

A dramatic sunset or sunrise over a landscape with mountains and a body of water, with rays of light breaking through a cloudy sky.

Being Thankful in Hard Times

An Attitude of Thankfulness

If being thankful to God is considered an obligation, one will never be thankful

thankful

An Attitude of Thankfulness

- A lesson from Thessalonica

thankful

And we urge you, brothers, **admonish** the idle, **encourage** the fainthearted, **help** the weak, **be patient** with them all. See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil. Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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Giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ – Ephesians 5:20

An Attitude of Thankfulness

- A lesson from the Lord

thankful

Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.” And he took a cup, and when he had **given thanks** he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. – Matthew 26:26-28

Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, **smitten by God**, and afflicted.

-- Isaiah 53:4

“Thankful for
God’s Good
Grace”

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And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it be possible, **let this cup pass from me;** nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.” (26:39)

An Attitude of Thankfulness

- A lesson from the Lord
 - How could Jesus be thankful?

Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, **who for the joy that was set before him** endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

– Hebrews 12:2

thankful

Thankful for Future Outcomes

- We must not judge God when times are hard
 - Not every hard time in life is sent from God
 - Lessons can be learned from every hard time
 - If God stopped these, spiritual growth would be impeded

Thankful for Future Outcomes

- Reasons for thankfulness in hard times:
 - God is seeking to correct something in my life
 - While not thankful for pain, thankful for result

For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives./For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

– Hebrews 12:6,11

So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong. – II Corinthians 12:7-10

Thankful for Future Outcomes

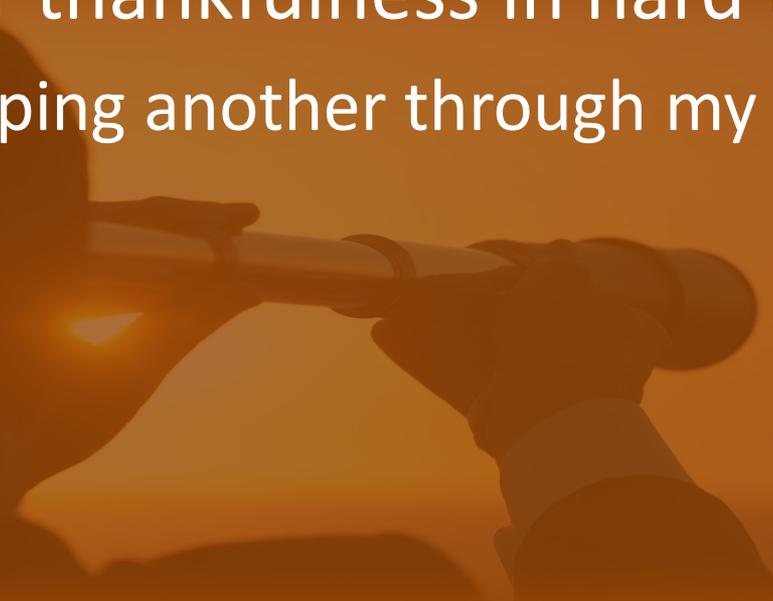
- Reasons for thankfulness in hard times:
 - God is bringing me to maturity
 - Raising me to a higher level of spirituality

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

-- James 1:2-4

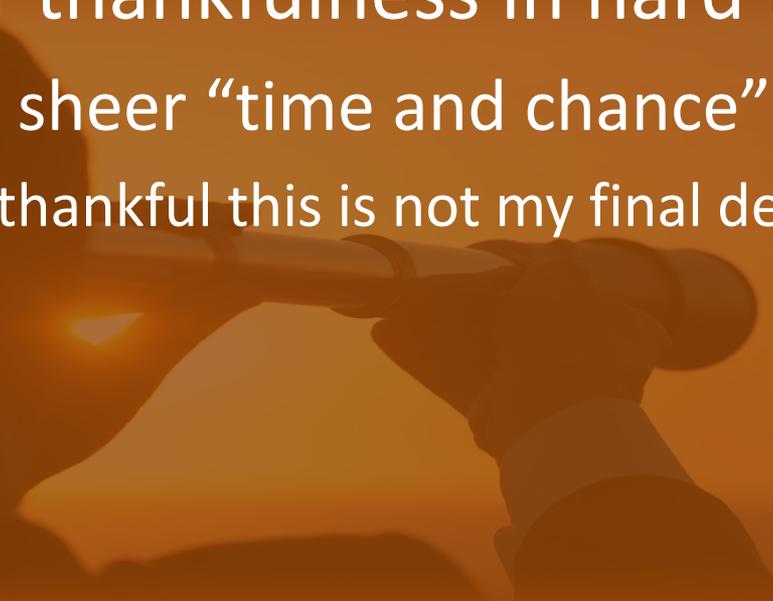
Thankful for Future Outcomes

- Reasons for thankfulness in hard times:
 - God is helping another through my hardships



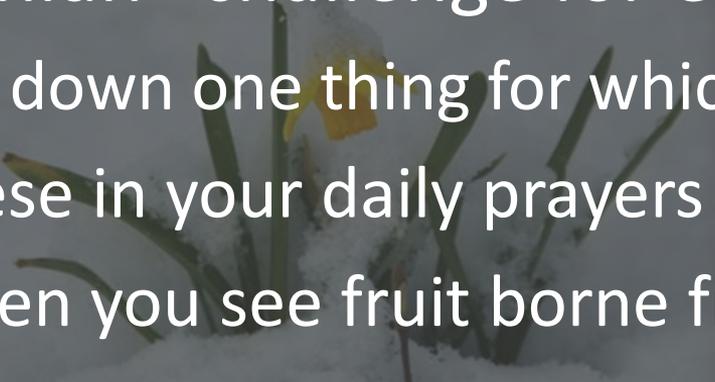
Thankful for Future Outcomes

- Reasons for thankfulness in hard times:
 - When it is sheer “time and chance” that hurts...
 - I can be thankful this is not my final destination



Insert song “Count Your Blessings” here

Being Thankful in Hard Times

- Being thankful is a choice
 - A “Thessalonian” challenge for each of us:
 - Daily, write down one thing for which you are thankful
 - Include these in your daily prayers
 - Rejoice when you see fruit borne from hard times
 - Everyday, give thanks for salvation
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- A small yellow and white flower, possibly a crocus, is shown growing through a patch of snow. The flower has several green leaves and a single yellow petal with a white center. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey, suggesting a winter or early spring setting.