

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!!!
May God bless each of us as we give Him formal Thanks this Thursday!!!!
Enjoy your families and your feast!!!

Thanks be to God for His healing power! Dan Miller, our web master and all around handy man, is much better now and is going on his cruise this weekend. Please pray for all the travelers as this weekend is a very traveled one.

Do God be the glory, Great things He has Done! Praise be to God!!!
God bless you and keep you and make His face to shine upon You!
Pastor Don

“A Psalm of Thanksgiving” Psalm 100 11-18-12

An excited poultry farmer called the FDA and wanted to patent the 6 legged turkeys he had breed. The agent asked how do they taste. The farmer replied, I don't know; I can't catch them. Thanksgiving is a time to count our blessings and be thankful. Someone once said that we don't know how much we have to be thankful for, until we have to pay taxes on it. Will Rogers once said “Just be thankful you're not getting all the government you're paying for.”

A weary traveler stumbled across a barn and thought he would rest for a while. It turned out to be Satan's barn. He stored his seeds of doubt, fear, and discouragement there. He told the traveler that these seeds would grow almost any where. The traveler asked where they did not grow. Satan answered in the heart of a thankful person. Worship that is most acceptable to God comes from a thankful and cheerful heart. 1Thessalonians 5:16-18 says “**Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.**” It has been said that the most important prayer is only two words; Thank-you.

Thanksgiving is the time of year when we remember and continue the traditions of our ancestors. I particularly like the tradition they had of setting down around the dinner table and enjoy a meal together as a family without having the phone ring. We like to think of Thanksgiving as an American Holiday; we credit the pilgrims with starting Thanksgiving, but giving thanks is not new. Thanksgiving is more than just a day to eat too much, watch TV, and visit with family& friends. It is a day set aside for us to reflect & count our blessings and then thank God for them. Is that what we do? Do we a grateful attitude? Does our thankfulness lead to worship?

Our Thanksgiving traditions started in 1621 as the Pilgrims gave God thanks for helping them settle in the new world. However, the Psalmists have been teaching people to be thankful for 1000's of years. Several Psalms begin with the words “Give thanks to the Lord”. Thankfulness is an attitude! 4 Times Psalm 107 repeats the phrase “Oh that men would give thanks to the Lord.” We just don't thank the Lord enough. Is thanks giving always on our lips? Thanksgiving is an attitude, not a calendar date. Are we filled with a grateful attitude this morning? Do we say thanks or do we give thanks?

John F. Kennedy once said “As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.”

Gordon Dahl said that our problem is that we worship our work, work at our play and play at our worship. Which leads us to a very real problem; Richard Foster said if worship does not change us, it has not been worship. Oswald Sanders sums it up nicely when he said we used to think that the chief end of man was to glorify God; now we are tempted to say the chief end of God is to glorify man. Do we give glory to God with our thanksgiving? Thanksgiving leads to worship. Are we thankful people? Does our thankfulness lead to worship? To see the face of Jesus in Albert Thorwaldsen sculpture of Him; one must get on their knees. It is only when we humble

ourselves, worship and serve Christ on our knees that we can see Him clearly. Worship begins with humility, humility begins with thankfulness. Are we thankful people this morning? Have we come to worship? Oh that men would give thanks to the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men. Then and only then can they make a joyful shout to the Lord and enter His gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise. Come ye thankful people come and let us worship the lord together with gladness. Let us pray.

Psalms 100 is filled with descriptive praise for God. The preceding 7 Psalms are royal Psalms. Psalm 100 was placed here as a response to show us what worship is all about. Our awesome God deserves our praise, honor and worship. Do we give it to Him willingly and lovingly?

Make a joyful shout is a command for public praise from everyone. We all need alone time with God; we also all need to participate in public worship. We all need to worship God both publicly and privately. This command is given to all people, not just the Israelites. The job of the Jew was to lead people to their God. Genesis 12:3 **“I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”** Today it is the Christians job to bring people to Christ. Are we doing our job?

Worshipping God is part of our service to him. We enter into God’s presents with every act of worship, whether public or private. Today we are invited into God’s house; the church. Back in David’s day people went to the tabernacle, but were not allowed in the most holy place. This is where they kept the Ark of the Covenant. It represented the presence of God. Only the priests could enter here and only on certain occasions. Today we are invited to the alter of God; we are invited into His sanctuary. We are invited into His presence. Do we come?

