

Thanksgiving to God

Ralph Waldo Emerson once said:

For flowers that bloom about our feet,
Father, we thank Thee.
For tender grass so fresh, so sweet,
Father, we thank Thee.
For the song of bird and hum of bee,
For all things fair we hear or see,
Father in heaven, we thank Thee.

This morning we gather together to be thankful. Are we thankful for Jesus, thankful for family and thankful for friends, thankful for full stomachs, thankful for warm houses, thankful for our next breath? Did you know that you take about 23,000 breaths a day? When was the last time we stopped and thanked God for that?

You know that there are so many things that we have to be thankful for this morning. In the United States and for some in Canada football is played on thanksgiving and families gather around the tube and watch the game.

I was thinking about thanksgiving dinner and how wonderful it is... turkey, potatoes, ham, scallops, stuffing, cranberry sauce and so on. Just thinking about it makes me hungry. You know that Thanksgiving dinners take up to 18 hours to prepare and are consumed in about 12 minutes... Isn't it interesting that half-time is about 12 minutes. This is not a coincidence people.

Thanksgiving is about giving thanks... isn't it?
How can we determine if we have "overdone" thanksgiving?

Paramedics bring in the Jaws of Life to pry you out of the EZ-Boy.

- * The "Gravy Boat" your wife set out was a real 12' boat!
- * You receive a Sumo Wrestler application in your e-mail.
- * You set off 3 earthquake seismographs on your morning jog.
- * Pricking your finger for cholesterol screening only yielded gravy.

- * A guest quotes a Biblical passage from "The Feeding of the 5000."
- * That rash on your stomach turns out to be steering wheel burn.
- * Representatives from the Butterball Hall of Fame called twice.

Thanksgiving has become a stat holiday. On this day many still get together over a meal, but have forgotten that it is a time to reflect back on every thing we have to be thankful for.

As a nation I find it an interesting statement that we have only one day set aside each year to give thanks to God as a nation. As Christians who are happy and blessed we have come to know that we should have some time set aside each day, to give him our praise for all the blessings he has already given us.

When I was a kid I remember the stores putting up thanksgiving decorations. I remember it being a bigger deal than it is today. When I go to the mall I see Halloween and soon even Christmas focus. When was the last time you saw a paper pilgrim decoration put up in a national chain store? I have seen tons of Halloween décor out and about. There is a commercial push to buy candy and costumes. Then Christmas décor hits the stores and we see Christmas is missing from many of decorations. What we see is happy holidays.

Have you noticed that Christmas for many has lost its meaning?
Is society still thankful for Christ's birth?

How about Remembrance Day?
Is society still thankful for the sacrifices made?

How about Easter?
Is society celebrating Christ's death and resurrection or Bunny and Chocolate day?

Has our nation forgotten how to be thankful to God for his many blessings?

This morning, I want to direct your attention to Psalms 103:1-4

*Bless the Lord, O my soul;
And all that is within me, bless His holy name!
Bless the Lord, O my soul,
And forget not all His benefits:
Who forgives all your iniquities,
Who heals all your diseases,
Who redeems your life from destruction,
Who crowns you with loving kindness and tender mercies*

David's heart is thankful and he gives thanks to God...

Let's take a look at these scriptures.

Is there anything but praise and thanks here?
Is David asking for anything?
Is he making a plea?

Nope... This passage is nothing but pure unadulterated praise and thankfulness.

Everyone can get stressed out, caught up in the busyness of life or simply tired. But in whatsoever state we are in Paul tells us to be content. What does this mean?

Content def'n:

- A State of peaceful happiness
- A State of satisfaction

Are we happy?

Are we satisfied?

In short, are we really thankful? The word says: "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" Are we expressing thanks to one another and to God?

When I read this, I see a zealous David. I see a man enraptured by God. He is passionate in his praise. He loves God and you can hear it in his words.

Some of his expressions of praise would probably not be accepted in our churches today, but his sincere heart glorifies God because of his honest praise and thankfulness.

David was a king, a leader, a musician and he sang, played and praised with his whole heart. This wasn't dry or stale it was alive and full of happiness and satisfaction with his God.

Is this a one-off for him?

Psalms 34:1-4

I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make its boast in the Lord; The humble shall hear of it and be glad. Oh, magnify the Lord with me, And let us exalt His name together.

Psalms 66:1-4

Shout joyful praises to God, all the earth!

Sing about the glory of his name!

Tell the world how glorious he is.

Say to God, "How awesome are your deeds!

Your enemies cringe before your mighty power.

Everything on earth will worship you; they will sing your praises, shouting your name in glorious songs."

In truly being thankful to God; I ask that you consider the following as you praise him:

- Are you honest with yourself and is your praise from your heart?
- Are you aware of what he has done for you?
- Are you praising him with a thankful heart?
- Are you sharing his Good works with others?
- Are you forcing a method of praise or are you praising God in a way that is natural and real for you?
- Are you praising God Daily?

Honest and sincere praise shows thankfulness for all he has done for you and your families this year. In Isaiah 29:13 we see that this is truly what we need to be thankful.

"These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me."

This morning let us just take a moment to think about all that God has done for us this year and to praise him and thank him for the year.

prayer