

Thanksgiving Brings Courage

The fact Paul took courage implies his spirits may have been at a low ebb. But the sight of concerned brethren brought a prayer of thanksgiving to his lips and new courage to his spirit. This passage suggests several thoughts about thanksgiving.

Message

1. Thanksgiving under the pressure of trial.

- a. Jesus told us to be of good cheer in the midst of tribulation because He has overcome the world (John 16:33).
- b. For us whose true citizenship is not in this world, trials at the hands of the world system should not be unexpected. When they happen, we can thank God and take courage that they cannot defeat us.

2. Thanksgiving for unexpected blessings.

- a. Without our knowing it, God often puts concern for our well-being in the hearts of fellow Christians as he did for Paul on this occasion.
- b. Nothing is so refreshing as God's surprises that He as a loving Father often brings across our pathway.

3. Thanksgiving for evidences of God's never-failing control of circumstances.

- a. By sending these brethren to encourage Paul, God was showing the apostle he was not in the battle alone.
- b. God understands the limits of our ability to handle trials, and He allows only what He knows we can bear (1 Corinthians 10:13)

Conclusion

A spirit of defeat weakens our spiritual stamina. A spirit of gratitude and thanksgiving renews our courage and strength.