The writer of Hebrews repeats this command to come before the Lord. Hebrews 10:25 **“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the day approaching.”** Too many people take Sunday morning worship for granted. Church attendance is down in America. And it should not be. We might not always have the privilege to freely worship as we choose. We need to exercise it while we can. We need to make Sunday worship a priority We are just too busy these days! Things need to be done and there is only so much time.

A lot of people use Sunday as an extra day to catch up on their work load. It was not meant for that. God gave us Sunday as a day of rest and a day of worship. When we fail to use things the way God intended for us to use them, sometimes He takes them away from us. Are we using His day properly? Do we worship Him with our whole heart? Do we serve Him with gladness? If we are not glad to be serving Him, are we really serving Him? If we don’t serve Him out of love, are we really serving Him? Do we come before His presence with singing? When you are filled with love and praise for God it just naturally erupts into song. You say but I can’t sing; that is ok. In the old King James Version, verse one reads **“Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands”**. Do we make a joyful noise unto the Lord? Whatever fills our heart, is what comes out of our mouth. Jesus told us in Matthew 12:34 **“For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.”** What does our mouth reveal about the contents of our heart? Knowing that He is God, knowing that He made us & has a purpose for us, should enable us to enter His gates with thanksgiving and enter His courts with praise. It should give us an attitude of praise and thankfulness. We

should bless His holy name. Does it give us an attitude of praise? Do we enter His presence giving thanks? We are His people; we are His flock. Jesus is our leader. Jesus is the Great shepherd. Ps 23 tells us that “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.” God provides all our needs. We should be thankful. We should be joyful, but are we? Do we give thanks with all our heart or do we complain and grumble?

We are to enter His presence with praise and thanksgiving because God is good. All the time God is good. All good gifts come from Him. All life’s blessings are from Him. His mercy is everlasting and His truth endures to all generations. The root of the Hebrew word for truth means to be established or to be confirmed. The same root word gives us the word amen, which means truly or surely. God’s goodness comes from His all powerful and encompassing love. God’s truth shall last forever. Jesus said in Matt.24:35

“Heaven & earth will pass away, but my words will by no means pass away.”

God’s words will not end. His promise is sure. As long as there is life, there will be an invitation for people to come to Jesus. And if we come to Him, He will by no means cast us out. Because the Lord, He is God. He is the only living and true God. He alone can create and sustain life. He not only gives us earthly life, he gives us eternal life. We should all be thankful for the promise of heaven. Are we?

We serve a risen Savior; we worship a living God. A God no man has seen or touched. The lost serve various man made idols; creations of their own hands and minds. But Christianity is not a religion. It is a relationship with a living Saviour; a Saviour that we may not be able to touch, but one who can and does touch us; a being who owns us. We are the workmanship of His hands; the sheep of his pasture. It is God who made us and not we ourselves. He is our creator. He is our loving heavenly Father. He made us because he loves us. He gave us free will because He loves us. Do we love Him? Do we love Him enough to stay in his sheep fold or do we want to head off for greener pastures? Do we return when we realize there are no greener pastures than the ones He picks for us

God owns us not only because He made us, but because He bought us with a price; the blood of His own Son. Paul tells us in 1 Cor. 6:20 “You were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your Spirit; which are God’s.” He reiterates this thought in 1Cor.7:23 “You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men.” That price is the blood of Jesus. We need to be thankful; thankful that God loved us so much He was willing to sacrifice His only begotten Son for us! What r we willing to sacrifice for Him?

Christians should be the most thankful people on earth; are we? We should always be ready, willing and able to share our testimony and praise our God. Do we? If we truly love God and are truly thankful to Him for all He has done for us, we will share Him with others. Don’t keep the faith, pass it around. We need to share our faith. We are Ambassadors for Christ. An Ambassador is more than just a mere messenger; he is a representative of the one who sent him. Are we good representatives of Christ? When people see us, do they see Him?

So, what are we thankful for this morning? Salvation, health, family, job, having our worldly needs met, a purpose in life? Have we said thank you to God? Do we have a grateful heart? Are we truly thankful? Does our thankfulness result in our worship?

Thanksgiving lifts us above the situations and the problems that we face. The problem is still there, but now our thoughts are higher. Our focus is not on the problem, but on God.

