

“Thankful 24/7”
“Thankful Year”

We are in the final week of our sermon series, “Thankful 24/7” AND the final week of the Christian year. Our culture is already filled with Christmas music and decorations and all the other things that go with this season of the year. It is interesting that sometimes our Christian calendar ends up out of step with the secular calendar. However, it does give us some time to continue focusing on being thankful as opposed to some of the anxiety around whether there will be enough of everything for the holidays. In worship, we are being challenged to a year of gratitude, beginning in December as our new year as Christians begins. So will you be thankful this week and prepare for a year of thanksgiving? My prayer is that we all find new ways to say Thank you to each other and to God for all the grace and love and mercy we have received.

Things I’d like to remember from today’s sermon: **“Thankful Year”**

Prayer Journal

Thank you, God, for all your blessings to me and my family; for the strength you give me each day and for all the people around me who make life more meaningful. Amen.

Study Guide

Monday, November 26, 2018 Matthew 6: 25-27

This is in the middle of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Jesus points out how much human beings tend to worry about things that do not matter; life, clothes, food. The rat race is still filled with "rats" an old saying goes. Jesus asks pointedly how much do things change worrying? Not much, if anything changes. Jesus isn't advocating laziness or doing nothing at all. What Jesus is asking his followers to do is to worship God, acknowledge God, share with others make sure one's life is in alignment with the kingdom values. Write down one or two things you worry about the most. Then share with God those worries and ask God's to fill you with grace and peace. Then say thank you for how God takes care of you.

Tuesday, November 27, 2018 Matthew 6: 27-30

These verses focus specifically on whether or not worrying adds anything to life. Does worrying add an hour or a day? Jesus notes how the lilies of the field do nothing at all, yet are taken care of by God. Realistically there are things that frighten people. Lay offs occur, companies shut their doors, illness can take its toll. Worry about what may happen does not add to the quantity or quality of life. Having just gone through an election cycle, we know how the differing platforms feed into fear and anxiety. Christians, trust in God who has promised to take care of use. How do you cope creatively with worry? What steps can you take to keep worry from dominating your heart and spirit? How can a life of gratitude help with your worry?

Wednesday, November 28, 2018 1 Thessalonians 5: 12-15

In these final verses from Paul's earliest letter is encouragement and concern. We see similar recommendations in Romans 12. These words are naming specific actions that witness to a believer's faith: respect those who are leading, live in peace, comfort the discouraged, help the weak, warn those who are acting out. Don't repay wrong with wrong, pursue good for each other. When Jesus notes that worrying doesn't solve anything, Paul is focusing on final instructions and blessings. Living a life of faith, means that our words and actions match and witness to God. This life believes that God is with us in all things. How does your life and actions point to your faith in Christ? How does those actions also speak of a life of thankfulness 24/7?

Thursday, November 29, 2018 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24

These verses are so hopeful and profound. Like Paul's other writing these words encourage the church to rejoice, to pray and give thanks in all things. "Give thanks in every situation because this is God's will for you....avoid evil....The one who is calling you is faithful and will do this!" In Christ we are enabled and empowered to do all things: avoid evil, being careful and doing what is good and being grateful in all things. This is God's will. These words are so powerful. Somehow in giving thanks, God's will is done and made real in the world. Thanksgiving is the real witness to our faith. How does your gratitude witness to God in your life and the world? How can this challenge be part of your life in the next year?

Friday, November 30, 2018 Matthew 6: 31-34

This is the end of the Christian year. Advent begins Sunday and is the new year for Christians. The challenge for our new year is to live a year a gratitude. The only way to do that is to listen to Jesus and to quit worrying. We are challenged to strive for things that really matter. Jesus reminds us that God knows what we need. Strive to live out the kingdom values and our needs will be taken care. Don't be afraid, Don't be afraid...be compassionate and caring and we will have what we need. What would it take for you to be thankful for a whole year? Would you be willing to write notes, make phone calls and specifically take time to give thanks? Today spend some time asking God to help you to not worry and to give thanks in all things.