

November 19, 2017 -

Psalms 100

- Be Ye Thankful

### Introduction:

The story is told of two old friends who one day bumped into one another on the street. One of them looked dejected, almost on the verge of tears. His friend asked, "What has the world done to you, my old friend?" The sad man said, "Let me tell you. Three weeks ago, my uncle died and left me forty thousand dollars." "That's a lot of money." "But, two weeks ago, a cousin I never even knew died, and left me eighty-five thousand dollars free and clear." "Sounds like you've been blessed...." "No, no you don't understand!" he said. "Last week my great-aunt passed away. I inherited almost a quarter of a million dollars. "Now the guy is really confused, "So why do you look so miserable?" He said, "I can't believe it...this week...I got nothing!"

That's an attitude of ingratitude. Folks, "attitude is everything" and it is no different when it comes to thanksgiving. The attitude we carry with us through life is of utmost importance. Unfortunately, the holiday that may very well help us to have an attitude of gratitude is overshadowed by everything else like the football games and the crazy shopping frenzy.

Years ago themes of gratitude were common at school, on TV, and in store shop windows. Even Pilgrims for those of us who recall who they were was a featured to remember. But no longer! Whatever happened to Thanksgiving?

The purpose of the holiday has been vanishing gradually from national awareness and you have to look hard for any public display of giving God thanks? God deserves better and we all would be the better for it. We can choose to be thankful. Paul said, **"In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. I Thess. 5:18**

The reasons we may find it hard to give thanks are as many as the troubles that strike us each day. Difficulties don't pause for a Thanksgiving break. There is a way, however, to find reasons to be thankful during even the darkest episodes of life. When the curtain of struggles seems to block out all joy, we can choose to be thankful.

### I. Have An Attitude of Gratitude toward God. / Psalm 100

1) True gratitude comes when we realize where we would be without God's help. A biblical review of the national life of Israel provides abundant proof of just how costly a lack of thankfulness can be. God send a deliverer a special man, Moses. But Israel was not grateful they murmured against Moses and even sought to stone him at the first sign of trouble. We can show our gratitude by thanking God for providing our needs and we can prove our sincerity. A good attitude toward life begins with gratitude toward God.

**And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.- Col. 3:15**

We need to be careful not to get distracted with everything that we leave thanking God out.

## II Guard against Distractions (Luke 10:38-42)

a) When I think of distractions I always think about Mary and Martha. Martha is a classic example of how we undertake projects for family with good intentions and drive them out of proportion to the point we are not only unthankful but down right angry.

1. Martha struggle was in being too distracted with her own plans! The harder Martha worked, the more frustrated she became with her sister Mary. The Bible said in vv. 38 she was cumbered. In English this conveys the idea of harass or burden but the (GRK. perispao means {per-ee-spah'-o} to be driven about mentally, to be distracted or to be over-occupied.

2. In verse [41] **And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:** "Notice Jesus said "MANY THINGS." It wasn't that she was just upset about the dinner and Mary helping her it was much more than one thing. The one thing needed, the one thing God desires of us is to spent time with Him and Thanksgiving ought to be a time of thanking God. Ps 37:7 tells us, "Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him." Ps 46:10, "Be still, and know that I am God."

3. When our activity consumes our time and energies so that you have no time for God and family, you have become too busy! You might think, as Martha did, that if you don't do the work it won't get done. That may be true, but Jesus taught that your highest priority must be your relationship with Him. If anything detracts you from that relationship, that activity is not from God. God will not ask you to do something that hinders your relationship with Him.

Sometimes the things we set out to honor God with end up dishonoring God. God wants us to be thankful for the best gift of all...Jesus. Third, we can make a conscious effort to...

## III Go Back and be ye Thankful. Vv. 11-13

1) We understand and appreciate the importance of gratitude. How it can radically change relationships. We have all heard the story of Jesus healing the ten lepers but like so many Bible stories we don't apply it to the situations of life we encounter.

The story begins: "And as he entered a certain village there met him ten lepers, and they stood at a far distance." Leprosy was the most dreaded of all the ancient diseases. In their time, lepers were treated as outcasts. They were kicked out of their community, their homes their jobs. They were left to an existence of begging. They would come together in their own leprosy community, trying to eke out an existence.

2. The scripture makes it quite clear that as these lepers approached Jesus they stood at a far distance. Everywhere these poor men journeyed they heard familiar words yelled out: "Unclean," "Leper." And then some would hurl stones at them to keep them away. Leprosy was a serious public health concern but it was shaded with the religious element of ritual

uncleanness. So it was that they not only had to live with their physical handicap, but they were also isolated. They had to live in the misery of loneliness.

3. You will note that prior to Jesus healing them all (note verse #13) ... lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. Note it says they lifted up [their] voices, the word for voice in Greek is the “phona” it is where we get our English word phone. Their voices carry over a distance because Jewish law clearly prescribed that a leper could not get within fifty yards of a clean person.

Application: When was the last time you truly thanked God... for saving you from your past?

1. Imagine their excitement when Jesus sent them on the way to the priests Vv.15-17. He's testing their faith. It may have been a meager faith, but this is a good test. He's also affirming the viability of divine law. He knew Leviticus 13 and 14, of course. And He is upholding that law. This was a sign of their healing. Priests were the only ones who could pronounce lepers healed. The Bible says in verse 14, that as they went, they were healed. Once declared cleaned by the priest this man eight days later according to the Levitical law went back, the Greek “hū-po-stre'-fō” implies “returned” and found Jesus. The cleansing rite was an eight - day ritual.

2. How excited these men must have been. Distorted faces and bodies began returning to normal. A warm sensation began creeping into their once dead fingers and toes. They could go back to their families, their communities their jobs. Sadly, only one cleansed leper returned to thank Jesus? What happened that the other nine never returned to give thanks... Excuses! There are all kinds of excuses. Gratitude can be easily overlooked because of the excitement of a great gift or in the moment of great victory or success.

3. This man fell down glorifying God. He knew God was the source of his miracle and he thanked Jesus, he thanked Him as well as worshiped Him. He came back with the right attitude. So while the ungrateful nine illustrate the general attitude of the Jews, they are representative of the general attitude toward Jesus. Give us healing, give us food, deliver us from demons, do miracles, but do not expect worship. The grateful Samaritan is a picture of the outcast who believed. This man's faith embraced Jesus as God, as Lord. It's a faith that bows humbly in recognition of one's lowliness in His presence. It's a faith that Jesus says saves.

Along life's way God often sends us a mentor, a comforter, consular, counselor, an adviser or who knows maybe even an angel. We can show our gratitude by thanking God for providing our needs and we can prove our sincerity by going back and giving thanks to those God sent our way. When was the last time you went back and thanked someone from your past?

Conclusion:

Thankfulness is a conscious response that comes from looking beyond our blessings to their source. Thanksgiving is encouraged throughout the entire Bible. When we think of all God has done for us, we are obliged to give thanks to Him.