

Thanksgiving - The Forgotten Holiday

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[0 : 0 0] and to point out that it is absolutely a scriptural ideal, a scriptural standard, or maybe expectation is a better word to say there.

Thanksgiving is expected of God's people, but sadly I feel it's a forgotten one. And I see that's very evident in our society today, and it's possible that it's true in your life and in your heart as well.

And so I want to preach a message this morning. I'm going to tell this Thanksgiving, the forgotten holiday. The forgotten holiday. Now, the first point I want to make is going to be scriptural.

It's really going to make a lot of sense, but it's going to take a little bit to dig it out and to point it out. So bear with me, and let's go to the Bible in the 1 Chronicles 16. And I want to show you something that was set up here in the Bible, and it's really going to apply here to this holiday.

1 Chronicles 16. Now, as Moses appointed in giving of the law back in the old days of wandering through the wilderness, he gave Aaron and his sons, the Levites, he gave them specific duties, and most of it really pertained to the tabernacle itself.

[1 : 1 6] And some were given the duty to bear the ark, and some were given the duty of the teardown and bearing of the elements of the tabernacle and building it up. And it was their duty and job.

But David's in this land where there's no wandering around, and he's seeing something maybe that these, I don't want to say that he sees them idle, but he gives them something that's in his heart.

David's a musician. David's a writer. He's very artistically developed and very gifted in that way. And so, in chapter 16, notice verse number 4.

It says, And he 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. And it gives their names.

And then in verse number 7, Then on that day David delivered first this psalm to thank the Lord into the hand of Asaph, and give thanks unto the Lord. And he gives them one, he writes one and gives it to him to perform, as a thanksgiving and a praise to God.

[2 : 1 8] This is interesting. David inserted this as a duty for these men. Now look at chapter 23. 1 Chronicles 23. And you'll see the mind of David here, as I mentioned, about them not having to do certain duties anymore, and adding this to their list of duties.

1 Chronicles 23, I'll begin in verse 25. For David said, The Lord God of Israel hath given rest unto his people, that they may dwell in Jerusalem forever. So a permanent location.

And also unto the Levites, they shall no more carry the tabernacle, nor any vessels of it for the service thereof. For by the last words of David, the Levites were numbered from 20 years old and above, because their office was to wait on the sons of Aaron.

And there's their job in 28 and 29 in the tabernacle. But in addition, verse 30, And to stand every morning, to thank and praise the Lord, and likewise at even.

So this is instituted for them to do twice daily. That's interesting. This is the heart of David here on this thing. To sing.

[3 : 26] Look at chapter 25. And the first few verses gives a little more light about this. Moreover, David and the captains of the host separated to the service of the sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Juduthan, who should prophesy with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals, and a number of the workmen according to their service was.

And he gives these names. At the end of verse 2, it says, Which prophesied according to the order of the king. At the end of verse 3, he gives another man and his names, and says to give thanks and to praise the Lord.

And in verse 5, All these were the sons of Heman, the king's seers, and the words of God, to lift up the horn. One more verse. Verse 6 says, All these were under the hands of their father for song in the house of the Lord, with cymbals, psalteries, and harps, for the service of the house of God, according to the king's order, to Asaph, Juduthan, and Heman.

And he gives the number. There are 204 score and 8 of them. There's 288 of them. And he breaks that down into 24 groups, or courses, and there are 12 each. And that's listed throughout the rest of that chapter.

So they're not the same guys doing it year-round. They're kind of, they have courses. They come and go. Now David set this up. Morning and evening, it's to be an ongoing thing.

[4 : 38] In these 24, possibly in a year, it'd be roughly two weeks apiece, perhaps. Now this is present during Solomon's reign. And in 2 Chronicles 5, Solomon dedicates that temple, and there's just a load of them there.

And they're singing, and they're praising, and the glory of the Lord comes down and fills the house. The priest couldn't stand to minister. And I want you to see that that's something David established with this praise and thanksgiving to God.

And it carried over into Solomon's reign. And in chapter 8 of 2 Chronicles, verse 14, it describes Solomon having these men and setting them up according to what David had said.

So it went another generation. But then after that, the kingdom is split, Rehoboam and Jeroboam, and things really deteriorate. And there's, there's a, it's a rare mention of the priest.

I'm not saying it never happened, but it's, it's not mentioned. It was specifically mentioned with David. It's specifically mentioned at times with Solomon. And then it kind of disappears. Now look ahead to 2 Chronicles 29.

