

Giving Thanks Psalm 103:1-5

The mark of real Christian love; is the love that grows out of thanksgiving. The Bible teaches us all that God has done for us in Jesus Christ. It also teaches us that God blesses us each and every day of our lives. Paul realized that ***“in Him we live and move and have our being,” (Acts 17:28)***. God provides everything we need physically and spiritually to live godly lives filled with good works.

William Law, in his book, ***“A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life”***, said, ***“Would you know who is the greatest saint in the world? It is not he who prays most or fasts most; it is not he who gives most alms, or is more eminent for temperance, chastity, or justice; but it is he who is always thankful to God who wills everything God wills, who receives everything as an instance of God’s goodness, and has a heart always ready to praise God for it.”***

One temptation of the maturing Christian is the danger of getting accustomed to his blessings – that is taking his blessings for granted and getting so accustomed to them that they fail to excite him as they once did.

Psalm 92:1-2 says, ***“It is good to give thanks to the LORD, to sing praises to your name, O Most High; to declare your steadfast love in the morning, and your faithfulness by night.”***

One of my favorite **psalms** is **100:4-5** ***“Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name! For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.”***

Song:

1 I will enter His gates with thanksgiving in my heart;
I will enter His courts with praise.
I will say this is the day that the Lord has made.
I will rejoice for He has made me glad.
He has made me glad, He has made me glad,
I will rejoice for He has made me glad.
He has made me glad, He has made me glad,
I will rejoice for He has made me glad.

Thinking of all that God’s goodness gives to us, draws out of our hearts - great gratitude. Which is why another of my favorite sings is ***“Count Your Blessings.”*** Yes, every good thing is from our God, as **James 1:17** puts it, ***“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.”***

The Christian life should be full of thanksgiving. Paul, in **Col. 3:15-17** wrote, ***“And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”*** Gratitude for the Lord leads us to forgive

others, and this joy that springs forth causes our hearts to burst forth in songs of praise and but it also, calls us to live lives of service to the Lord.

Of course, when we fail to respect and thank God; our lives are given to things that can do no good. Nothing substitutes of God. **Romans 1:18-23** says, **“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So, they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.”** Those who forget God settle for idols and futile speculations. Without God, there is no hope.

Brethren, don't forget all the good things He has done for you. Moses warned the Israelites in **Deut. 8:10-14**, ***“And you shall eat and be full, and you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land he has given you. “Take care lest you forget the LORD your God by not keeping his commandments and his rules and his statutes, which I command you today, lest, when you have eaten and are full and have built good houses and live in them, and when your herds and flocks multiply and your silver and gold is multiplied and all that you have is multiplied, then your heart be lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery...”***

The book of Judges tells the sad story of a generation that lost sight of God and had to be disciplined. **Judges 2:7** tells of the faithfulness of the people during the lifetime of Joshua; however, it is **verse 10** that is all telling, ***“And all that generation also were gathered to their fathers. And there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD or the work that he had done for Israel.”***

It was this generation which ***“did evil in the sight of the Lord and served the Baals, they forsook the Lord, the God of their fathers,”*** **Judges 2:11-12**. And what was the outcome of this forsaking of God, **Judges 2:14** tells us, ***“So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he gave them over to plunderers, who plundered them. And he sold them into the hand of their surrounding enemies, so that they could no longer withstand their enemies.”*** When we forget the Lord, we put our lives into jeopardy.

On the other hand, Job held fast to God even when he suffered great anguish. According to Job chapter one, Job suffered the loss of seven sons and three daughters, 7000 sheep, 3000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, 500 female donkeys, and very many servants. The Bible tells us he was the greatest of all the men of the east. After this terrible thing happened **Job 1:20-22** says, ***“Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshiped. And he said, “Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave,***

and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.” In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.”

In chapter two it gets worse for Job, he suffers a terrible disease that caused sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. Job didn't understand why this happened, but he did not give up his faith in God. When his wife told him to curse God and die, he said, *“Shall we indeed accept good from God and not accept adversity?”* In all this Job did not sin with his lips. We all face adversity, but we should never forget the good that God gives us.

What does God do for us. Well, let's count our blessings. **First**, we should be thankful we are not spiritually dead. Salvation is no small gift. Paul realized what it means to be saved from Sin. In **Romans 6:17-18** he said, *“But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.”* On a very personal level, Paul knew exactly how important it was to be saved from sin. In **Romans 7:24-25** he said, *“Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.”* I tell you without Jesus we could never be free from sin's control and destiny.

Second, we should be thankful we have a Savior who loves us and who intercedes for us. **1 Tim. 2:5-6** says, *“For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.”* Jesus not only died for us; He serves as our mediator with God the Father and makes intercession for us (**Hebrews 7:25**).

Third, we should be thankful we have a Father in heaven to bless and help us. Jesus in **Mt. 6:31-33** says, *“Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”* God will take care of us.

Fourth, we should be thankful the Lord gives us strength. **Isaiah 40:28-31** says, *“Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; but they who wait for 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.”*

Fifth, we should be thankful our names are written in heaven. **Luke 10:18-20** says, *“And he said to them, ‘I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.’”* There is no miracle greater than knowing our names are recorded in heaven. This is our hope.

Sixth, we should be thankful we have victory over death. Because Jesus rose from the dead, we have hope in a bodily resurrection. In **1 Cor. 15:50-57** we read, *“I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

Seventh, we should be thankful we have an inheritance in heaven. Jesus went to the Father to prepare a place for us. **1 Peter 1:3-5** says, *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God’s power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”*

Let’s praise God each and every day and thank Him for the blessings. Thanksgiving is the foundation of our love for God. **Psalm 30:4-5** says, *“Sing praises to the LORD, O you his saints, and give thanks to his holy name. For his anger is but for a moment, and his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning.”*

As we approach “Thanksgiving Day”, even during this time of Covid 19, let us give praise to God for all of his most wonderful blessings. Let us be like Job and say, *“Blessed be the name of the Lord.”*

Gratitude for the cross of Jesus, as revealed in the gospel, calls us to deny ourselves, to take up our cross daily, and to follow Jesus. Love calls us to believe and trust the Lord and His teaching, to turn away from sin and evil, to confess our faith in Jesus Christ, and to be baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of sin. If you are thankful to God this morning, won’t you obey?