

Be Thankful

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- [0 : 0 0] That's one thing we can do is thank the Lord for each day that He gives to us. And, you know, it's a wonderful thing of just having friends.
- Because, you know, when you realize, as Adrian was up here talking, it just made me think again about the reality. You know, we serve a God that's not an American God. We serve a God who created the whole world, loves everybody all around, and no matter what, you know, if you've accepted Christ as your Savior, you know, we're going to get to heaven and meet all sorts of people.
- Some of which we have had an influence upon to their salvation, others that you have no idea about. But it makes a wonderful reality that what we have in common is in Christ.
- And just the idea of being thankful, you know, it's one of those elements that is something that we have to understand understand the need to be thankful.
- And you can start finding your Bibles, Colossians chapter 3 this morning. We're going to take a few moments here this morning as we look into God's Word about just the reality of be thankful.
- [1 : 1 2] You know, because oftentimes I think when we even set aside a day to be thankful, I'm glad that we in America set aside a day of a year just to remind us to be thankful.
- Because you know what? It's very easy, especially in today's world, to get cynical. You know, to kind of get negative about the dynamics of life and the things that go on and the challenges we face.
- And you see all the things happening around us. But to have a day that is supposed to be focused upon giving thanks, you know. And Thanksgiving's a time that families gather.
- And, you know, we often think about Thanksgiving. We talk about food, you know, of everything from turkeys to cranberry sauce. And I've yet to see a cranberry shaped like that can that always comes out of.
- You know, we think about those things. And oftentimes we say, well, we're thankful for what we get to eat or what we get to consume. You know, we think about the commercialization of Thanksgiving.
- [2 : 1 6] I mean, a lot of promotion of football and just all different things that dynamic, you know. But it's a day that's really changed since its inception that we really need to stop.
- And as believers, it's not something that ought to be a day. It ought to be what we live. Because, but a day is good because throughout Scripture, you'll find God sets apart days to help us remember.
- So I think having a day of Thanksgiving is a great thing because it makes us slow down, makes us stop and consider the great things that God has done for us, that he's given to us.
- You know, if you're here today, God has blessed you, you know. We need to understand that reality in our life. You know, the holiday in America is often traced back to 1621 in New England when the much-needed harvest provided what was needed to survive the next upcoming winter after a very hard season.

You know, oftentimes we forget that the pilgrims that began this idea of having a day of celebration here in America, we lose the idea that they went through some very hard times prior to giving thanks.

[3 : 35] Some difficulties. It wasn't thankful just because of all the good things. They were thankful that no matter what, God is still God. That God is who he said he is.

And, you know, as we see that come about throughout our history, but it wasn't until about 1863 it became a national holiday. It had been celebrated in pockets on different days.

But, you know, but this whole idea of Thanksgiving, and I think one reason that you find that commercialization today moves past Thanksgiving, you ever notice that they move from a pagan holiday of worshiping things you ought not to worship that are counter to Scripture, to try to do Christmas to celebrate the birth of Jesus, but it's really not about the birth of Jesus.

It's let's get our money made for the year. And they skip over Thanksgiving. You know what? It's hard to commercialize being thankful. It's hard to monetize that because it's not something that you can put a price tag on.

You can't buy enough stuff to be happy. You know, you can't possess enough things to be happy. You can't have enough good things in your life happen to be just make you happy or joyful or thankful.

[4 : 53] But I think it's important that we stop to be thankful. And the word, it's the word thank. You know, it's interesting. If you study words, the word thank and the word think.

Thank and think are the same root. That's an interesting dynamic because you know what? Thankfulness is directly tied to how we think.

You cannot separate thankfulness from how you think. Because how you think impacts your gratitude.

Because what you think about the things that you have and the things you've been blessed with, the things around us, that connection is there. And it's the result because thankfulness is the result of thoughtful reflection.

Reminding us that thanksgiving comes from thinking about the blessings that God gives. That's true. But you know, the opposite is also true. That if we don't think about them, we'll be unthankful.

[6 : 00] Because it talks about us being thankful. But you know, it's very easy to be unthankful. Matter of fact, unthankfulness is natural. Because unthankfulness has to do with us.

To say, what do I deserve? What do I get out of this? What is life about? How is it all focused upon me as an individual? And thankfulness isn't something just to consider for a day, but every day.

And it's not an easy thing for us to do by any means. Because we're busy in life. Because sometimes I think we're unthankful because we don't stop and think.

We just don't take the time to stop. Or to think or to consider the blessings that God gives to us. The dynamic of how we think about it is essential.

And this is why, as a believer, we ought to be thankful. Because when we spend time and understand who God is, the outflow ought to naturally be thankfulness.

[7 : 04] Because here, if you found Colossians chapter 3, let's take a look here this morning. Let's stand and honor the reading of the Word of God. And we'll look down here and read just a couple of verses. We'll begin in verse 15 here this morning.

