



WEST VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST

9:30 am Bible Class—all ages
10:30 am Sunday Worship
5:00 pm Proverbs study (online)
7:00 pm Wednesday Bible Class

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June 5, 2022

When Fuel Prices Rise

It's rare that a day goes by without seeing someone on social media post a painful picture of a price readout from their most recent trip to the gas station. I'd be lying if I said that the meteoric price rises of fuel and of other commodities as of late have had no effect on my family; we're definitely feeling the pinch. However, I haven't found myself particularly angry or even frustrated at the situation. Part of it of course is that my family is not facing the dire straits some are (for which I'm very thankful!). I'd like to think that part of it though is how my faith has equipped me for moments such as these. There are several verses that I believe are worth considering if more than your wallet is hurting each time you visit the pump.

First, "in everything give thanks" (1 Thessalonians 5:18). Sure, higher fuel prices are bad. But is there anything else that's good? Paul doesn't call me to give thanks for the higher prices; he doesn't say, "for everything give thanks." He does call me though to find something for which to be thankful "in everything." Start with the big picture things: your relationship with God, your home in heaven, your family, etc. Next, reflect on things that provide perspective: having your basic necessities met (cf. 1 Timothy 6:8), having a car to put fuel into, not being among those choosing between fuel and food, etc. I've appreciated occasionally seeing people on social media comparing concern over fuel prices with the concerns of people in war torn environments such as Ukraine. While we shouldn't invalidate the feelings of anyone who is struggling, perspective can help us to form gratitude.

Second, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God" (Philippians 4:6). This goes hand in hand in with the previous point. The fact is that whether we're struggling with fuel prices or the ravages of war, we have a Mediator who understands (Hebrews 4:15) and a God who invites us to come to His throne with our concerns (Hebrews 4:16; 1 Peter 5:7). Contentment and gratitude don't just arise because of blessings; they arise because God has said, "I will never you nor forsake you," so that we may boldly say, "The Lord is my Helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?" (Hebrews 13:6). Even if you're finding it difficult to identify with some or all of the blessings I've identified in the above paragraph, you can still find more than enough contentment in a God who wants to hear you and help you.

Third, "Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world" (Philippians 2:14-15). Two things happen whenever Christians take to social media or other avenues with their complaints over fuel and commodity prices (or anything else). One, they join a chorus of non-Christians who are already complaining about these things and everything else under the sun. Two, they miss an opportunity to be 1) blameless, 2), harmless, 3) children of God without fault, and 4) shining lights in the world. Christians shouldn't just declare their difference by saying they love the Lord; they should declare it by the grateful, contented life they live.

Please understand, I write all of this as one who has been guilty on many occasions of failing to pray and be grateful and choosing instead to complain. My failures don't change what the Bible says or what all of us, including me, need. At the end of the day, we don't need lower fuel prices; we need Jesus. As Christians, we have Him! Let's try to live in such a way so that the world sees Him living in us – even when the price of fuel goes up.