

ALPHA COUNSELING SERVICES
20730 Bond Rd NE Suite S180
(360)779-3624 Alphapoulsbo.org
November, 2021

Dear friends,

Another Thanksgiving Day will soon be here. I like the giving thanks for the whole month. I know we are supposed to give thanks always but it helps me to emphasize it for a whole month each year.

This past October I was confronted by Oswald Chambers' devotion on discipleship. The part that convicted me was about being faithful and therefore thankful with the boring stuff in life. **... "it does require the supernatural grace of God to live twenty-four hours of every day as a saint, going through drudgery, and living an ordinary, unnoticed, and ignored existence as a disciple of Jesus. It is ingrained in us that we have to do exceptional things for God – but we do not. We have to be exceptional in the ordinary things in life and holy on the ordinary streets, among ordinary people – and this is not learned in five minutes."**

At one time, many years ago, I wanted to build the largest church in the state of Pennsylvania. I had some pretty big plans for my work for God. I was going to stand up in the pulpit do something big and set the whole world straight. Well, here I am in a quiet town in Washington sitting down and talking to people one at a time. It is often His plan for us to not be the center of attention.

Two verses that help me to live by faith in the ordinary things in life are about how to be thankful and the need for contentment. First Thessalonians 5:18, says; **"give thanks IN all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you,"** Every time I quote this verse I emphasize the fact, to myself, it is not necessarily giving thanks **FOR** something but choosing thankfulness toward God in that situation. It helps me focus on God and not on what I'm struggling with at that time. It takes practice to say thankful words that your emotions are doing their best to contradict anything positive.

The other verse that has helped me is First Timothy 6: 6, 7, & 8. **"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content."** I struggle with contentment partly because I live in this world full of advertising geared to make me want something new, better and usually expensive. Paul's goes on to say that we Christians can be hurt badly by not being content. For years I drove a beat up yellow pickup truck and every day as I drove by all the fancy cars here in the medical center parking lot I would ask God for contentment with godliness and then thank Him for my old Datsun. I think it worked! I sold that thing many years ago and now drive an old white Toyota pickup with duct tape holding a light.

Again this Thanksgiving month will you join me in looking for small, ordinary, even boring things that you can say thank you to God for?

Speaking of being thankful... Thank each of you for your prayers and financial support that make Alpha possible.

Yours in Christ,

Richard