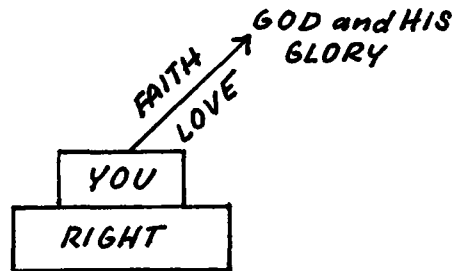


Lesson #9—The Relationship of Thanksgiving to the Glory of God

Introduction

- A. We have been reminded, in these lessons, that there are three important facets to the Christian life. We must **practice the truth** in doing what is right, we are to do this by **faith and love**, and the goal of all of this is **for the glory of God**.
- B. There are a number of truths that harmoniously fit into all three of these areas. Perhaps at the top of the list would be **praise and thanksgiving**. This emphasizes the value and importance of these in our daily life.
- C. Thanksgiving was a virtue largely lost in the Fall of Man. As sinners, we are by nature without gratitude. As believers we must **repent** of this sin, choose by faith to **obey God** and seek to **regain** the grace of thanksgiving.



I. The Biblical Principle and Illustrations Regarding Thanksgiving.

A. The healing of the ten lepers, Luke 17:12-19.

And as He entered into a certain village, there met Him ten men that were **lepers**, which stood afar off.

And they lifted up their voice, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

And when He saw them, He said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, **as they went, they were cleansed.**

And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice **glorified God.**

And fell down on his face at His feet, **giving Him thanks**, and He was a Samaritan.

And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine?

There are not found that returned **to give glory to God**, save this stranger.

And He said unto him, Arise, go thy way, **thy faith** hath made thee whole.

Observations:

1. One can only imagine the condition of these men—lepers. Think of the day they discovered their disease, the leaving of their wives and children, their inability to work, the necessity to depend on others, the way they were treated by society, the hopelessness of their affliction, and perhaps most of all, the questions they had about their relationship with God (was this a judgment on them, was it an indication that they were not right with Him?).
2. It is interesting to note that they were cleansed as they were in the process of obeying God. Their faith was expressed in obedience.
3. Of particular importance in this passage is the relationship between thanksgiving and the glory of God. The three aspects mentioned in the introduction are seen here.
4. It is evident that the Lord Jesus was disappointed that all the men did not return to thank Him. We must ask if we daily disappoint Him. We have been delivered from an affliction far worse than leprosy.
5. The advice that we would give so strongly to the nine men who did not return to thank the Lord Jesus and to glorify God—we should apply to ourselves.

B. The promise of God through the Psalmist, Psalm 50:14, 15.

**Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the most High,
And call upon Me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.**

Observations:

1. These verses remind us that God must be on our mind and His thanksgiving must be on our lips—not only when we are in trouble.
2. Note the intimate **relationship** between thanksgiving, obedience, prayer, the promise of deliverance and the glory of God.
3. These verses describe the normal Christian life. It is important that we recognize the place of thanksgiving.

C. The reminder that thanksgiving is pleasing to God, Psalm 69:30, 31.

**I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify Him with thanksgiving.
This also shall please the Lord better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs.**

Observations:

1. Many of us would be only too glad to give a valuable offering to God—if it could be done as in the days of the Tabernacle.
2. By this we fail to understand the importance of thanksgiving and how pleasing this is to God. It is even more important in the day in which we live. Faith is always better than sight.

D. The example of Daniel, Daniel 6:10

Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house, and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforesaid.

Observations:

1. Daniel was in a very tight spot! His enemies had just made it illegal to pray. In spite of this the prophet prayed and gave thanks to God.
2. This verse is a description of Daniel's character and manner of life. He prayed at least three times a day. It is interesting to note that the Holy Spirit caused the words "...and gave thanks..." to be included in this description. There is a great lesson here. Daniel's prayer life was not simply a series of requests—he spent time in thanksgiving. This is undoubtedly one reason he became such a great man of God.

E. The ministry of the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians, II Cor. 4:15.

For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many rebound to the glory of God.

Observations:

1. Here Paul is speaking of his ministry among the Corinthians. God had made him a source of spiritual help to many of them. They were grateful and had thanked God for the apostle. Paul rightly interpreted this as bringing glory to God.
2. This verse comes to us as an exhortation and example. We have all received benefit before God from pastors, Sunday School teachers, relatives and friends. For all of this we must be grateful. When we are—God is glorified.

II. The Importance of Thanksgiving.

- A. Thanksgiving is important in that one of the five Levitical Sacrifices was so designated, Leviticus 7:12, 15.

If he offer it for a thanksgiving, then he shall offer with the **sacrifice of thanksgiving unleavened cakes mingled with oil...And the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offerings for thanksgiving shall be eaten the same day that it is offered....**

Observations:

1. By making thanksgiving an important part of the peace offering God held this virtue constantly before the Israelites.
 2. Thanksgiving was not left up to the Old Testament saints as an option. God made this an important part of their spiritual life.
- B. David appointed certain Levites to thank the Lord and he wrote Psalms that would express thanksgiving to God, I Chronicles 16:4, 7.

