

Give thanks

Preached Sunday 11/22/20

Opening / Call to worship

Comments

- This has been a very difficult year, with lots of struggle, and unexpected difficulty
- We have had much to pray about, much to be anxious about, much (maybe) to complain about
- But... GOD is still on the throne, and His love for us never fails
- I want to set aside this service for us to come together and give thanks
- **Psalms 118:19** *Open for me the gates of righteousness; I will enter and give thanks to the LORD.* - That's what we are here to do today! Enter and give thanks
- We are commanded / reminded to be thankful throughout Scripture
- Even around the throne **Revelation 11:17** saying: *"We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign.*
- So today - in spite of the year - we are going to give thanks.
- I want to open with a "responsive reading" through Psalms 100 a "thanks-giving" psalm
- Then as we enter in to worship - I would love for you to stand and say something for which you are thankful

Reading

1 Shout with joy to the LORD, all the earth!

2 Worship the LORD with gladness.

Come before him, singing with joy.

3 Acknowledge that the LORD is God!

He made us, and we are his.

We are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving;

go into his courts with praise.

Give thanks to him and praise his name.

5 For the LORD is good.

His unfailing love continues forever,

and his faithfulness continues to each generation.

Message

- Certain things are repeated in Scripture
- Because we need to hear them / be reminded of them
- Let me remind you today of the command to give thanks (our text) and what happens when we give thanks!

Exegesis

1 Thess 5:18 *Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.*

- The scripture is pretty clear, not requiring much exegesis

Thankful

- Truly having a heart of gratitude, not "thanks for the black socks grandma" as John Piper taught
- But expressing gratitude for the Lord

All circumstances

- When should we be thankful - all the time
- For what should we be thankful - everything!
- If you'll remember from our message two weeks ago, we talked about the church in Thessalonica.
- They were a persecuted church - suffering for their faith
- Yet Paul writes them to be thankful in all circumstances

God's will

Belong to Christ Jesus

Application: What happens when I practice this command?

I want to share four things that happen to me when I practice giving thanks.

Least we can do (no slide)

- Gratitude is the least I can do
- God has given us everything (every good and perfect gift)
- I can't repay him - but I can say thank you
- Yet human nature is to forget this.
- See the story of the 10 lepers. How many returned to say thank you? Only 1
- Let's do *the least we can do*

Reminds us of his care

- So easy to forget that God loves us and will take care of us
- Enemy has always tried to make us doubt God's motive for us
- In these uncertain times - we need to be reminded that God will take care of us... that God IS TAKING CARE OF US
- When we start iterating through the blessings - we see that God hasn't forgotten us, but is still taking care of us
- He is our shepherd, we are his sheep (Psalm 23:1)

- He knows where we are and what we need and is taking care of us
- He loves us!
- If he gave us his Son, he will give us everything we need See **Rom 8:32**
Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else?
- When we practice thanksgiving - we

Changes our perspective

- The book of Psalms is filled with "Historical psalms"
- These recall the goodness and glory of God - in times past
- Even though the "present" was bleak, the psalmist directed people back to the things God had done
- We are to give thanks for God's glorious intervention in times past - to help us recall...
 - He is on the throne,
 - He sees what the enemy is doing
 - He will save us again, as he saved us before
- Didn't we just read **Hebrews 13:8** *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*
- As we recall the past glory of God - we see that we need not fear our present circumstances
- Even though in the moment things seem dark and hopeless.
- **Thought** Yesterday as I was praying and meditating on the word, I remembered the old song we used to sing *Let God arise* and I began to pray "Lord, rise up once again for your people!" - but I will give thanks for what He has done!

Acknowledges our dependence

- This one hits a little closer to home

- When I truly begin to practice gratitude - I realize how dependent I am on God
- There is nothing that I have and can do - that He hasn't given me
- The pride of self and accomplishment is gone - because I realize God has done it all for me.
- Think about your own life - how much of it did you do on your own? How much did God do for you
- This is the beginning of my humility
- The good news is that he knows we need him
- Jesus taught us to pray **Matt 6:11 (NIV)** *(11) Give us today our daily bread.*
- Through gratitude I become aware of my dependence and I can pray this prayer with a humble heart

Reminds us that we don't deserve it

- This leads me to the last thing - when I realize I can't do anything apart from him - then I realize that I don't deserve anything from him
- This is the humble heart gratitude creates in us
- It is when we are here that God can truly change us.
- Consider **2 Peter 1:5-9** *In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God's promises. Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge, 6 and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with patient endurance, and patient endurance with godliness, 7 and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love for everyone. 8 The more you grow like this, the more productive and useful you will be in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*
- We are called to grow and develop in Christ
- *9 But those who fail to develop in this way are shortsighted or blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their old sins.*
- There is a danger of forgetting we've been cleansed from our sins. Thinking somehow we are good enough or we deserve what God has done
- As I practice gratitude - I realize how much God has done, then I realize how little I deserve it.

- Then I am in the place to grow!

Closing

What am I thankful for?

- That I can come *boldly* to the throne, because I trust in His name and His provision
- That he will never cast me out
- That as he taught Peter - 70x7
- That us steadfast, faithful, unfailing love endures forever

Let's give thanks for the body and blood of Jesus

- **Note** Jesus gave thanks
- Let us give thanks

Communion

1 Cor 11:23-26 (NIV) (23) *For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, (24) and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." (25) In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." (26) For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.*

Prayer

- For healing
- For every need