

An Exhortation to Thanksgiving

Introduction

- A. The Scripture: Make a joyful noise unto the Lord all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness, come before His presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord He is God, it is He that hath made us and not we ourselves. We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. 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
 - B. God instructed His ancient people to go to Jerusalem three times a year for worship and thanksgiving.
 1. The Feast of Passover (our April) to have the Firstfruits of Barley Harvest, Leviticus 23:1-14.
 2. The Feast of Pentecost (our June) and have the Firstfruits of Wheat Harvest, Leviticus 23:15-22.
 3. The Feast of Tabernacles (our October) and have the Firstfruits of Wine and Oil, Leviticus 23:23-44.
 - C. This all reminds us that thanksgiving is a constant theme in the Bible. The word and its cognates are used 140 times in the Scripture. One of the five sacrifices in Leviticus was the Peace (Thank) Offering. (Lev. 3:1-5; 7:12-15).
 - D. In 1621 the Pilgrims set aside a day for thanksgiving and such was recognized quite regularly until in 1864 President Lincoln appointed the fourth Thursday in November as Thanksgiving Day.
- I. That Which Makes Thanksgiving Possible.
- A. The Scripture:

Know ye that the Lord He is God, it is He that hath made us and not we ourselves, we are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Psalm 100:3.
 - B. The Comment:
 1. Thanksgiving is possible because of the existence of God.
 - a. The Fall of Man has caused the human race to be alienated from God and thereby to lose the consciousness of God's existence. The divine object of thanksgiving is missing from the lives of many people.
 - b. What comfort comes to the believer because of the existence of God. The reality of His divine plan, the mercy of God in salvation, the promises of the Bible, the providence and protection of God, the privilege of prayer, and most of all the honor of knowing God and His greatness.
 2. Thanksgiving is possible because of the creating work of God.
 - a. We are not the products of a blind evolutionary force.
 - b. God has chosen to create us. He created us for Himself, for His glory and so we could be to His praise, Isaiah 43:1, 7, 21.

3. Thanksgiving is possible because of God's sovereign choice.

a. Israel was reminded that they were chosen by God (Amos 3:2) and so is the believer today (John 15:16).

b. It is an untold comfort to know we belong to God. (Eph. 1:3-6)

II. The Explanation of Thanksgiving.

A. The words expressing thanksgiving in Psalm 100.

"Joyful noise" VI, "Gladness", "Singing" V2, "Thanksgiving", "Praise", "Thankful", "Bless His Name" V4.

B. The object of Thanksgiving – God Himself.

"Serve the Lord with gladness, come before His presence with singing," V2.
"Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise, be thankful unto Him, and bless His Name," V4

It is important that we look beyond our material and even spiritual blessings to God Himself. He is worthy of all our praise and thanksgiving.

III. The Specific Reasons for Thanksgiving.

A. "For the Lord is good" Psalm 100:5.

1. The Bible constantly emphasizes the truth that God is good and what He does is goodness. Note Psalm 107:1, 8, 15, 21, 31, 43

2. To survey the past year in the light of Romans 8:28 will cause us to thank God for His goodness.

B. "... His mercy is everlasting" Psalm 100:5.

1. The mercy of God is portrayed in His love, compassion, forgiveness, patience, and watchful care. We do not deserve such loving care.

2. Note the praise of the Psalmist for God's mercy, Psalm 106:1; 107:1; 118:1-4, 29; 136:1-26.

3. David combined goodness and mercy in Psalm 23:6.

C. ". . . His truth endureth to all generations" Psalm 100:5.

1. Truth is one of man's greatest possessions. It all finds its origin in God Who is the Truth, John 14:6; Col. 2:3.

2. We know the truth about God's love, His provision in Jesus Christ, our sin, our need of salvation, how to become a Christian, how to have assurance of salvation, how to live the Christian life – only because of God's goodness in revealing Himself to us through Jesus Christ.

Conclusion: A profound sin is to be unthankful, Rom. 1:21.

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