[5 : 45] Generations have passed. And I didn't look through every king here, but it, it comes and goes. And when, when, when Rehoboam comes on the scene, 2 Chronicles 29, he really changes things in the land, gets all the corruption out.

And one of the things that is noted that he did in verse 25 of 2 Chronicles 29, and he set the Levites in the house of the Lord with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps.

They weren't there before him. He brought them back. According to the commandment of David and of Gad the king's seer, Nathan the prophet, for so was the commandment of the Lord by his prophets. And it describes their, them doing that and them singing and going down through verse 28, worshiping and singing and sounding with the trumpets.

And down to the passage in verse 31, in the middle of the verse, the congregation brought in sacrifices and thank offerings. And the thing is back in order. But as the nation, as the kings, one good, one bad, it just, it drops off again.

And about a hundred years pass and another man comes on the scene and it's Josiah. And you don't need to turn, but in 2 Chronicles 35, it describes Josiah getting these guys and setting them back up according to the commandment of David.

[7 : 01] And so this, this Thanksgiving choir and song of praise to God, which was instituted to be a daily thing, twice a day, ongoing, throughout their generations, day after day, week after week, year after year, never to stop.

It stopped. It's found times where it just stopped for our generations. And then the Jews are taken out of their land and then they're brought back in a few of them to rebuild the temple.

And in Ezra's time, you can read in Ezra chapter 3, where they build the temple and the Levites get together and sanctify themselves and they start it back up.

And they start praising and thanking God for his mercy and do it forever. And those men praise the Lord. If you remember, that's that time where the elders were like, yeah, this is the glory of this temple, not like the old one they were mourning.

And then the wall, the work stops and time passes and it's not until Nehemiah, flip over to Nehemiah chapter 11, just fast forwarding through some of the history here.

[8 : 09] Nehemiah chapter 11. Nehemiah chapter 11. And here they're gonna, that has to do with the temple.

I'm sorry, the temple was built. This is the walls of Jerusalem are now being built under Nehemiah. And he gathers these men, these Levites again.

And I'm not gonna read through the chapter, but I'll just pick out verse 17. And it says, and Mataniah, the son of Micah, the son of Zabdiash, the son of Asaph, was the principal to begin the thanksgiving in prayer.

And they're doing something special here. Look at chapter 12, one more verse. Chapter 12, verse number 17. This is the same occurrence. It says that, and at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, they sought the Levites out of all their places to bring them to Jerusalem to keep the dedication with gladness, both with thanksgivings and with singing, with cymbal psalteries and with harps.

And it goes on to describe them doing that. It's something David established a long time ago. Now, in this sermon, in this thought of thanksgiving, the forgotten holiday, I wanna say, first of all, just like in this, we can apply this to today that thanksgiving is a forgotten affair.

[9 : 34] It's no longer a way of life the way David established it to be. It was supposed to be. David, a strong type of Jesus Christ in the Bible, established the thanksgivings to be daily.

Morning and evening, going up to God. I can imagine, as I mentioned earlier, that kind of wave rolling across the land on Sunday morning. This is David's heart and his mind that prays, that incense of prayer and praise and worship and thanksgiving be going up before God continually.

That God would be pleased with his people because it would be, it would never be a time. I would just wonder in my mind of the hustle and bustle of the capital city of Israel, Jerusalem, of in that center of the city of that time of day, people going to and fro and work and things going on that they're singing.

The priests are singing again. They're erupting again in praise and thanksgivings to God. I wonder if it caught people's attention, if they stopped to listen, if they joined in in song to their God.

But thanksgiving became a forgotten affair. David established it to be ongoing and yet it turned into just a one day ceremony.

[10 : 44] We're building a wall, we're going to dedicate the temple wall or the wall of Jerusalem, let's get the priest here so we can have our thanksgiving event. What was supposed to be daily just became a one day affair.

Now, thanksgiving as we know it, it's an American holiday and it's founded upon the acknowledgement of the providence and the protection of the Almighty over His creation.

And today anymore in the nation of America, it's just a time for families to get together and have a day off and have good food and fellowship and it's no longer about God.

It may be in your heart and should be in your heart but if you're going to be honest, in the land, it's not about God. It's about being thankful for. And if you watch and you see on TV throughout the time, you'll see people, celebrities, or others getting interviewed and they'll say a word and they'll say, I'm thankful.

Celebrities will be like, oh, I'm thankful for my fans or you guys, hey you guys, just want to say thank you, thank you for all you, come on. Others are, they're going to say, you'll hear this, you'll say, I'm thankful.