And he (David) appointed certain of the Levites to minister before the ark of the Lord, and to record, and to **thank and praise the Lord** God of Israel...Then on that day David delivered first this Psalm to **thank the Lord** into the hand of Asaph and his brethren.

Observations:

1. All of this indicates David's understanding of the place of thanksgiving among the people of God. He built it into the formal worship of the day and wrote the Psalms which could be used to thank the Lord.
 2. If David found it necessary to make a formal preparation for thanksgiving in his own life and among his people—we are by this exhorted to do the same. Perhaps we too should make a list of those areas which should be mentioned with thanksgiving each day.
- C. Thanksgiving was a spontaneous activity in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ, John 6:11; 11:41.

And Jesus took the loaves, and **when He had given thanks**, He distributed to the disciples...Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up His eyes, and said, **Father, I thank Thee** that Thou hast heard Me.

Observations:

1. While the Lord Jesus is our Savior and Lord He is also our example (I Peter 2:21). This is most clearly presented to us as we read of the spontaneity of thanksgiving in His daily life. We must follow His example and be thankful.
 2. If anyone had the right to be blessed it was the Lord Jesus. In spite of this He continually gave thanks to His Father. The implications of this should cure us of our ingratitude.
- D. Thanksgiving is important in that it is a commandment, I Thess. 5:18.

In every think give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Observations:

1. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit the Apostle Paul wrote this exhortation to thanksgiving as a commandment. We must accept this as such.
2. The interpretation of thanksgiving (along with rejoicing and praying) as the will of God opens a new door of thought for us. No believer would knowingly choose to live out of the will of God—but this is exactly what we do—when we are not thankful!

III. That Which Accompanies Thanksgiving.

- A. Thanksgiving accompanies the filling of the Holy Spirit, Eph. 5:18-20.

And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but **be filled with the Spirit**. Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,

Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Observations:

1. This appears to be one clear evidence that we are filled with the Holy Spirit. All failure in attitude and action to be thankful—is surely grieving and quenching to the person and work of the Holy Spirit.
2. These verses should motivate us to include thanksgiving in our daily priorities and high on the list. How should we evaluate the person who would read these verses and then neglect the virtue of thanksgiving?

B. Thanksgiving accompanies prayer and the peace of God, Phil. 4:6, 7.

Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by **prayer and supplications with thanksgiving** let your requests be made known unto God.

And **the peace of God**, which passeth all understanding, **shall keep your hearts and minds** through Christ Jesus. (See Col. 3:15 and 4:2.)

Observations:

1. What could be more valuable than the ability and privilege of talking with God and having the peace of God in your daily life? For this to be of practical benefit it would seem that we are here taught that thanksgiving is a necessity.
2. Is it possible that we lack answers to prayer and the comfort of peace of heart and mind—simply because we do not thank God for Himself and His continual blessing? The answer can only be, Yes!

C. Thanksgiving accompanies the normal Christian life, Colossians 2:6, 7.

As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk (live) ye in Him.

Rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, **abounding therein with thanksgiving.**

Observations:

1. We received Jesus Christ by faith and that is how we are to live.
2. Thanksgiving is here described as being related to each facet of the daily life—living day by day "abounding therein with thanksgiving". It would be impossible to receive a clearer directive.

D. Thanksgiving accompanies worship, Revelation 7:11, 12.

And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and **worshipped God,**

Saying, Amen, Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, **and thanksgiving**, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

Observations:

1. Worship is the highest deed that any human can perform. There is nothing that is more important or valuable. An essential part of worship is thanksgiving.
2. When we live with an attitude of life which is characterized by ingratitude—we are manifesting our inability to worship God. We forfeit that privilege and honor by our lack of thanksgiving.

VALUE OF THANKSGIVING

1. FILLING
2. PRAYER
3. PEACE
4. DAILY LIFE
5. WORSHIP

IV. The Exhortations Regarding Thanksgiving.

Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise, be thankful unto Him and bless His name.

For the Lord is good, His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endureth to all generations. Psalm 100:4, 5

Observations:

- A. It is obvious that these verses state that thanksgiving is a necessity if we are going to come before God. The general teaching of the Bible would imply that for one to come to God without being thankful—is coming unprepared—it would be coming with the wrong attitude—it would involve one in sin—it would incur the judgment of God.
- B. These verses explain how we are to be thankful and for what:
 - 1. We are to be thankful to God for Himself and for His greatness and goodness. We must meditate on that. We must seek to understand the infinity of God's person, His attributes and His goodness expressed in His work and grace.
 - 2. We are to be thankful to God for His mercy and its everlasting quality. Without the mercy of God we would be in Hell.
 - 3. We are to be thankful to God for His truth and how it endures generation after generation. God has revealed Himself to us in the Holy Scriptures as well as in the natural creation. We are blessed with the truth. What a terrible condition we would be in—if we did not have the truth!

Conclusion:

We must take time each day to express our thanksgiving to God. It is also important that we state a spontaneous "thank you" to the Lord. He is worthy of all we could ever do in this area of our daily life.