And it says, Let's pray.

Heavenly Fathers, we just take a few moments here this morning to think together about being thankful. Lord, help us to understand the necessity, the substance of thankfulness.

When we understand the reality of what it is and how it stems directly from you. Lord, we pray just have your hand upon each heart, each life here today.

Lord, you know the struggles, the trials, the tribulations of life. But Lord, we also know the greatness of who you are. Lord, help us to be mindful of the right things, to think on the right things.

[8 : 40] Lord, we ask it all in your precious name. Amen. You may be seated. You know, as we look here this morning in our text, we find something very important here.

Because I think we see the core of thankfulness. The core of thankfulness. You know, what is the center of thankfulness? You know, and as a child of God, I think we have some core reasons to be thankful.

And I think one of those core reasons is the fact that we can actually experience the peace of God in our life. In the midst of chaos, in the midst of life that's sometimes upside down, you can walk with peace in your heart if you're walking with God.

You can walk in the midst when it doesn't make sense. You know, I want you to understand because the core reason to be thankful, it stems from within, not without.

Our mindset is I ought to be thankful because of what I have out here. But the scripture tells us it has to do with what you have in here. Because when we consider what we have in Christ, it changes our perspective of how you see things.

[9 : 55] You know, oftentimes we walk past things that we don't pay any attention to. And I was reminded about this yesterday. We had a Zoom board meeting for the camp.

And we're sitting there beforehand and Brother Rickard's out of Ottawa down there. He's on and he's the chairman of the board there. And we're talking a little bit.

And I'm sitting in my office here and he notices the window behind me. Oh, beautiful stained glass window. You know what? It came to my mind. I look at that thing so much I don't even pay attention to it.

You know, you have people come. Oh, beautiful stained glass windows. And you're kind of like, well, yeah, I walk by them every day. But you know, it made me stop and think, you know, how often do we walk past the things we ought to be thankful for?

Because they're there so much we miss them. We become accustomed to them and don't even understand what it is. And when we see this dynamic, this core within us is the peace of God in our life.

[10 : 57] Now, notice here in verse 15, it says, let the peace of God do what? Rule in your hearts. Now, we're going to talk just a little bit about that because I think it's tied directly to the attitude of thankfulness.

But first, we need to define something. Because the Bible speaks about two things when it comes to peace. It talks about the peace of God and peace with God.

Now, I want you to understand that's two different things. The peace with God happens at the moment of salvation. It happens when one accepts Christ as their Savior. It changes from within.

I want you to understand Romans 5 tells us this. It says, therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. I want you to understand what Christ did on the cross made a way for us to be at peace with God.

Because our sin has made us alienated, made us an enemy of God. Salvation provides the means of being at peace with God.

[12 : 02] The peace with God is important. Romans 5.10 says this, for if we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his son. Much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

But I want you to understand something. Just because you're at peace with God because of salvation, many believers don't experience the peace of God in their life.

Because the peace of God doesn't come on autopilot. I want you to understand there are certain things you get at salvation that are automatic.

Everybody gets the same. There's no deviation. Everybody gets the same thing. But what you do with it makes a difference. The peace of God that Paul is speaking about here is that peace that God gives in our heart.

You know, Jesus, as he's getting ready to go to the cross, You know, the more I study the dynamic of Jesus going to the cross, the more I realize that the things that Jesus said, knowing what was ahead of him, are just amazing.

[13 : 09] John 14, he's getting ready. He knows what's going to happen. He's going to be beaten. He's going to be spit on. His beard is going to be pulled out. He's going to be crucified.

I don't know about you, but those aren't things that sound enticing. But yet Jesus is concerned about his disciples. And he says, guys, I want you to know something. Notice what he says. Peace I leave with you.

My peace I give unto you. Not as the world giveth, I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled. Neither let it be afraid. The peace of God is knowing that we can rely upon God in the situations of life.

Even when there's trouble. You know, sometimes the hardest time to be thankful is when trouble's there. When life's upside down. When things aren't working the way we think it ought to be.

And the expectations that we have get in our mind supersede what we ought to be thinking about. Because I want you to see here. Look what it tells us here.

[14 : 14] Paul's telling them. He says what? He says, let the peace of God do what? Rule. That's a very important word. The word rule here is a word that has to do with who has authority.

The picture here is actually like a referee or an umpire at a sporting event. Both teams, when they step on the field, say that umpire has authority.

They direct the game. They make the calls. You know, as far as when things are out of bounds. I mean, you see all that dynamic. And that's what it's talking about.

To let the peace of God do what? Rule in your heart is to say, I'm going to give God the authority in my life. I'm going to give what God offers as the authority.