[11 : 57] Somebody will say, I'm thankful for the men and women that are fighting for our country and keeping us free. You're going to hear that. And you're going to hear people say, I'm thankful to be in this land and the freedoms of this land and things like that and all of these things are fine.

And you'll hear people talking like that. They'll say they're thankful for their health or they're thankful for certain nice things and all that's great but it's not the point. And it's never been the point to say, I'm thankful for and just list something.

The point is to be thankful to someone for all of that. But that's what's missing. That's what's gone. Is this thought of that I'm thankful for a few things.

But who are you thankful to? It's to the Lord God. That's where it's supposed to be. That's where David wants it to go and has become a forgotten affair. Being thankful to God is a forgotten affair.

It's a one day celebration. And that affair even of itself has become forgotten because now it's completely overrun by just money hungry retailers preying upon the discontented American lifestyle.

[13 : 07] You've had Christmas shoved in your face for the last two months already and it's just going to get worse. And Thanksgiving is truly a forgotten holiday. But it's that way because it's a forgotten affair.

A thought to spend time and thank God and to have my heart bowed before God and thanking Him for His goodness and for things in my life. Thanksgiving is a forgotten affair.

We just need to get to Christmas as soon as possible because we love that one so much more. And that's what's in your face. It's the music, the Christmas music, the decoration, the shopping.

And look, I love that season. I'm into it. I'm fine with it. But this is a forgotten holiday. It's so overlooked because its purpose has gone by the wayside.

It's a forgotten affair. And I know why it's a forgotten affair because Americans, just like Israel, just like them, have forgotten the Lord and they've turned their hearts away from God to the success that they've enjoyed.

[14 : 06] They've turned their hearts away from being thankful to Him to the blessings that they've experienced. They've raised up idols in their hearts and have replaced the Lord. And so Thanksgiving is a forgotten affair.

Now turn with me to the New Testament for a few. Colossians chapter 2. And I want to point out a few verses in this book in Colossians about this thought of Thanksgiving.

Colossians chapter 2. Notice verse number 7.

Well, start in 6. As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him, rooted and build up in Him, established in the faith as ye have been taught, abounding therein with just one particular thing.

thanksgiving. Abounding therein with thanksgiving. Look at chapter number 3 in verse 15. Colossians 3.15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts to the which also ye are called in one body.

[15 : 19] And one more thing, be ye thankful. Verse 17. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.

Chapter 4 and verse number 2. Continue in prayer and watch in the same with thanksgiving. In verse 15 of chapter 3 He said, Be ye thankful.

Be ye thankful. That's a state of being. Be ye thankful. In Psalm 100 and verse 4 it says, Be thankful unto Him and bless His name. Secondly, I want to say thanksgiving is the forgotten holiday because thanksgiving is a forgotten attitude.

It's a forgotten attitude. Being thankful. Being grateful rather than greedy. It's a forgotten attitude. I grew up around an older generation that have been through some things.

I grew up around a generation who have been through a real depression. and they've experienced loss. They've experienced tough times. Been through some wars. And they didn't take things for granted.

[16 : 30] They saw things as valuable even if I saw them as total junk. They said, No, let's not throw that away just yet. Let's hang on to that. Might be able to use that somewhere down the road.

At our church before we came out here a few years before we had done a total renovation of the building and it took in four phases the entire building and throughout that I don't know how many dumpsters we filled with just junk that was stored here stored there and this building over there up in this loft of an attic over here just even up in the sanctuary had an attic and there was junk all up in there of just stuff that was tucked away from the past or picked up to be used at one point never was just filthy collected dust and we had to downsize.

We threw so much stuff away but I understand why. It's from somebody who wasn't going to toss stuff. It's from somebody who saw value in things and didn't take everything for granted. That's a different generation than what's been out the last few.

The last few generations just one after another they have one thing in common. They're unthankful. They're ungrateful. They've been raised with an attitude of expectation and a government that promotes it and enables it.

never have there been people more selfish and exhibiting this entitled attitude than our day to day because thanksgiving is a forgotten attitude.

[17 : 59] The Bible says in 2 Timothy chapter 3 and verse 2 of the last days it says for men shall be lovers of their own selves covetous boasters proud blasphemers disobedient to parents unthankful unholy.

in the Proverbs there's a generation oh how lofty are their eyes that generation is described as being never satisfied they never say or they say not it is enough.

In Romans chapter 1 it tells of a people that when they knew God they glorified him not as God neither were thankful but became vain in their imaginations and their foolish heart was darkened all of those descriptions of a God rejecting society they're unthankful.

