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COGA NEWS



WHAT'S IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE

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Gratitude When Life Isn't Perfect

Bishop Cecil Reid

Don't stop counting!

"O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever." (Psalm 107:1)

November is the month when we hear a lot about being thankful. We see Thanksgiving decorations, recipes for our favorite holiday dishes, and reminders to count our blessings. It's a wonderful time to pause and appreciate the goodness of God.

But what happens when life doesn't feel particularly wonderful?

What if we're dealing with an illness, grieving the loss of someone we love, facing financial difficulties, or waiting for a prayer to be answered? What if the Thanksgiving table has an empty chair this year? Can we still find reasons to be grateful?

The answer is yes, but sometimes we have to look a little deeper.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:18, Paul writes, *"Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."* Notice he didn't say to give thanks for all circumstances, but in them. To give thanks ***in*** everything, not necessarily for everything.

God doesn't expect us to pretend that painful circumstances are pleasant. He invites us to recognize that even in difficult seasons, His presence and faithfulness remain.

Gratitude doesn't mean we ignore our struggles. It means our struggles don't get to tell the entire story.

We can be thankful for the strength to face another day, even when the day is difficult. We can appreciate a friend who calls to check on us, a church member who offers a prayer, or a moment of peace in the middle of a stressful situation.

Sometimes our blessings are not dramatic. They are found in ordinary moments we might otherwise overlook.

A warm meal. A familiar song. A kind word. The opportunity to begin again tomorrow.

And sometimes gratitude comes from looking backward and remembering how God carried us through something we once thought we couldn't survive.



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This November, let's challenge ourselves to look beyond the blessings that are easy to recognize. Let's also acknowledge the quiet ways God continues to provide, strengthen, comfort, and guide us.

If this season is joyful for you, share that joy with someone who may be struggling.

If this season is difficult, remember that you don't have to manufacture happiness to be thankful. You can bring your honest feelings to God and still recognize His goodness.

Thanksgiving is more than a holiday on the calendar. It is an opportunity to cultivate a grateful heart.

Life may not be perfect. Every prayer may not yet be answered. Every circumstance may not be what we hoped.

But God is still faithful. And that is a reason to give thanks.



UPCOMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER

- 6th & 7th > Leadership Virtual Conference
- 26th > Thanksgiving

DECEMBER

- 31st > Watch Night Service

Find more information on www.cogainc.org

A LITTLE SOMETHING TO LAUGH ABOUT

- I'm thankful for God's patience. If He can put up with me, there's hope for everybody!
- Fall leaves remind us that letting go can be beautiful.
- November's official dress code: Wear layers, remove layers, put the layers back on, and repeat.
- November is the month when "I'll just taste it" becomes a full Thanksgiving meal.
- The older I get, the more thankful I am for comfortable shoes, a warm blanket, and a chair that doesn't require instructions to get out of.
- The Thanksgiving table is the only place where people argue over who brought the best food while eating everybody else's.
- November is when my refrigerator becomes a game of "What container is this, and how long has it been here?"
- Thanksgiving dinner is a wonderful reminder that some blessings come with gravy.
- A thankful heart sees blessings where a complaining heart sees inconveniences.
- If you woke up this morning, God gave you another reason to say thank You.
- A grateful heart doesn't need a perfect day to find something good in it.