And notice how that happens. Because it says this. It says, and let the peace of God rule. That's another important term there too.

[15 : 19] The word let. Because let implies something else. It implies a decision by you. Of what you're going to allow to take place. You know, sometimes I think we miss God's peace he wants in our heart.

Because we're so caught up holding on to everything else. All the troubles. All the sorrows of this life. You know, Philippians 4.7 says, And the peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

You know, we want the peace of God. Not just the peace of the situation. Because oftentimes we look, well, I have peace about this. Let me give you an example.

Let's go back to a good scriptural example here. Think about Jonah. Jonah's running from God. And he's at peace enough. He's asleep in the bottom of a boat in the middle of a storm.

A storm's raging outside and Jonah's asleep. Jonah was at peace with the situation. But he wasn't at peace with God. Because sometimes we can fool ourselves into saying, well, everything's okay.

[16 : 21] But God says that we need to let it rule in our heart. That has to remember thankfulness and thinking are connected. What's it saying? We need to have the right thought process in our life.

And the peace of God will allow you to walk together. And we see here, he says, let the peace of God rule in your hearts, that which also you are called in one body.

And be ye thankful. You know, that's even corporately together. Because we're called together as a church, a called out assembly of believers.

To be thankful to the Lord, to be thankful for one another. You know, sometimes that's not easy. Because we're people. You know, have you ever stopped to consider some people aren't very easy to be thankful for? I'm just being honest.

But you know what? When you look at them and think about it the right way, it changes the perspective. Because how you think changes how you respond and what you do.

[17 : 20] Our thinking is important. And we see here, notice next here, the construction, the assembly of thankfulness. Where does it come from? Notice the next verse 16 says, let the what?

The word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom. Now that's another one, let. Just because you're saved doesn't mean you're letting God's word have authority in your life.

You know, oftentimes we can know what God wants. We can understand the scripture, the word, the scripture, the Holy Bible. It's the first cause of thankfulness.

When the word of God impacts you, it changes you. And when you're transformed, the spirit of God dwells within you. And God's grace and mercy impacts a life, especially you personally.

You know, because how you think about God impacts your response. I was thinking this week on a verse in Job. This isn't on the slide, so they'll be up there looking for it since I'm going to mention it.

[18 : 23] Job 121. Oftentimes we don't think about this verse being tied with thankfulness. Job said, basically this, he says, I came into this world naked.

I'm going to leave naked. I don't have anything. He just lost everything. And the end of that verse says, and makes an interesting declaration. Talks about blessing God. I was thinking about that this week.

You know, this week I've thought a little bit about all the year that's gone by. I mean, there's been a lot of things happen this year. There've been some things that very challenging, disappointing, sadness.

But you'll hear Job experienced all those same things. And in the midst and the bottom, you might say Job was on the bottom. And he looked up and said, praise the Lord. How could he do that?

That's exactly what we're talking about here. Because what he thought and understood about God changed his attitude of thankfulness. I think we can be unthankful for the things that go on because of the way we think and consider who God is.

[19 : 29] Because when we see this dynamic, let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom. You know, I want you to understand it's not just having it, but in wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another.

You know, one thing about the word of God, we need to encourage from others about it. Because sometimes I think we can get so hyper-focused on something that we get caught up and we miss the rest of the things God has for us.

But God's word covers everything for life and godliness for us. That includes having a spirit of thankfulness. Because that peace of God ruling in your heart, to be at peace with God says, God, I don't understand the circumstances.

I don't understand why you allowed this. But I trust that it's going to work for the best. That it's your will. If you consider that the will of God is something specific to thankfulness.

You know, being thankful is in the will of God. When we understand the importance of that, of dwelling there. Notice what it tells us here. Let the word of God dwell in you.

[20 : 33] That word dwell means to inhabit. But it's even more in a sense than just inhabiting. Because to dwell is literally the term used here is kind of interesting because it means like to feel at home.

Because there's a difference. You can be someplace, you can be present someplace, and not feel at home. I've visited places that, you know, it's like you might say you're okay being there, but it's like you're not at home.

Because think about it. When you're at home, there's a different comfort level. There's a different connection. When it says for the word of God to dwell in you means that it's comfortable with you.

And you're comfortable with it. It changes the way we think. Notice here that it goes on and it says, Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.

Singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. You know, one of the songs this morning is, Is Well With My Soul. You've probably heard that. If you've been around church very long, you've probably heard that song sung many times.

[21 : 37] I encourage you to go look up the backstory on it, Is Well With My Soul. Because you'll find out the author of that song could truly say, I have peace of God that dwells in my heart.

Because it wasn't written when everything was going well. Just like Job, it wasn't written from the top. It was written from the bottom. Looking up.

Because we need to understand the importance. And even that song this morning teaches us. You know, oftentimes I think we forget today how much what we listen to in song impacts our thinking.