But when you read in your Bible and I'll point you to specifically the Psalms go back to Psalm 35 in our Bible thanksgiving is a theme and it's an attitude and it's all over and specifically in the Psalms no other book mentions thanks and thanksgiving as much as the Psalms.

And if you could look at this as if these are men that are spiritual men that are in tune with the Lord and experience problems of life just like anybody else does they weren't immune to that but what they wrote their writings were different than the writings of our day.

[19 : 24] The writings of our popular culture today are completely carnal. None of it's uplifting and pointing you towards something spiritual or better or the Lord himself.

It's completely carnal and vain. But that's the difference. The Bible lifts you up. The Bible points you to a relationship with God as it is a revelation of God. These writings and these reflections of Bible authors are pure.

Even when they're in or describing human experiences that aren't so pure or that aren't so great pain and suffering. Look at Psalm 35 and look at verses 15 through 18.

15 through 18. But in my adversity they rejoiced and gathered themselves together. Yea, the objects gathered themselves together against me and I knew it not. They did tear me and ceased not.

With hypocritical mockers and feasts they gnashed upon me with their teeth. Lord, how long wilt thou look on? Rescue my soul from their destructions and my darling from the lions.

[20 : 29] I will give thee thanks in the great congregation. I will praise thee among much people. Now, keep that thought in mind and go to Psalm 79.

I want you to notice something here. In the midst of human experiences of pain and rejection and suffering there's still this attitude of thanksgiving.

Psalm 79 I'm not going to read the whole thing but notice how it begins. O God, the heathen are coming into thine inheritance. Thy holy temple have they defiled.

They've laid Jerusalem on heaps. And you can skim through verse 2 the dead bodies verse 3 their blood have they shed. We are reproach in verse 4 and he's praying for God to pour out his wrath upon the heathen.

But coming just skimming to the end of it he's praying that God would fix everything. Verse number 12 says I want you to consider this that these are not psalms of somebody sitting at rest and at peace.

[21 : 52] They're written out of a hard or hard circumstances out of torture and they're saying God please please come and fix us deliver us help us we will thank you.

See the difference in an attitude there? These are mentions these are words of faith. They're awaiting deliverance from their enemies and from the sorrow. They're pledging to thank God and to lift his name up when he saves them.

It's an attitude. It's not whining like victims. Oh God this is what happened to us you let it happen but they're saying Lord deliver us we're going to thank you.

It's a different attitude. This is an attitude of thanksgiving. They're displaying faith in their God and preparing themselves to glorify him with thanksgiving.

There's a difference. Today I hear prayer requests that are concerns and they're burdens on people's hearts but there's something missing. It's this kind of faith and this attitude when the Bible says be careful for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known unto God.

[23 : 07] Someone will say I'm in a real bind here and I don't know how it's going to get fixed and this is hard and it's heavy on my heart and just pray for me but where's the one that will say like the Psalms this is the situation and I'd appreciate your prayers and I'm going to trust God to work it out and I just want to thank him for being so good to me.

It's a different attitude. Thanksgiving's a forgotten attitude because today people would rather have pity. People would rather be the victim. They'd rather gain the attention when the attention ought to be on the Lord Jesus Christ whether you've got things going for you good or bad.

Look at Psalm 92. Psalm 92. I know it's easy for me to stand up here and say but I'm pointing you to the scripture and this is our source and our standard. Psalm 92.

Look at verse 1. It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord and to sing praises unto thy name O Most High to show forth thy loving kindness in the morning and thy faithfulness every night and there's instruments involved and you would think oh it must be good everything must be wonderful to say stuff like that it's a good thing to give thanks to the Lord.

Well maybe not. Maybe it's not so good. In verse number 7 it describes the wicked springing as the grass all the workers of iniquity flourishing. Doesn't sound like things are going so well but look at verse 9 we'll go from 9 forward for lo thine enemies O Lord for lo thine enemies shall perish all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered but they're not scattered yet.

[24 : 42] They're not perished yet but the promise or the faith is that they will be. Verse 1 was a present tense it is a good thing to right now today give thanks unto the Lord and to sing praises unto his name and show forth all these great things his loving kindness and faithfulness but currently the wicked are around.

