

Thanks-living

I hope all of you had a wonderful Thanksgiving. I realize that Thanksgiving has already passed. I would be a little late to give a Thanksgiving sermon, so I'm going to change the title.

Instead of this being a Thanksgiving lesson, this is going to be a lesson on Thanks-living. With all the many blessings we enjoy, it's so easy to forget about how grateful we should be.

Christians ought to be the most grateful people on earth. Every day is thanksgiving and thank-living for the people of God. The Bible has a lot to say to us about thankfulness.

The words 'thank and thankfulness' occur over 134 times in the Bible. There are some people in the Bible who failed to be thankful. They are negative reminders of what can happen when we fail at being grateful. I want to look at a few of these examples and then share what I am thankful for.

I. Example Number one: The man who wanted his Brother inheritance:

The passage can be found in Luke 12:16

Here Jesus is in the middle of a sermon when he's interrupted by a man who makes a statement that has nothing to do with what Jesus is talking about. The man says, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." From the comment Jesus tells the parable about a rich farmer. As the farmer is looking at his crops, he failed to give glory to God for what he had. The personal pronoun "My" occurs 4 times and "I" occurs 5 times.

There are no indications whatsoever that he gave God credit for His blessings. And as a result, he had no reason to give God thanks. It is because of this thankless attitude that God says to him, "You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?" (v. 20).

II. Example Number 2. The Pharisee praying at the temple (Luke 18:11-12).

In another parable Jesus talks about a self-righteous Pharisee who stood in the Temple and "was praying to himself, He said, "God I thank you that I am not like other people, swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax-collector beside me. I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get".

Who was he praying to? Himself. Who was he thanking? Himself. Although he addresses God, God is nowhere to be found in the prayer. Now look at the humble tax-collector standing afar off, who would not even lift his eyes to heaven. Look at him as he beats his chest and says, "God be merciful for I am a sinner."

Jesus says, "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

III. Example number 3: The lepers who did not come back (Luke 17:12)

Only 1 came back to say thank you. With a puzzled look on his face, Jesus asked, “Where are the other nine?” To the one who was grateful, Jesus said, “Arise, go your way, your faith has made you well.”

II. What are some ways we can express Thanks-living?

#1. Be thankful for the necessities:

In Mt 15:36 we have the account of Jesus feeding the 5,000. Here is one who had the power to multiply the loaves and the fishes, and having done that, he did not forget to give thanks.

#2. Be thankful that we have religious freedom:

#3. Be Thankful to have Christian parents.

Think about the number of children that do not have what our kids have? To have no one to give them advice or encouragement from the Bible.

Proverbs 22:6 says, “Teach a child in the way they should go and they will not depart from it.”

What a blessing it is to have parents who live by that verse.

#4. Be Thankful for the Lord’s church:

Paul said in Phil 1:3, “I thank my God upon every remembrance of you.”

#5. Be Thankful for Christian friends:

#6. Be thankful that God hears and answers prayer:

In John 11, Jesus stood before the tomb of Lazarus and prayed,

“Father, thank you that you have heard me. I know that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.”

#7. Lastly, Be Thankful for redemption:

With great excitement Paul said, “Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!” (2 Cor 9:15)

Close: Our Lord Jesus was thankful.

Even as He instituted the Lord’s Supper, even though He knew what was coming, what did Jesus do? He thanked His Father for the bread that would become a memorial of His sacrificed body (Luke 22:19).