



The Curse of Ingratitude by Pastor Glenn Huebel

Many people think that happiness is the highest good of life. The Declaration of Independence assumes that all people desire this good and it calls the "pursuit of happiness" an inalienable, God-given right. One would think that with so many people pursuing happiness we would have more of it, but happiness is a fairly rare blessing. Many think that happiness is found in prosperity, but they never seem to reach a sufficient level of wealth to produce a happy heart. Indeed, some have discovered to their dismay that anxiety rather than happiness often increases with wealth. Some might even conclude that wealth breeds unhappiness! We could say the same about other worldly goals people often strive to achieve.

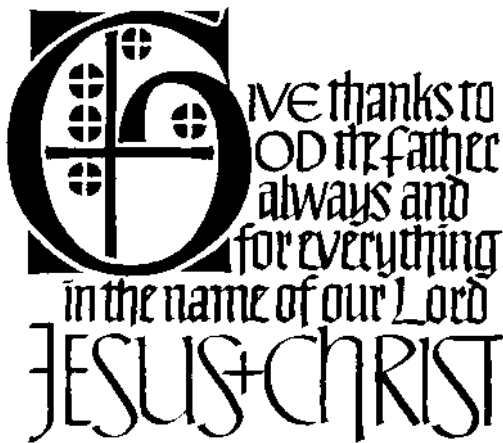
Why is happiness always the elusive butterfly – even in a country that guarantees the right to pursue it? One answer is that people seek it in the wrong places. The wise King Solomon gives very valuable advice on the futility of seeking happiness in worldly pursuits. Solomon had and experienced everything that most people in the world only dream about. Yet, after having it all he concluded that gaining riches, power, pleasure – even wisdom – is vanity, vexation, and sorrow. Certainly this is what Jesus meant when He said, "One's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions." When

God's blessings are received with an ungrateful heart they never satisfy the soul. Ingratitude sucks out contentment in our lives. Ungrateful people are rarely, if ever, happy people.

Gratitude, on the other hand, is closely associated with happiness – or more accurately, JOY. Psalms that praise the Lord for all His benefits are also Psalms of great joy. The Psalmist who writes, "Serve the Lord with gladness" also says "enter His gates with thanksgiving!" (Psalm 100:1, 4). The Psalmist in Psalm 98 praises God for the gift of salvation, and calls upon all the earth to "make a joyful noise to the Lord" (Psalm 98: 2, 4). The Psalmist in Psalm 107 recounts all the good things God does and calls Israel to "give thanks to the Lord." At the end of the litany of good things, he writes, "the upright see it and are glad" (Psalm 107:1, 42). Psalm 118 is a beautiful Psalm of thanksgiving recounting the Lord's blessings. It is also the Psalm that proclaims, "This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it" (Psalm 118:24). Psalm 149 is a song of praise to the Lord. The Psalmist invites Israel to rejoice: "Let Israel be glad in his Maker; let the children of Zion rejoice in their King!" (Psalm 149:2). Gratitude and joy belong together like faith and love.

Happiness is not found in the pursuit or achievement of worldly goals, but it IS usually present in a grateful heart, whether we have much or little. St. Paul writes to the Philippians, "I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need" (Philippians 4:11-12). It is noteworthy that this epistle was written in a prison cell, and it is saturated with the call to "rejoice." The world has always and

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That you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name. —John 20:31

will always seek happiness in the wrong places, just as it seeks wisdom and righteousness in the wrong places. Instead of striving in vain to give your children a “better life” than you had, wouldn’t it be wiser to teach them how to be brought low and how to abound, how to face plenty and hunger, abundance and need through GRATITUDE? If St. Paul “learned” these things, can they not be TAUGHT? Ingratitude is a natural fruit of the flesh, just like pride, rebellion, greed, etc. (2 Timothy 3:2). We should not be at all surprised that it shows up in our own hearts and the hearts of our children, but should we ignore or tolerate it when it does? Just as parents use the law to curb and expose other sins and vices in their children, so we must challenge this one whenever it appears, because when it develops in the heart and comes to full maturity – it will curse your child and those in his/her social circle. It even has a name

now- *affluenza!* It is the basic foundation of what people are calling “the entitlement generation.” It’s not pretty. Ingratitude should not be tolerated in our hearts or in our homes.

The law, of course, has no power to produce gratitude. Parents should teach politeness – saying “please and thank-you,” and writing thank-you notes because “love is not rude” (1 Corinthians 13:5), but external politeness is not yet gratitude. A truly grateful heart arises from faith in Christ which is created and nurtured through the Word. Thus St. Paul calls us to “be thankful” and “let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts” (Colossians 3:15-16). When the Spirit has created a thankful heart through faith in Christ, parents have the joyful

privilege of guiding their children to SEE the wonderful blessings of God that surround them daily, such as body, soul, eyes, ears, reason, senses, clothing, shoes, food, drink, house, home, land, animals, and all that supports our body and life. For all this it is our duty to THANK, PRAISE, SERVE and OBEY. What a marvelous God we have who spared not His own Son for us that we might be His own and live under Him in His Kingdom. If we cannot find things to be thankful for, even in difficult circumstances, we are spiritually blind. Let us open our eyes to see what great things God has done for us. Come join us to give thanks to God on Wednesday evening, November 26, 7:00 pm.

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits
(Psalm 103:2)

Blessings,
Pastor Huebel

Angel Tree Christmas 2014 by Laralynn Conaway, Angel Tree Coordinator



A Ministry of Prison Fellowship

Angel Tree Christmas season is just around the corner!

