

We are stepping away from the book of James for a moment to talk about thanksgiving. It is always a good thing to be thankful, and we can ask God to help us find ways to express our gratefulness for all that we have been given. That is one of the lessons that our TTAs and staff learned during Curtain in Five! We need to be thankful while working and reworking things, both on and off stage, even down to closing the building with clean-up!

God wants us to be thankful in all things. That presents a great challenge for most of us – especially when it comes to being corrected. Are we supposed to react with thanksgiving when someone tells us what to do, or asks us to change our behavior? What if we are caught with ‘our hand in the cookie jar,’ so to speak?

One of the greatest lessons I ever learned was from a director that I had as a young adult. When we worked with him, he taught us that we could be respectful, and earn the respect of others by responding to correction with a simple thank you. If we were given a note on stage about something that needed to change, we would simply hear what he had to say and respond with thank you. We didn’t take offense to what he said, because he was our director, and we knew that he saw the bigger picture and wanted our show to be the best it could be. Off stage, if we were corrected for something we had done wrong, we still responded with thank you because we knew that he was looking out for us, and had our best interest in mind. He corrected us because he wanted us to be our best all the time.

Thinking about his expectations reminds me to check out what God’s word says about responding to correction. Proverbs seemed like a good place to look, and so I found the following scripture, “A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger,” (Proverbs 15:1). What could be a gentler answer than thank you?!?

Here is a great challenge. Let’s practice saying thank you when we are corrected. If you are asked to fix something on stage, instead of talking about why you were doing what you were doing, just say thank you. If someone asks you to follow a rule, say thank you for the reminder, and then act on it! Be quick to listen, and if you respond, respond with thank you!!

In Matthew 11:29-30, Jesus says, “*Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*” Our saying thank you is a gentle answer. Our realizing that we are wrong and changing our behavior is a humble response. If we are gentle and lowly, then we are more Christ-like. When we work together with a spirit of obedience and respect, everything runs smoothly, we honor God, and we are more thankful! That sounds like a great beginning in thanksgiving.

*A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.*

*Proverbs 15.1*