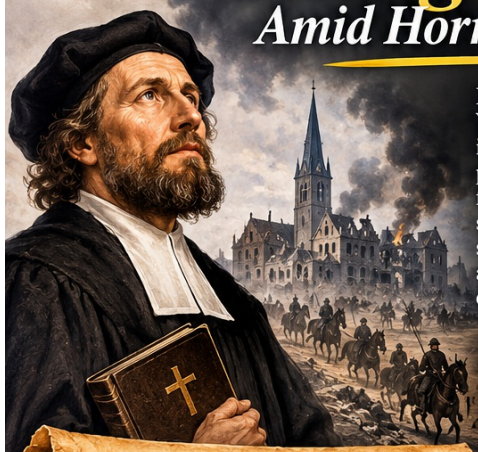
Giving Thanks
Amid Horrific Circumstances



In 1636, amid the darkness of the Thirty Years' War, a German pastor, Martin Rinkart, is said to have buried five thousand of his parishioners in one year, and average of fifteen a day. Throughout these war years several waves of deadly pestilence and famine swept the city of Eilenberg as the various armies march through the town, leaving death and destruction in their wake.

The Rinkart home served as a refuge for the afflicted victims, even though Martin Rinkart often had difficulty in providing food and clothing for his own family. The plague of 1637 was particularly severe, and at its height Rinkart conducted as many as forty to fifty funeral services daily. His parish was ravaged by war, death, and economic disaster.

In the heart of that darkness, with the cries of fear outside his window, he sat down and wrote this table grace for his children:

"Now thank we all our God
With heart and hands and voices;
Who wondrous things had done,
In whom His world rejoices.

Who, from our mother's arms,
Hath led us on our way
With countless gifts of love
And still is ours today."

Here was a man who knew thanksgiving comes from acknowledging the love and goodness of God, not from outward circumstances.

Happy moments,
praise God.

Difficult moments,
seek God.

Quiet moments,
worship God.

Painful moments,
trust God.

Every moment,
thank God.



The worst time for an atheist is when he is grateful and has no one to thank!

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