

In the midst of life's messes, it isn't always easy to give thanks



In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Giving Thanks in All Things

In keeping with the thanksgiving focus at this time a year, I remember hearing a story about someone who had made a commitment to follow the biblical precept of giving thanks at all times (found in the verse above) and had soon after gotten robbed and was trying to think of some positive in that. I then came across an excerpt of this in a Charisma article and discovered that it was the respected 17th-century Bible commentator Matthew Henry. As mentioned above, his commitment to thankfulness was soon put to the test after he was robbed. Here's the rest of the story taken directly from Mike Shreve's Charisma article (<https://www.charismanews.com/culture/87533-giving-god-thanks-after-being-robbed>)

"At first he felt compelled to react in negative ways: upset, angry, depressed and fearful. But then he remembered his commitment. So he sat down, took hold of his mind and prayerfully pondered how to respond to the situation. Feeling inspired, he wrote down four things he decided he could be thankful for, despite the life-threatening encounter he had just endured.

This is the proclamation he penned to God:

"Let me be thankful first because I was never robbed before; second, because although they took my purse, they did not take my life; third, because although they took my all, it was not much; and fourth, because it was I who was robbed, not I who robbed."

When I was confronted with this story and realized how thankfulness calmed his mind and realigned his faith, I was immediately convicted of areas of negativity in my own thought life and speech that needed to be adjusted. The thought kept echoing in my heart, "If Matthew Henry could be that thankful after being robbed literally, then I need to more passionately express thankfulness when it seems I've been robbed—mentally, emotionally or even physically—by circumstances of life."

In closing this obviously doesn't mean that we give thanks because of bad things that happen to us, but that that we can thank God in the midst of the problems of life and thus rise above these challenges. In the midst of the inevitable troubles that come our way, I want to grow in having a thankful heart for the many blessings that are mine in Yeshua.