

# Good News, Bad News, & Thanksgiving

Thomas Robinson, *How the Gospel Works* 9, November 24, 2019

## Colossians 1:3-14 Translation TR

<sup>3</sup> **We're always thanking God**, the Father of our Lord Jesus Anointed King (*Christos*), as we pray for you, <sup>4</sup> since we heard about your **faith** in **Anointed King Jesus** and of the **love** that you have toward all God's people, <sup>5</sup> because of the **hope** stored up for you in God's realms, which you heard about in advance in the **message of the truth, the Good News** (*euangelion*), <sup>6</sup> which has come to you.

Just as it bears fruit and grows in all the world, so it is also among you, since the very day you heard and recognized that **God's grace is truly real**. <sup>7</sup> You learned that from Epaphras our beloved fellow-slave, who is faithful on your behalf as a servant of the Anointed King, <sup>8</sup> and he's the one who showed us clearly your love in the Spirit.

<sup>9</sup> Since the very day we heard all this, we never cease praying for you, and asking that you may be filled with an ability to **recognize his will**, with all **wisdom** and **understanding** empowered by the **Spirit**.

<sup>10</sup> The aim is to **live in a manner that's worthy of the Lord**, fully pleasing as you bear fruit in every good work and grow in the knowledge of God. <sup>11</sup> In this, you'll be strengthened in every area of power, by the might that flows from his glory, for all **endurance** and **patience**, as with **joy** <sup>12</sup> you **give thanks to the Father**, who has made you sufficient to receive a portion of the **inheritance** in the light that belongs to God's people.

<sup>13</sup> He rescued us from the authority of the darkness and transferred us into the Kingly realm of the Son who embodies his love, <sup>14</sup> in whom we have real deliverance from slavery, the forgiveness of sins.

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## Colossians 3:12-17 Translation TR

<sup>12</sup> Since God has chosen all of you, set you apart, and loved you, then dress the part with hearts full of tenderness, with kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, <sup>13</sup> putting up with one another and giving grace to each other, if anyone has a complaint against another. Just as the Lord has given grace to you, so must you too.

<sup>14</sup> And over all these, clothe yourselves with love, which ties everything together for real maturity. <sup>15</sup> And let the peace of the Anointed King set the standard in the way your hearts think, since you were called into that peace in his one body.

And be thankful (well graced): <sup>16</sup> Let the message of the Anointed King dwell in and among you in all its richness, as you teach and exhort each other with real wisdom, by his grace singing Spirit-empowered psalms, hymns, and songs, singing with your whole being to God.

<sup>17</sup> And whatever you do, by word or action, do everything as a person who belongs to the Lord, Jesus, giving gracious thanks through him to God the Father.

## Colossians 4:18 Translation TR

<sup>18</sup> I, Paul write this greeting to you with my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.

## Philippians 4:4-7, 11-13 Translation TR

<sup>4</sup> Since you're in the Lord, I want you to celebrate with joy all the time! Again I'll say it, all of you, be joyful! <sup>5</sup> Let your shared reasonableness be evident to all people. The Lord is right here!

<sup>6</sup> Refuse to get anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and by request with thanksgiving let all of your desires be made known to God.

<sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, a peace that's beyond the grasp of any human mind, will guard your hearts and your ways of thinking in Anointed King Jesus.

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## Thanksgiving that Flows from the Good News

We live in an age of irony, distancing from engagement in life. Early Christians (like Jesus) can put us off because of their lack of ironic distance. They live with a sense of joy and engagement with life even in the midst of suffering, persecution, and loss.

In the OT the word for "to thank" (*yadah*) means to confess/ praise – used only toward God. Recognizing God's reality as source of life & good. Praising God in worship as in Ps.100.

In the NT, the common words for thanks and thanksgiving are closely related to the idea of "grace" – *eucharistein*. The experience of God's grace announced in the Good News of Jesus' Life-Death-Resurrection filled them with a sense of gratitude and courage for life.

Jesus was continually surrounded with human suffering and trouble – sickness, poverty, and oppression of the people; the doubt and fear of disciples. But he lived with great calm, seeing beauty, faith, hope, healing – God's presence visible in all things and people.

Jesus' ministry/grace climaxed in the Cross – God's absolute love in the heart of suffering – calling disciples to life shaped by God's self-giving love. The Cross was the end of irony. Such grace calls us a world of gratitude/charis – thanks to God in all circumstances.

## Living in a Way that fits the Love of Jesus

Early Christians didn't see the world as they had before. They shared a sense of birth, new creation, recognizing grace. Every sense was wide awake to the challenge of living in a new way with new hope in world of old traps, worn-out values. The aim is to walk/live fitting that Good News embodied in Jesus. Every day is precious. A choice to see God's presence, seek God's kingdom, find transcendence or be blinded into our world's self-serving ordinariness.

Seek Wisdom, Understanding. No foolishness. Don't narrow your mind to see only material things. Keep a mind big enough to recognize the Lord who creates the material things, to acknowledge God and his purpose for creation, to seek his will – real knowledge of God.

Integrate his Grace and Love into your understanding of the world and all your relationships – giving grace to each other. Letting Jesus' peace decide conflicts. Clothed with Love.

## Spirit-Filled Life – Poetry and Gratitude

The Good News is deep and rich. Marinate in it. Teach it to each other and outsiders. This Spirit-filled life is expressed in poetry and music – traditional psalms, new experiences – sung with voice and heart. These take into account the full range of human experience and see them in the light of God's inexpressible gift of grace in the Messiah.

A profound integrity / wholeness results. All of life – happiness and suffering, pleasure and pain – can be experienced as we grow in the light of the love that's at the center of God's delighting, suffering, self-giving, unconquerable, ever-living grace.