Because the songs we sing should accurately reflect the word of God. I'll just make this statement. We don't have time to delve into this this morning. But I want you to understand this. There's a definite relationship between our understanding of scripture and God and the songs that we sing.

Just because they say it's scriptural or they say that it's godly or they say that it's religious doesn't mean it's accurate. Now, a preacher can, I can pick on a lot of things because I'm not talking about just some of this crazy music out there.

[22 : 44] It might be by groups you like. As a believer, I'll caution you. Always filter everything you hear sung through the word of God. Because it's teaching you. That's the reason music is such a powerful dynamic in our life.

It's part of how God wired us. When we understand that dynamic, that knowing the word of God allows us to do something. Notice what it says here.

It says in the verse 16, Singing with what? Grace in your hearts to who? To the Lord. You know, one thing about music in our life, it ought to be to the Lord, especially at church.

People do a lot of things they call worship and they sing to each other. But true worship, we sing to the Lord. The sad part is it can all happen in the same auditorium.

Because worship isn't an outward action, but a dynamic of the heart towards God. Singing in our heart to the Lord.

[23 : 49] I want you to see here to be ye thankful. Because look at the course of thankfulness. The action, the direction that it takes us.

Notice in verse 17, And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all, what? In the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

This is the only part of thankfulness that's outward. The other two dwell within. This is the result, this is the manifestation of what's within comes out. Remember, Jesus made that very clear.

It's not the outward things, but the heart that condemns a person. It's from within. You know, we spend a lot of time looking on the out, but the in makes the difference.

Because you can do the right things on the outside and have a corrupt heart and still have a problem. Notice what it says, That whatsoever ye do. You know, this is kind of like an interesting measuring stick for our course through this life.

[24 : 51] The things we do and the things we say should be in line with the Lord Jesus. Look what the text tells us here. And it says, Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.

To do all. It means that, let me put it this way. It means that Jesus ought to be able to associate with it. In other words, what you say and what you do, Jesus ought to be comfortable with.

Everything you do in word and deed ought to be unto the Lord Jesus Christ. To say, God, I'm doing this. You say, well, what are you talking about?

This covers every area of our life. Whether it's going to work. Whether it's how we interact with our spouse. Whether it's how we interact with strangers. How we interact at just whatever the function is.

Because how we interact, the things we say and do ought to be honoring to the Lord Jesus. That's the course in which thankfulness takes you.

[25 : 58] Because thankfulness takes you away from focusing upon yourself and focusing upon God. You know, we can be thankful for others. But you know, the root of that, because we understand the value of others.

And we understand the values of others because we understand who God is and what God created. When we understand that picture, it means that this dynamic of association.

Because oftentimes it's a big ask in our life. Because often we don't consider that what we do or say reflects upon our Savior. But that's the standard that will allow us to give thanks to God.

Because as a believer, you bear witness of the one who saved you. To a lost world. Of anybody who ought to be thankful, believers ought to be thankful. But when we don't let the peace of God rule in our heart, we don't let the Word of God dwell within us, instead of thankful, we become unthankful.

Let me throw another word of unthankfulness, bitterness. Anger. You know, because sometimes when things happen in life, we get very quickly to get bitter and angry. And we let bitterness and anger, the root is unthankfulness.

[27 : 09] Unthankfulness comes from a wrong perspective. A wrong thinking. Because it's an inward thinking instead of an upward thinking. When we consider these things, even here this morning, we can rejoice in what we have.

You know, if you're saved, you ought to have the biggest thing you can rejoice about, the fact that you're saved. Because there was a moment in your life when you understood who you were, a sinner that was separated, alienated from God.

You had no peace with God. And at some point, somebody, you were confronted with the Scripture. You were confronted with the Word of God that made you understand your place in what Jesus did.

And to understand that it's not information, it's something that you have to apply to your life. You have to make a choice to be saved. And if that's truly happened, God says that if you let the peace of God, because you have peace with God, you can experience the peace of God in the circumstances of life.

You know, this morning, do you have the peace of God in your heart? Because as Paul's writing to the church here at Colossae, he reminds them that you cannot separate the peace of God and the Word of God within you, the right thinking from thankfulness.

[28 : 29] Because we can have a generic thankfulness, but it's still in error if we don't understand who God is and what He's done for us. Because the things physically you can thank God, you can be thankful for, none of it would be there without the one above.

Without Christ. Without the Creator. Without it, thankfulness is difficult and impossible without understanding who God is and what He's done for you.

This morning, I want you to think about, are you thankful? Why or why not? As heads are bowed and eyes are closed this morning, this morning, is the Word of Christ at home?

Does it dwell in your life? Is there a reflection of Christ in you and what you say and do? And how does it impact your thinking about being thankful?

do you do?