Thanksgiving and praise is centered upon God and not us or our circumstances. Thanksgiving takes away the attention from the benefits that we have received, and puts it on the goodness of God. We realize that He gave because He loves us and wants what is best for us; He only gives us what is best for us. When we enter into worship we must put all our attention upon the goodness and greatness of God.

A thankful heart is a proclaiming heart; a witnessing heart. Our thankfulness in a thankless world demonstrates the greatness of God. Psalm 105:1-2 says

“Oh, give thanks to the LORD! Call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples! Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; Talk of all His wondrous works!”

We need to be grateful and thankful for the little things in life; things that are normal, usual, and predictable. Everyday of life and every aspect of life is a gift from God. Being thankful in all circumstances means not just on holidays, our birthday or anniversary, or when we receive something special, like a bonus or a promotion, but all the time. We need to appreciate and be thankful that we wake up each morning; that we are able to get around; that we have food to eat and a home to live in; that we have friends; and most importantly that God has a purpose for our lives. Thankfulness leads to worship!

Developing the habit of thankfulness develops us as Christians. A grateful heart is a worshipping heart. Thankfulness is the cornerstone of praise. In 1620, 102 Pilgrims had come to this continent to build a new world where they would be free to worship God. Soon fifty-six died due to starvation, disease and the cold winter. However, they did not give up. In 1621, 46 Pilgrims and 91 Indians met to give thanks for a bountiful harvest and for the preservation of their lives. They had every reason to be depressed and discouraged, but they chose to give thanks. When we are depressed, discouraged, and downtrodden, what do we do? How do we react? Do we give up; grumble and complain? Or do we give thanks and worship God because we know He loves us and He is still in charge? Do we know and believe Romans 8:28 “**And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.**” Do we really believe Romans 8:28? When things are bad; we fear that they are going to get worse. Then we fear that they will work their way to the worst, but we need not have that fear if we are believers. You see even the dictionary teaches us about God. If you look up worse in the dictionary, you will see that between it and worst is another word; that word is worship. When things are bad, we need to remember that worship is the buffer between worse and worst. Do we begin worship with thanksgiving?

Does our thanksgiving lead us into praise and worship? Are we thankful to God?

Thanksgiving is more than just the 4th Thursday in Nov. It is deeper than watching parades and football games while sharing a feast with our family and friends. It is a grateful attitude. Do we have it? Do we share it? It is proclaiming our love for God by giving him the thanks and praise He alone deserves. It is proclaiming our love for Christ by being the ambassador he has called us to be. It is being truly grateful for a life filled with meaning and purpose. It is being eternally grateful for a custom made home in heaven. It is living the life God intends for us to live. It is loving Him, serving him, worshipping Him, obeying Him and telling others about Him. Do we do these things?

Thanksgiving is remembering that we are God's people, that he made us, and that He will provide everything that we need. He has already given us everything that we have. We can trust Him. He loves us and only wants what is best for us. When we remember that, how can we be anything but thankful? So let us enter His gates with Thanksgiving and His courts with praise. Let us be thankful and praise His name. For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting & His truth endures to all generations. Amen, let's pray.

Call to Worship: (From Psalm 107)

Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! His Mercy endures forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so! They cried out to the Lord in their trouble and He delivered them! Oh that men should give thanks to the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men. He satisfies the longing soul, and fills the hungry soul with goodness. Let them exalt Him also in the assembly of the people, and praise Him in the company of the elders. Whoever is wise will observe these things, and they will understand the lovingkindness of the LORD. Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness, And for His wonderful works to the children of men!

All glory, praise and honor to the Lord! Praise ye the Lord!

Offertory: It has been said that in his heyday, every word that Rudyard Kipling wrote

was worth twenty-five shillings. Hearing this, a group of college students got together and wrote him a letter. It said "dear Mr. Kipling, we understand that every word you write is worth 25 shillings. Enclosed is 25 shillings, please send us your best word." A few days later they received a telegram for Kipling. It contained only one word. The word was "Thanks". Kipling's best word was thanks. Isn't "thanks" also our best word? Isn't thanks the best word in any language? Gratitude and thankfulness are the most important gifts we can offer anyone because they are founded in love. Are we thankful people? Do we have a grateful attitude?

Benediction: Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus

Christ, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in

you that which is well pleasing in his sight, Through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom be glory forever Amen!

