

Hello everyone, happy thanksgiving! We have so much to be thankful for here in America, are we thankful? Thanksgiving is an attitude, not a holiday. Be thankful! Please keep my family in your prayers. Dad is having nose bleeds again and mom is in hospice. Thank you! God bless and keep you and yours!
Pastor Don

Thanksgiving Is an Attitude Col.1:9-22 Nov. 24, 2013

A farmer went to the patent office with a picture of a 6-legged turkey. He said I want to patent these new 6-legged turkeys I've just developed. That is a fine looking bird said the patent office official how does he taste? I don't know replied the farmer I can't catch him

A weary traveler stumbled across a barn and thought he would rest for a while. It turned out to be Satan's barn. In this barn he stored the seeds of doubt, fear, and discouragement. He told the traveler that these seeds would grow almost any where. The traveler asked where they would not grow. Satan answered in the heart of a thankful person.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 Says "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God you." In today's text, Paul reminds us that we have a lot to be thankful for. It has been said that the most important prayer is only two words; Thank-you. It has also been said that the worship most acceptable to God comes from a thankful and cheerful heart.

So, what is the condition of our hearts this morning? Are we thankful and joyful? Are we glad to be in the house of the Lord today? Did we enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise? Is Thanksgiving Day just a day to pig out and watch football with friends & family; or is Thanksgiving Day a day to voice publicly our Thanks to and love for God? As we contemplate these questions, let us look to our Lord in Prayer. (PRAY)

Paul begins this letter to the Colossians by telling them that he is praying for them. We all need to be in constant prayer for our fellow Christians. Paul tells us 3 things about these prayers. 1st they need to be constant: we do not cease to pray for you. 2nd we need to pray that they are filled with knowledge of God's will for their life and spiritual wisdom and understanding so that they will be able to walk worthy of their calling. & 3rdly we need to pray that they bear good fruit and that their faith and knowledge increases constantly. Do we consistently support our fellow brothers and sisters in prayer?

V 11 tells us that we are strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power

Do we give thanks to God for His strength? God promises us His strength; His strength not ours. What ever God calls us to do; He will equip us to do. Philippians 4:13 tells us that we can do all thing through Christ, who strengthens us. Our strength comes from the Lord. Psalm 27:1 "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" Do we believe that? Is God our strength? Do we totally trust Him? Do we totally turn our battles over to Him? Do we rely totally on Him and His strength and His promises to fight our battles and sustain us on our life's journeys? Or do we try it in our own strength and only give it over to God after we have utterly failed and made a total mess of things?

It is not easy to give God total control of our lives, is it? We grow impatient waiting on the Lord; we want things now!!!! We are used to instant things aren't we; we have instant oatmeal, instant potatoes, micro wave ovens, and roadrunner. We need to remember that old saying, "good things come to those who wait." Isaiah puts it this way in chapter 40 verse 31; "Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."

Are we waiting upon the Lord, or are we plowing on through, trusting in our own understanding and strength? We need to give God total control of our lives and be glad. We need to remember that every thing we have God gave to us: our jobs, our talents, our homes and families. These are all gifts from God to us. 1 Chronicles 29:12 says "Both riches and honor come from YOU, and You reign over all. In your hand is power and might; in your hand it is to make great and give strength to all." Do we thank God for all He has given us? Do we really count our blessings? Do we joyfully and patiently wait for God before we do things?

On Thursday, we will give thanks to God before we eat the bounty He will set before us. Are we just as thankful after we eat? Deuteronomy 8:10 says, "When you have eaten and are full, then shall you bless the Lord your GOD for the good land which He has given you." Do we give God credit for not only meeting our physical needs; food, clothing and shelter, but also our spiritual needs, like a Savior? We can only be qualified as partakers in the inheritance of the saints in the light through the blood of Jesus. Vs. 12-14 tell us the most important thing that we have to be thankful for; eternal life. "Giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light." ¹³ He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." Light signifies purity, comfort, knowledge, & joy. The light signifies Jesus.

In John 8:12 Jesus says "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." Saints signifies the believers in Colosse. Jesus said in John 14:6 "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." We need to thank God that He made salvation simple, easy, and the same for everyone. Then once we have accepted Jesus, we need to walk with Him. Being firmly rooted and established with abounding love for and faith in Him, building up our faith and love by bible study, pray and worship. Romans 10:17 "How is our hearing this morning?

When we become a Christian, we need to be thankful that God has delivered us from evil. Darkness signifies evil; light signifies good. In Ephesians 5:8 Paul commands us to walk as children of the light. God's strength enables us to do this. We are to shine brightly, so others can see Jesus living in our hearts.

Since God has delivered us from evil, He will also deliver us through our trials and temptations; through the traps and attacks of our enemies. Ps 91:3 says "Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the perilous pestilence."

