



CrossRoads Notes:

Title: Thanks to God at Thanksgiving
Theme: Biblical Expressions of Thanksgiving
Series: Full Measure of Thanksgiving

Psalm 100:1-5, “Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come before Him with joyful songs. Know that the LORD is God. It is He who made us, and we are His; we are His people, the sheep of His pasture. Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise; give thanks to Him and praise His name. For the LORD is good and His love endures forever; His faithfulness continues through all generations.”

Introduction: *This week we are celebrating Thanksgiving and the Holy Spirit is guiding us through the Word of God to direct our thoughts, spiritual hearts and lives toward Biblical expressions of thanksgiving to the Lord.*

Because of the strength of the flesh and the powerful draw of the world, Christians are wearied by thoughts of preparing food, travel, eating, entertaining, talking with family, watching football with friends and many other things. Honestly, for many, Thanksgiving is opening day for depression and for most it is opening season of an unfulfilled life.

Proposition: *I would propose to you that the Lord in His great wisdom and love has prepared this Sunday, the Sunday before Thanksgiving to be an opportunity for us to offer Biblical expressions of thanksgiving unto Him! Considering how the people of God are a temple of the Holy Spirit of Christ, they have every opportunity to abound in singing, praying, giving and sharing testimony of God’s faithfulness in Christ Jesus. A life that expresses these four truths is like incense in the temple, fragrances that are pleasing to God and to the Body of Christ.*

Interrogative Sentence: *Just how can we live out these four truths of Biblical expression in our endeavor to please the Lord?*

Transitional Sentence: *The first truth to enjoy in thanksgiving worship is Holy Spirit illumination of singing to the Lord. Psalm 147:7 says, “Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving; make music to our God on the harp.” David, a man after God’s heart (Acts 13:22) wrote, “I will be glad and rejoice in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High. (Psalm 9:2) The Holy Spirit moved through David, the great song writer, to set the heartbeat of our worship, “I will give thanks to the LORD because of His righteousness and will sing praise to the name of the LORD Most High.” (Psalm 7:17)*

The Body of Christ cannot give if they do not have. The song service is a reflection of the worship in singing about and to the Lord throughout the week. Anyone can work diligently to put together a song service. It is the song leader who has enjoyed worship unto the Lord with those songs who will enjoy the Holy Spirit’s enabling for people to be aware of God’s presence.

For application's sake: What is your heart attitude toward the song service? If you are a song leader, in your preparation in getting songs in order, is there a season of praise unto the Lord with those songs? If you are in the congregation, is there a heart ready for worship, with and choruses and a hunger for spiritual songs? Is the preacher more focused on His message than the songs sung about and unto the Lord?

Transitional Sentence: *The second truth to enjoy in thanksgiving worship is Holy Spirit illumination of praying to Him.* 1 Thessalonians 2:8 says, "I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing." The Holy Spirit through David exhorts us with, "My heart says of you, "Seek His face!" Proverbs 15:8 tells us, "The Lord detests the sacrifices of the wicked, but the prayer of the upright pleases Him."

The whole counsel of God's Word teaches us that prayer, which includes the attitudes of the human spirit in its approach to God is a blessing to Him as we adore Him, confess to Him, praise Him and bring supplication unto Him. The highest blessing to the spiritual heart of mankind is communion with God, in the Name of Christ as led by the Holy Spirit. (New Bible Dictionary)

In our Saturday morning prayer meetings we almost always open by saying, "Father, we come into your presence, not because of what we have accomplished or with great plans, but simply under the blood of Christ and we thank you that at this moment you are our 'Father' not our 'Judge.'"

For application's sake: When accusations are made against you by the devil who is the one who works diligently to hinder your labors for the Lord and cause you to lose faith in God and when afflictions come, can the Lord say of you as he did Job? "Then the LORD said to Satan, 'Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil. And he still maintains his integrity, though you incited me against him to ruin him without any reason.'" (Job 2:3)

Christians who desire to show true thanks to the Lord in prayer long to have the walk with the Lord that Enoch had. (Genesis 5:22) They also have the heart of their Savior, Jesus, who prayed to His Father, "...yet not my will, but yours be done." (Luke 42:22)

Transitional Sentence: *The third truth to enjoy in thanksgiving to God is giving to Him.* It has often been said, thanksgiving is both Thanks and Giving. This week is our National Thanksgiving Holiday. Holy Spirit illuminated Christians desire to overcome the world's view of how to celebrate Thanksgiving Day. Thus, they look to the whole counsel of God's Word because there are various Scriptures referring to national feasts unto the Lord which present truths and principles that have eternal obligations. (The Pulpit Commentary)

A key part of enjoying a “National Feast” unto the Lord was giving. Pastor Ralph, W. Neighbor wrote about two men who were engaged in a conversation about giving to God;

“One said, ‘You give way too much money, [time and energy] to the work of God. I have decided to wait until a large sum of money comes in and then I will give.’ ‘No!’ Said the other man, ‘I give as God prospers me, and according to His plan.”

According to Pastor Neighbor, the man who waited for his large sum of money never enjoyed the blessings of the Lord, but the man who gave generously of his time, money, and strength as the Lord provided, prospered abundantly.

He writes: “If we give willingly and cheerfully to God, we are insured for time and eternity. The greatest earthly bank is a weak institution compared with the [provisions] from heaven upon which we God-honoring Christians may draw from.” (Knights Treasury of 2,000 illustrations)

Transitional Sentence: *The fourth truth to enjoy in thanksgiving to God is testifying of the Lord’s faithfulness.* Deuteronomy 4:9 says, “Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them.”

The Lord in His understanding gives the people of God an exhortation and it is for us as well. We are to be careful not to forget all that we have seen Him do, great and small. Christians are leaky vessels and need to have an ongoing reflection, one that is based on the experiences they have had with the Lord, with those experiences measured to the Word of God. Historical God sightings should be celebrated regularly and faithfully passed on down to those who come behind us. We are to live with the understanding that walking in this gospel dispensation comes with its privileges and duties. (The Bible Knowledge Commentary; New Bible Commentary; Commentary, Critical and Explanatory, Old Testament; The New American Commentary; The Expositors Bible Commentary; Thru the Bible)

It is a privilege to have Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord. It is our duty to teach those who come behind us that they must be born again in Christ Jesus. It is a privilege to prayerfully read and study the Word of God and to live in such a way showing others that the written Word of God is imprinted upon our spiritual hearts by the Holy Spirit of Christ.

Karl Barth, a famed Biblical theologian, was once asked, “What is the greatest thought you ever had!” His answer, “Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so.” (Dale Galloway, Rebuild Your Life)

J. I Packer, in “Knowing God” wrote, “What matters supremely, therefore, is not, in the last analysis, the fact that I know God, but the larger fact which underlines it – that He knows me. I am graven on the palms of His hand. I am never out of His mind. All my knowledge of Him depends on His sustained initiative in knowing me. I know Him because He first knew me, and continues to know me. ...There is unspeakable comfort in knowing that

God is constantly taking knowledge of me in love and watching over me."
(The Tale of the Tardy Oxcart, Swindoll)

In Closing: *In this Thanksgiving Season, do not over indulge in the world view of celebration.* There is *nothing* wrong with taking time to enjoy all the food, family and other privileges available this Thanksgiving Day. However, the key to beating the depression and unfulfillment that is so common during the Holiday Season is to say, "Thanks to God at Thanksgiving." We say thanks, by singing to Him, praying to Him, giving to Him, and testifying about His faithfulness."