



Flying H Youth Ranch

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Dear Partners,

We just finished Thanksgiving, and are headed toward Christmas. This season often prompts a little introspection, and I am no different. My shoulder is still painful and sleep is sometimes hard to come by, so I have indulged myself in a certain amount of grumbling, to which my wife could attest. Since God couldn't be described as happy about the grumbling the Israelites did in Exodus, I decided I needed to once again learn why and how to maintain a thankful attitude.

I Thessalonians 5:16-18 tells us to "Be joyful always; pray continually: give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

Wow! I know I have read this before, but I have not absorbed the context. First, I am to "Be joyful always." Since God doesn't ask for things that are impossible, then I clearly have a ways to go. I am not always joyful. Joy is not something I can accomplish by striving for it. I know that continuous joy is not attainable for me where I am right now. I need more information, more help. The next verse leads me on. I can only have that kind of joy by praying "continually," through being in fellowship with God all the time. If I leave Him for a moment, the admonishment to always be joyful once again feels like a pipe dream. What I pray about is the key. I suppose I could be in constant contact with Him and grumbling, like I have been apt to do of late, but that does not lead to joy. It leads instead to depression and despair. Thanksgiving leads to joy.

It cannot be just thanksgiving for "good" circumstances. I need to thank God as much when I lose a job as when I get one, as thankful for rotator cuff surgery as I am for good health. Paul knew what he was talking about and how difficult it was to be thankful in all circumstances. "I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want." Philippians 4:12. It is easy for us here at the Flying H to see God's blessings right now. He

has been very generous to us this past year. His “good” gifts are easy to spot. Our finances are in order, our vehicles are in good running condition, our houses are nice places to live, and much more. But we are also thankful for the boys that are here, even though they are sometimes very difficult; and we are thankful for the parents we get to work with; and for both the ups and downs of our income, both personal and corporate.

I guess the way I think of this is that I have a fundamental need to remember that God is sovereign, and that God is good. His sovereignty and goodness show up in the “good” things He gives us, and in the difficult things He gives us. My need to remember all this is continuous.

God bless you and your family this Christmas season,

Bob Hostetler
Executive Director

Our praises are:

- The spiritual thirst evident in many of the boys.
- For the committed staff He has brought here, and is bringing here.
- We have had many enquiries and applications from families that need help with their teenage boys.
- The stress of the holidays gives us opportunities with the boys to help them see their character.
- The stress of the holidays helps us staff see our character, too. 😊

Our prayer requests are:

- For each boy here to come to know Jesus, and honor Him as Lord of their life.
- That we remember to give thanks continuously.
- Please remember the Johnsons. They long to be here.
- Wisdom for whom to bring in as residents in January. (We have room for three or four.)
- Wisdom for whom to invite to come on as new staff. (We have three families seeking approval as missionaries at the Flying H.)

Our needs are:

- A new school. Details are coming in January, but our sixty year old building that was originally two guest houses is quite inadequate. The new school will take around \$350,000 to build, and God has given us approximately a quarter of that sum so far.
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