

COGA NEWS



WHAT'S IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE

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ALWAYS A REASON TO BE GRATEFUL

Bishop Cecil Reid

Don't stop counting!

As the Thanksgiving season approaches, we often hear the phrase, **"Count your blessings."** Gratitude may come easily for some, yet for others it can be difficult — especially when we see the troubles in the world around us and experience challenges within our own families. Life sometimes brings loss, disappointment, or hardship that makes gratitude feel out of reach. Yet the truth of God's Word reminds us that even when it's hard, there is always a reason to be grateful.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:18, Paul writes, *"Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."* Notice he didn't say to give thanks for all circumstances, but in them. Gratitude doesn't deny the pain, but it invites God into it. When we choose to thank Him even through tears, we acknowledge that He is greater than what we face — that His promises are still true, and His love still surrounds us.

Hard times have a way of stripping away distractions and helping us see what truly matters. Maybe it's the people who stood by us, the strength we didn't know we had, or the quiet moments when we felt God's peace holding us

together. Gratitude in difficult seasons teaches us to see God's hand working behind the scenes. He may not change our situation overnight, but He changes us — giving us endurance, wisdom, and deeper faith.

Think of Job, who lost nearly everything, yet said, *"The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."* (Job 1:21)



Job's gratitude wasn't based on comfort or circumstance — it was rooted in his relationship with God. He understood that no matter how dark life became, the light of God's presence was still shining.

When we practice gratitude in hardship, it doesn't erase the struggle, but it shifts our focus. Instead of asking, "Why me?" we begin to ask, "What is God teaching me?" Instead of seeing emptiness, we start to notice grace. Gratitude becomes a lens that helps us see hope where others see despair.

Sometimes gratitude looks like whispering, "Thank You, Lord," through tears. Other times it

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looks like smiling through uncertainty, believing God's plan is still good. And sometimes, it's simply getting out of bed and saying, "God, I trust You today." Those small acts of faith are powerful forms of praise.

This November, let's make gratitude our daily practice — not just a response to blessings, but a declaration of faith. Thank Him for the roof over your head, for the air you breathe, for the people who love you, and for His mercy that never fails. Even when life is hard, remember that every sunrise is proof that God hasn't forgotten you.

There will always be challenges, but there will also always be grace — grace that sustains, comforts, and restores. So, no matter what this season brings, hold onto this truth: even when it's hard, there is always a reason to be grateful.

As we move through this month, let us actively choose gratitude, especially when it's hardest to do so. Remember that gratitude is not merely a response to positive circumstances; it is a spiritual anchor that can keep us grounded when the storms of life rage.



UPCOMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER

- 7th & 8th > Leadership Virtual Conference
- 22nd > Southern District Thanksgiving Feeding
- 28th > Thanksgiving

DECEMBER

- 13th > Sothern District Christmas Program
- 31st > Watch Night Service

Find more information on www.cogainc.org



A LITTLE SOMETHING TO LAUGH ABOUT

- In November, we give thanks for leftovers because cooking is overrated!
- November is the time to be grateful for family, friends, and food—mostly food!
- "November: when elastic waistbands become a spiritual blessing."
- "Lord, give me the strength to say no to a third slice of pie... or at least the wisdom to hide it well."
- "Thanksgiving calories don't count if you pray first, right?"
- "If you can't find me, I'm probably in the kitchen doing 'research' for Thanksgiving."
- "I'm not saying I'm thankful for pie, but I'm not not saying it."
- "If thankfulness burned calories, I'd be ready for Christmas cookies by now."
- "Too blessed to be stressed — unless the turkey's still frozen and the family arrives in ten minutes."
- "Let your heart be as full as your plate this November."
- "November: when your thankfulness list and grocery list are both full."

November



be thankful