Verse number 11 says mine eye also shall see my desire shall see one day my desire upon mine enemies my ears shall hear the desire of the wicked that rise up against me the righteous shall flourish it's all future stuff but it hasn't happened yet but yet today the command is to give thanks to give thanks the rest from the enemies is in the future thanksgiving is an attitude that's to be displayed in the present 1 Thessalonians 5 18 says in everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you now look at Psalm 95 there's one more thing I want us to think on Thanksgiving is forgotten holiday thanksgiving is a forgotten affair and it's a forgotten attitude and then thirdly I want us to see it's a forgotten approach look at Psalm 95 and verse number 2 it's a forgotten approach verse 2 says let us come before his presence with thanksgiving and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms look at Psalm 100 and verse number 4 verse 4 enter enter approach enter into his gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise be thankful unto him and bless his name how often do you approach God or as the Bible says draw nigh to God or go to that throne of grace with complaints and with needs and with cries but the way to approach God is with thanksgiving you can let your request be made known unto God with thanksgiving in the Old Testament blood had to be shed in order to approach the presence of God a sacrifice was made something was offered to appease his wrath against they're so unclean these people are so unholy compared to him something had to die to appease his wrath against their sin now considering that

Jesus Christ has eternally appeased that wrath of God against our sin he's given himself an offering and sacrifice to God for us but it doesn't mean that we show up empty handed we're supposed to show up with an offering a different style of offering Psalm 50 and verse 14 says offer unto God thanksgiving Psalm 107 verse 22 let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving Psalm 116 verse 7 I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving let me show you one more verse in the Bible Hebrews 13 along these lines this isn't the Psalms this isn't David in the Old Testament Hebrews 13 something that applies directly to you in this light thanksgiving is a forgotten approach Jesus Christ has made it available to given us access through the blood of Christ to get to God but it doesn't mean we come empty handed

Hebrews 13 and verse number verse number 12 you see it's referencing the Lord Jesus Christ Christ and by verse 15 13 15 it says by him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually just like David that is the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name but thanksgiving is a forgotten approach for some the Lord's their last resort he's their final attempt to get it fixed to mend the problem in their life I can't do it I don't see any way I'm going to call on God cry out to him but this approach I believe this kind of approach the Bible approach will change you I've gone to prayer already with a heavy heart with fears with anxieties with don't know what's happening how's it going to get fixed God God God God God please and I've gone to that and I felt in the back of my mind I feel like something's wrong

I know I'm supposed to cast all my cares upon him I know the Psalms say to pour out your heart unto him ye people and I feel like yeah I'm going to do that I'm just going to put my complaint on God but I don't something's not right as I'm doing it I need to change my approach and I changed my approach and I said Lord I know this is this stuff's kind of beating me up in my mind but I do want to say thank you for saving me and I mean it and as I talk to God and just kind of quiet my spirit and start to thank him things start coming to mind oh my goodness he's been good to me oh thank you for this and for this thank you for this thank you thank you thank you and it starts to roll and as it rolls all of a sudden this other stuff I start to say you know what God I'm thinking a little bit differently all this weight which was real and present

[30 : 31] I'm starting to see it differently like you've done all of this all of this so what's this to you and I start to see it through faith again instead of through the flesh and instead of just pouring out my complaint I change my approach to actually following the scripture and letting those requests be made known with thanks giving and continuing prayer with thanks giving and it changed my approach and it changed me I stopped whining and I conclude by saying God I'll trust you in this situation because you've never let me down and the thanksgiving does that thanksgiving is the forgotten holiday it's gonna come and go so fast it's gonna it's overshadowed by what's so much bigger this season it's a forgotten affair as we saw it's established by David to be ongoing and continually it's supposed to be a part of everything it's a forgotten attitude today entitlement and greed abound and as the bible says we read in

Sunday school let it not be once named among you as becometh saints what ought to be named among you is thanksgiving it's a forgotten approach thanksgiving is a sacrifice and an offering that God will not deny he'll welcome it every time and then you'll be welcome to cast your cares upon him when your heart's right when you offer that sacrifice let it not be a forgotten holiday among us may this not just Thursday upcoming mean something more to you but may it be the way you live your life the way you approach your God and the attitude you have in you every day of your life for Jesus sake let's pray father I ask that you'll bless the thoughts the message and the words that you'll minister these truths to our heart and God that you'll bury them in us and grow them in us and Lord there's plenty around us that's not going to be thankful it's not going to promote thanksgiving but I know where we found this attitude and we learned of this approach and this affair we learned from the scriptures and God

I pray you'll direct us to that book point us to the book help us to fall in love with the word of God and to let it yield fruit in our lives and change us God may we be forever a thankful people Lord if there's one thing that we'll thank you for it's Calvary and for where your son bled innocently bled for our sins thank you for giving us eternal life and giving us the righteousness of your son and thank you for eternal life in Jesus Christ God we're glory