**Thanksgiving: A Time of War?**

 Even though we have much to be thankful for each and every day, Thanksgiving is a time, specially set aside for everyone in our nation to give thanks. It can be a day for us to take an accounting of all that God is doing in our lives. All across America, Christians worship God with hearts full of thankfulness and joy for all of the blessings that are constantly being poured out in their lives and yet, sometimes can also experience great hardships. Because of this, even Christians are sometimes prone to fall into patterns of dissatisfaction and discontentment.

 How often have we convinced ourselves that someone or something is the reason that we cannot be thankful. Our thoughts may go something like this. “If only thiswere different then I could be thankful.” And thiscan be any number of things. You fill in the blank. Our job, someone at the job, disappointments with your spouse, disappointments with children, extended family, health issues, even disappointments at the church. With this in mind, I want to set a biblical principle in place. It’s a principle about worship. If we are living our lives in patterns of discontentment there’s a good possibility that there’s a war going on inside us. And that war is ultimately centered on worship. Will we worship God……or will we worship the idols of our own heart? An idol of the heart is anything other than God that we look to for ultimate happiness and fulfillment in our lives. I want to give Christians something to ponder; if there is a pattern of unhappiness, discontentment, and lack of thankfulness that has gone on for some time, God has not left you…He has not stopped providing for you….He has not stopped hearing and answering your prayers. But, to some degree, you have stopped worshiping Him and are worshiping the god of self. You have decided that you will not be happy or thankful to God unless things go the way that you want. When this happens, the ultimate result is loss of peace, loss of true joy, ongoing bitterness and lack of contentment.

 What is the answer to getting back to true worship of God and contentment in my life? The answer is that God is at work in all of the events in our lives so that we might grow in our faith, and become more like Jesus Christ as we rightly respond to these events with joy and thankfulness. Listen to the words of James from the New Testament. “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.” As we celebrate Thanksgiving with family and friends this year we can joyfully give thanks to God no matter what our situation is because God is at work in our lives for our good and for His glory!

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