

Thank You

Ready:

"Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

-1 Thessalonians 5:18

Set

Several years ago I ran the annual Kansas City Dog 'N Jog, and at that time I thought that my crazy dog, Tweak, and I would have a shot of winning the entire thing. Coming into the final loop of the two-mile race, Tweak and I were in third place. I was so excited that we were clearly going to place in the top three. Unfortunately, during the final turn, Tweak swerved in front of me, and I lost my footing and slammed hard into pavement. It was over after that. I hobbled to the finish bruised and beaten.

When I got home that day, I reflected on the situation. It would have been so easy for me to be miserable the entire day and grumble at the outcome of the race. I thought back to a time when I'd finished a longer race and had done much better than expected. I praised God so much after that good race, so, why couldn't I praise Him in the awful one I'd just finished?

Then it hit me. Oftentimes I am more concerned about the results of a race and my performance than in whether or not I glorified God during the race. Completely convicted by my response to the situation, I decided to start praising God for the good things about that day's race. It truly had been a blessing. I wasn't injured badly enough that I had to go to the hospital. I had gotten to see my family who came to watch me, and my dog had surprised me by being halfway under control in the presence of many other dogs. There were so many things to be thankful for!

Here's the thing: Bad situations in life aren't all about us. Most often, they are simply challenges that God gives us to allow us to glorify Him in our responses. The fall wasn't about me at all; it wasn't about my place in the race. It was about what God wanted to teach me through the circumstance and how He wanted to display Himself through me in the process.

Things in our life often don't go the way we intend them to, and sometimes they go even better than we expect. Our responsibility in both situations is to realize that both good and bad can be used to honor and glorify Christ.

Go

1. Think of a circumstance in which you should have praised God, but, instead, harbored feelings of anger or self pity.
2. What could you have praised God for in that situation?
3. What are some ways we can praise God in the hard times? Is there a tough situation in your life right now in which you can praise Him? Ask God for forgiveness for your attitude and for Him to reveal His love and grace to you during this time.

Workout

1 Chronicles 16:33-35

Psalms 148:1-3

Philippians 4:4

Overtime

“Lord, I often make bad circumstances about me and not about Your glorification. Please help me to understand that You use all things for good, even when we can’t see them. Thank You for loving me even when I am not praising You.”



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