**Give “Thanks” To the LORD For He Is Good**

Thanksgiving - The big national holiday in which we all are supposed to take time out and reflect on the goodness of life. We'll take Thursday off, eat a lot, watch football, spend time with family and are thankful… But Just how thankful are we????

Yes, I am talking about family and Thanksgiving – a day set aside by our fore-fathers, not for the purpose of eating turkey or watching football, but for the simple and profound purpose of giving thanks to God our Creator, for his manifold blessings to us. This morning we will focus on thanksgiving – what it means and how it changes our lives... our families . . . What Does it Mean to be Thankful?

 *“Let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.”* ***Hebrews 13:15***

**Definitions -- *(Thanksgiving is translated several different ways in the Bible.)***

 1) Worship or a choir of worshippers

 2) Praise

 3) A promise or covenant

 4) Gratitude, Graciousness

 5) Thankfulness

 6) The Divine Influence on the heart.

Psalms 26:7 That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving <08426>, and tell of all thy wondrous works.

Psalms 28:7 The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise <03034> him.

Philippians 4:6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. (KJV)

Psalms 30:4 Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks <03034> at the remembrance of his holiness.

So, how will you do? Will you eat a lot? Watch some football? Hang out with family? It will be nice to have a day off, won’t it? Now, we can get on with the business of really preparing for Christmas – you know, the presents, the decorations, Santa, the specials on TV – all that stuff. Wait a minute! My question to you is this – will we CELEBRATE the Thanksgiving holiday? Do we even know what the Thanksgiving holiday is supposed to be about?

We know that regardless of the American holiday, a Christian should live with thanksgiving every day!

***"There is a legend about two angels who were sent to earth to gather up the prayers of men. One was to fill his basket with the petitions of mankind. The other was to gather their prayers of thanksgiving. Sometime later they went back to the Father's house. One had a basket heaped high, and running over, with the innumerable petitions of men. The other returned with a sad and heavy heart, for his basket was almost empty. The thanks of men were heard but rarely on earth, even though the angel had searched diligently. Do not let us forget the thanksgiving side of your prayers."***

***"The man who has forgotten to be thankful has fallen asleep in life." David McCarthy***

Lets take a few moments to look at some of the things we should be thankful for.

**Food**

(Matthew 6:31-33 KJV) Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? {32} (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. {33} But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

(Matthew 15:36 KJV) And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake them, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

**God's Direction**

(Colossians 4:2 KJV) Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;

**Family**

(Psalm 96:&) Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

**Everything**

(Ephesians 5:20 KJV) Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;

**Jesus**

Why did Jesus have to Die? What is God's plan for all the families of the earth? (Plan A / Plan B)

(Genesis 28:14) "In you and your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

(Genesis 22:17) "I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies."

We have been promised that we will judge men and angels. Paul says this in Corinthians. We have been promised that the God of peace will crush Satan under our feet shortly. We have been promised this in the book of Romans. As the bride of Christ, working with Jesus, we will help this world overcome Satan and the effect it has had on mankind so that God's blessings will fill the entire earth, like dew on the morning grass.

(Micah 5:7) "Then the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many peoples like dew from the LORD, like showers upon the grass, which tarry not for men nor wait for the sons of men."

(Micah 4:3-4) "He shall judge between many peoples, and shall decide for strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more; but they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken."

(Isaiah 26:9) "With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."

God's judgments are not in the earth yet. We have been promised in the book of Jude that this will happen after Jesus comes back with his saints, and this will be the time when we will truly convince men, and the world of unbelievers will learn righteousness.

In light of our current world events, what are the things we really have to be thankful for? How much is thankfulness a way of life – an attitude by which we proceed with our daily experiences? As we move on towards Christmas and all of the rush and stress associated with it, how may we carry the true meaning of thankfulness with us and thereby re-capture the true meaning of Christmas? How often do we say thank-you? True Thankfulness is serious business! It is tested in serious ways! How may we be thankful, even when life is lousy? What will we do when we run into . . .

**Difficulty**

(2 Corinthians 12:9 KJV) And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

**Strive for Contentment**

(1 Timothy 6:6-12 KJV) Godliness with contentment is great gain. . . . And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. . . For the love of money is the root of all evil: . . . O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. {12} Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life.

**Practice Humility**

(Philippians 2:3-4 KJV) Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. {4} Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

**Keep Perspective**

(Psalms 42:4) When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise <08426>, with a multitude that kept holyday.

(Psalm 107:21-22) Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing.

We need reminders. Here in this country, we need to be reminded to take time out from our busy lives and reflect on one of the basic human needs – the need to be thankful. We probably don’t think about thankfulness as a need, but it really is... Without a thankful attitude we become self centered. Without a thankful attitude we begin to believe that the world owes us and we cause rifts in our families. Without a thankful attitude we have no sense of the true value of life and family. Without a thankful attitude we simply miss out on one of the greatest values of life. This morning, my lesson focused on thanksgiving – what it means and how it changes our lives... our families . . . So, the question I am going to leave all of you with is: "What Does it Mean to be Thankful?"

"The hardest arithmetic to master is that which enables us to count our blessings"

Happy Thanksgiving!