How are we delivered from evil? How do we become children of the light? One way! Through the blood of Jesus! Redemption means payment of a price or ransom. We need to thank God for the redemption He gives us through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Christians should be the happiest and most thankful people on earth, are we? Christians should always be telling others about the blood of Christ, do we? Do we know that there is power in the blood? We are bought with a price; we have been redeemed by the blood of Christ. Paul tells us in 1Cor. 6:19-20 that we "are not your own"; "For you were bought at a price". The price is the precious blood of Jesus. So the question Christians need to ask people is "are you washed in the blood, in the soul cleansing blood of the Lamb? Are your garments spotless; are they white as snow; are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?" Well, are we washed in the blood of Jesus?

Paul says Jesus is the image of the invisible God. In John 14:9 Jesus says that any one who has seen Him has seen God. That is as close as any one can get. No man can see God. 1Timothy 6:16 tells us that God dwells in an unapproachable light and that no man has seen or can see God Himself. 1Timothy 1:17 tells us that God is immortal, invisible and eternal. 1 John 4:12 says that even though no one has seen God, if we love one another, God abides in us. Therefore, whenever someone looks at a Christian, they should see the Spirit of God. Do they see God's Spirit when they look at us?

Paul says Jesus is the 1st born over all creation, what does he mean by that? First born does not necessarily mean birth order. It probably means rank and privilege in the order of inheritance. Remember that neither Isaac nor Jacob were the oldest son, but they are the ones who got the inheritance. First born also refers to the fact that Jesus was the first to resurrect Himself from the dead. Proving what He told Martha in John 11:25 "I am the resurrection and the life, He who believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die."

In v16 Paul reminds us to be thankful for all the neat stuff God & Jesus created. Jesus was in the beginning with God, creating everything with God. John 1:3 "All things were made through Him and without Him was nothing made that was made." This shows us that Jesus is the Creator of the universe. Jesus created all these things for His purposes.

Jesus existed before the creation of the universe. Today all things still exist in Him. He is the preserver of all things; especially the church. The church here is the body of believers

Christ is the head of the church. It is His bride, bought and paid for with His blood. So if Jesus is the head of the church, does the church consult Him first before it makes plans and programs? Where does the church put Jesus? Is He above their checkbook and their activities? Are their outreach programs centered on taking Christ to the world? Do they welcome strangers and visitors? Do they consider themselves to be a saint social club or a hospital for sinners? Are they working for the glory of God or the praise of men?

Does Jesus have pre-eminence in today's church?

John 3:31 says "He who came from above is above all; he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth. He who came from Heaven is above all." John 5:23 says that he who does not honor the Son, does not honor the Father who sent Him. So what about us here at Price's Creek? What is our motivation for ministry? Are we thankful for the opportunity to serve God? What opportunities is God presenting to us? Is working for the Lord a privilege, or just another task we must do every day? Are we looking to promote God or ourselves? Is Jesus first in our hearts today?

Are we thankful this morning? Is thanksgiving a way of life or just a day on the calendar?

Paul finishes this section by telling us that we are reconciled to God through Christ. Fullness means complete embodiment of God. Jesus is the only intercessor between God and man. 1 Timothy 2:5 says "*For there is one God and one Mediator between man and God, the man Jesus Christ*". We should be thankful that Jesus is the mediator between God and man. Through the cross, any and every person has a chance to come to God for forgiveness and salvation. Each one has the same opportunity to get eternal life. Some will refuse to accept this free gift; others will gladly accept it.

Since we don't know who will or will not accept God's gift of eternal life, our mission, as believers is to tell everyone. We are not discriminate or judge, we are to tell. Go into all the world and make disciples Jesus said. Are we carrying out our mission?

We should be thankful for our salvation. Sin alienates people from God. We who are now reconciled to God through Christ have now become ambassadors for Christ, according to 2Corinthians 5:20-21 "*Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.*"²¹ *For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*" Are we good ambassadors for Christ? Can others see Christ in us?

We should be thankful that we are now, through the blood of Jesus, holy and blameless in the sight of God. We now can have fellowship once again with our creator. Paul uses the words body and flesh because there were false teachers in Colosse who were saying that redemption was only possible through a spiritual being. They did not believe Jesus was God in the flesh. Paul is trying to tell them that Jesus was indeed God in the flesh and experienced a very painful physical death. Hebrews 9:22 tells us that without the shedding of blood, there can be no remission of sin. Only those who choose in this life time to believe that Jesus did indeed die for their sins will be able to enter heaven.

Romans 10:4 says "*For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.*" The law revealed man's sin. No man could keep the law. Jesus came and fulfilled it. Jesus was the object to which the law pointed. Through our faith in Him, we can receive His righteousness and therefore be justified in the eyes of God; Holy, blameless and above reproach in God's sight.

Being holy, blameless, and above reproach; now that is something to be thankful for. Thanksgiving is an attitude, not just a holiday. As we prepare to celebrate a national day of thanksgiving, let us examine our hearts and our minds. Let us make sure we have an attitude of gratitude, not just this Thursday, not just this week, but everyday of our lives.

Let us be truly thankful & eternally grateful. Let us strive to be good ambassadors, disciples, teachers and followers of Jesus everyday that He chooses to give us life. Everyday is a gift from God, that is why it is called the present.

What are we doing with the present God gives us each day?

Happy Thanksgiving! Hallelujah and Amen. Let us pray.