The Angel Tree program, a Prison Fellowship program, seeks to reconnect prisoners and their children to God and to each other through the delivery of Christmas gifts and the Gospel message. Messiah has partnered with the Angel Tree Christmas program to share the Good News for the past several years and we are getting

ready for another year of this awesome ministry!

The kickoff of the Angel Tree program is Sunday, November 23. Will you help us show the love of Jesus Christ to the children of prisoners this Christmas? There are many ways to help!

- adopt an angel from the Angel Tree
- deliver gifts to the homes
- give monetary donations to purchase bibles or books for each child
- donate postage stamps to send Christmas cards to each prisoner
- Pray! Keep these children, the parents in prison and their families on your hearts and in your prayers.

Are you interested in adopting multiple angels from the same family? Last year I received many requests from Messiah families that were interested in adopting an entire family of angel tree tags. If you are interested in this, please contact me before November 23rd.

Thank you for your faithful and continued support of this important ministry of compassion and reaching out to these families with the love of Jesus Christ!

If you would like to volunteer your time or have any questions about other ways that you can help, please call me at 817-456-9464 or email me at LDNelson72@hotmail.com.

Lutheran Braille Workers by Pamela Buhler

The November and December Braille workshops have been limited to the following dates and times:

- 11/14 & 12/21- Messiah & Holy Shepherd (9-12th grade)
- 12/7- Messiah Junior Youth w/ ICE CREAM SOCIAL to follow (6-8th grade)
- 11/11 & 12/9- Open Family Workshop (everyone welcome)
- 11/13 & 12/11 Thursday Afternoon- Joy Bible study group (everyone welcome)



Oct 14th Tuesday Night Open Family Workshop



Oct 26th Messiah's Junior Youth printed 14 volumes of Ezekiel



Christmas By Candlelight

Angels: The Messengers and the Message – 2014

Advent is right around the corner. We hope you will be a part of this year's Christmas by Candlelight. You will enjoy a beautiful evening filled with the Word, Christmas music, friendship, and dessert by candlelight. Your invitation is in your church mailbox. Fill it out and reserve your table or ticket today:

Messiah Lutheran Church
Monday, December 1, 2014
6:30-8:30 p.m.

Christmas by Candlelight: Angels 2014 fundraiser will help pay for students to attend Christ Academy

& Phoebe Academy. Christ Academy is a special two week seminary program designed for high school aged boys to explore this vocation. A program which



provides young men the opportunity to experience the life of a seminarian and one which encourages them to prayerfully consider the Office of Holy Ministry as the vocation they might one day pursue (tuition is \$500). Phoebe Academy is a three day seminary program designed for high school aged girls to explore the vocation of deaconess (tuition is \$100).

Coordinators for this event are Joan Burk and Pamela Buhler. Please contact these ladies for further information on this year's dessert social.

E-Giving, from the Board of Stewardship

Member financial stewardship is essential for the accomplishment of our congregational goals. Many members use electronic bill-pay to fulfill their everyday obligations at home. Within the next few weeks Messiah Lutheran Church will implement an electronic transaction capability (E-giving) for making weekly tithes. Through this method we will be able to give our general fund offerings as well as designated special fund offerings.

You can see an example of the program by clicking on the button at the right side of this link. <http://cts.cph.org/egiving>

Some of the benefits of this program are:

- A better ability for members to regularly implement their giving plan
- Enabling electronic giving via smartphone app or on a website
- Less handling for the counters

- It is compatible with our current software

Please know that this is a completely voluntary program. We will continue the normal offering envelopes for all who wish.

More information will follow as to how we will implement this program. Many thanks to Jinel Munoz for coordinating this important effort.



Messiah Lutheran Church & School

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

1308 Whitley Rd. Keller, TX 76248

Church Office: (817) 431-2345

Early Childhood Center: (817) 431-6139

Classical Academy (K-8): (817) 431-5486

Sunday Worship: 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.

Sunday School & Adult Bible Class: 9:30 a.m.

Rev. Glenn Huebel, Senior Pastor

Rev. Steven Cholak, Assistant Pastor

Mrs. Erika Mildred, MLCA Headmaster

Mrs. Vicki Main, Kantor

Mrs. Shirleen Simek, Financial Director

www.messiahkeller.org

GIVE thanks to
OD the father
always and
for everything
in the name of our Lord
JESUS+CHRIST

*Join us in singing praises to our God,
from whom all blessings flow.*

Thanksgiving Eve Worship

**Wednesday, November 26
7:00 p.m.**

Feed My Starving Children - *Feeding God's Starving Children, Hungry in Body and Spirit*

HOW CAN TWO HOURS MAKE A DIFFERENCE? CHICKEN. VEGGIE. SOY. RICE! We had an amazing time serving the Lord by packing food for hungry children last month on October 17th at St Paul's Lutheran Church in Fort Worth. We had 16 volunteers in our crew, who helped package over 30 of the 131 boxes of manna packs (for Haiti) during our 2 hour shift. Our 117 volunteers helped pack 280,296 servings in 2 hours. This will feed 77 children for a year! To God be all the glory.

Would you like to volunteer two hours of your time and help pack meals? During our next MobilePack event, you will join members of your community in packing MannaPack™ meals for starving children around the world.

Where: Lover's Lane Methodist Church, Dallas.

When: **Saturday, Dec. 6, 2015.**

See Pamela Buhler for further information. We look forward to serving God's children with you!



Turning Hunger into HOPE

Fort Worth
October 17, 2014

Feed My Starving Children

