

Thankful for the Saints

Scripture

“Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers” (Eph 1:15-16 NKJV)

Devotion

Did you ever wonder what it would be like if you were the only Christian alive? Maybe you experience this a little when you go to work where everyone is lost but you? It would be a lonely world without the saints.

Believers need each other as we are all part of a body. Different parts of the body each supply what is needed to the whole. It could be a word of encouragement or even a word of exhortation as both are needed from time to time.

Unfortunately, we often fight and fuss with each other. Things seem to be so important during the heat of the moment or even for a season. There are things to fight for, or maybe better said, stand for, but most things are just not that important. Even when we find ourselves on different sides of a position, we need to remember to be thankful for our brothers and sisters in the Lord.

James asks us, “Where do wars and fights [come] from among you? Do [they] not [come] from your [desires for] pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend [it] on your pleasures.” (Jas 4:1-3 NKJV)

One of the most notable characteristics of the flesh is pride. “By pride comes nothing but strife. . . .” (Pr 13:10 NKJV) When we find ourselves feeling put out or put off, pride often kicks in and starts demanding its satisfaction. This happens over and over again until someone is offended. “A brother offended is harder to win than a strong city, and contentions [are] like the bars of a castle.” (Pr 18:19 NKJV) Therefore, it is important that we guard our hearts against such disastrous confrontations.

We may do this by practicing, as Paul does, giving thanks for all the saints in our prayers. It is very hard to be angry with those for whom you pray. Make sure this is not to be a mechanical incantation, but a true thankfulness expressed to God. This is not hard when you think of the prospects of living in this pagan society without any spiritual brothers or sisters for mutual edification.

“We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please [his] neighbor for [his] good, leading to edification. For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.” For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind [and] one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Ro 15:1-6 NKJV)