

Hello again everyone. Today was our annual community Thanksgiving Dinner. Thanks to all who helped and turned out. Food and fellowship was great! This year we planted a peace pole next to the church in our peace garden.

Hope you all have a safe and happy month of thanksgiving! Come see us when you can!

God bless and keep you; May He grant you His peace which passes all understanding!

Pastor Don

“A Psalm of Giving Thanks” Psalm 100 11-03-13

What 3 countries were destroyed when the cook dropped the Thanksgiving Day dinner?

China was broken, Greece was running, & Turkey was ruined.

After receiving a beautiful Thanksgiving card, a mother commented to her children “See kids, the pilgrim children liked going to church with their parents.” “Oh yeah,” replied her teenage son, “Then why is the father walking behind them carrying a rifle?”

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.

It has been said that the worship most acceptable to God comes from a thankful and cheerful heart. It also has been said that the most important prayer is only two words; Thank-you. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 Says “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God you.”

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 thanksgiving always on our lips?

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? Are we filled with an attitude of gratitude 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."

Oh that we would give thanks to the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works. It is only with gratitude and humility that we can make a joyful shout to the Lord and enter His gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise.

So what is the condition of our hearts this morning? Are we thankful, humble and joyful?

Are we glad to be in the house of the LORD today? Are we filled with an attitude of gratitude? Come ye thankful people come and let us worship the Lord together with gladness. Let us pray.

Psalm 100 is filled with descriptive praise for God. Psalms 93-99 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 & lovingly?

The Psalmist says "make a joyful shout to the Lord." This is a command for public praise from everyone. It is important for each of us to spend time alone with God; and it is just as important to participate in public worship. We all need to worship God both in public and in private. 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 they were not allowed into 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 do. We need to make Sunday worship a priority. As Americans, we are too busy! Things need to be done and there is only so much time to do them; so 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 we 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"*. We can all make a joyful noise; do we make a joyful noise unto the Lord? Whatever fills our heart will come out of our mouth. So what comes out of our mouth is important because 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 God 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. Psalm 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 crumble? 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 those who do, He will by no means cast 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 and 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. Christianity is not a religion; it is a relationship with a living being; a being 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 it 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 are 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 share our testimony? If we truly love God and if we are truly thankful to Him for all He has done for us, we will share with others. Don't keep the faith, pass it around. Faith is meant to be shared; are we sharing ours? 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 needs met, having a purpose in life? Do we say thank you to God everyday? Do we have a grateful heart? Are we truly thankful? Does our thankfulness result in are 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, birthdays, anniversaries, 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 worshiping 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 the 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 an attitude of gratitude. 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, obeying Him, worshipping Him and telling others about Him. It is remembering that we are His 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 and His truth endures to all generations. Amen! (Pray)