

THANKSGIVING Part 1

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Thanksgiving is more than a holiday we observe here in the USA. However, I'm grateful to live in a country where we actually set aside a special day for this one purpose — to thank God.

It's wonderful to do that, but are you aware of just powerful it is to give thanks to God? Having thought about this recently, I want to take you through some scriptures on thanksgiving, in order to let you know what will happen as the result of our walking it out.

In the First Covenant, or “Old Covenant”, we're instructed to give thanks to the Lord in the sight of the nations of the whole earth. In fact, that's part of the plan of redemption. Let me repeat that: Give thanks to the Lord in the sight of the nations of the whole earth; it's part of the plan of redemption.

2 Samuel 22:50 *Therefore I will give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen (lit. “the nations”), and I will sing praises unto thy name.*

1 Chronicles 16:8 *Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people (or, “all peoples”).*

No doubt the founders of our great republic, the United States of America, had these things in mind when they instituted a special day, set aside just to give thanks. According to historical record, our nation was founded to glorify God and be a lighthouse to the nations of the earth. In other words, *the destiny of America is to bring the witness of the one true God to all the nations.*

WHY DOES GOD WANT OUR THANKSGIVING?

God must honor the free will He gave to Adam — and to mankind. That's why He cannot simply stop all the bad things going on in the world. But — when God receives thanks, He is blessed by having the ability to release His blessing TO YOU on the earth. Since God is a lover of mankind (John 3:16) and in fact, God is love (1 John 4:8 & 16), He delights in expressing Who He really is to us. *Thanksgiving gives Him license to bless us!*

You've probably heard that God owns the cattle on a thousand hills, which speaks to us of God's financial and material blessing. As a matter of fact, He owns all the hills the cattle are on! (Psalm 24:1) And, He owns the gold and the silver inside the hills! (Haggai 2:8)

God owning the “cattle on a thousand hills” is found in Psalm 50:10, but we gain even more insight when we read this in context...

Psalm 50:10-15 *For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. (11) I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine. (12) If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fullness thereof. (13) Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? (14) Offer*

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unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High: (15) And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.

God's got you covered! He's got your back, as they say — and obviously He can afford it. Notice, *offer God thanksgiving, and pay your vows* (i.e. do what you're supposed to do); *then when call upon Him, you'll be delivered — and, God will be glorified.*

That's reminiscent of Matthew 6, in which, speaking of our provision, Jesus says not to worry about the things the nations worry about (what you eat, what you wear and so on), but to *“seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you”* (verse 33).

Thanksgiving is part of seeking God (since we must approach Him with thanksgiving), and it's part of His righteousness (since righteousness also means God's way of doing what's right; see Amplified Bible). **Praise God, worry-free, stress-free, abundant living is a byproduct of thanksgiving!**

Now let's read from Psalm 69...

Psalm 69:30-32 *I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving. (31) This also shall please the LORD better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs. (32) The humble shall see this, and be glad: and your heart shall live that seeks God.*

What does God want? Animal sacrifices? No. Does He personally need your money? No. Your Christian service? No, not in the way people think of that. What God is after is your heart; that's what pleases Him — but He doesn't have your heart if He doesn't have your thanksgiving — because *a THANKFUL heart is a heart that is right with God.*

Thanksgiving is what please God (verse 31); and it produces gladness (verse 32). Another thing mentioned there was seeking God.

THE RIGHT WAY TO APPROACH GOD

You say you're seeking God? Let's put it to the test. There's a way — a manner — an M.O., to approaching God, as we will see...

Psalm 95:2 *Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms.*

Psalm 100:4 *Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless His name.*

I've heard a lot of people say, “I just can't seem to hear from God. I can't seem to get into His presence.” There's a number of possible reasons why — but I if I'm describing you when I say that, I want to ask you, “What is your approach to God? Are you entering into His gates with thanksgiving?” Are you focusing on what you don't have, or are you focusing on what you do have? (A better way to say that for a New Covenant Believer is,

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“Are you focusing on what you don’t have manifested yet, or are you focusing on what you do have manifested already? What I mean is, not just what is manifest and in your hands, or in your house, or in your bank account right now, but what God said He has GIVEN to you already? After all, as a child of God, all things are already yours in Christ Jesus!)

Again, *What is your approach to God? Are you entering into His gates with thanksgiving? — and into His courts with praise? Are you thankful to Him? You want Him to bless you, but are you blessing Him?* I’m not telling you something I haven’t had to learn myself, but I AM telling you, that if you will approach God according to Psalm 100, verse 4, it will work for you. Bless God, His blessing will flow to you!

THANKSGIVING AS A SACRIFICE

Now, I know what you may be thinking. “How can I thank God, when everything seems to be going wrong?” But when we go to the 107th Psalm, we find that thanksgiving is often a sacrifice.

Psalm 107:22 *And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing.*

What’s this verse telling us? That you thank God by faith (not by feeling, not by intellect, but by faith).

We’re told essentially the same thing again, in Psalm 116...

Psalm 116:17 *I WILL offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD.*

Did you notice that word “will”? The point is, *your will is involved*. You have to make a decision! This isn’t just about something you’ll do today around the Thanksgiving dinner table when everyone feels pretty good and you’ve got all that wonderful bounty sitting in front of you, just calling you to eat it up! *This is something you choose to do every day of your life* (whether you feel like it or not)!

This says, “I WILL offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD.”

Notice the benefits: If you’ll do this; if you’ll offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving — THEN you can call upon the Name of the Lord.

Proverbs 18:10 informs us, *The Name of the Lord is a strong tower!* And if you know your Bible, you’ll know that if God hears you, your prayer is as good as answered (see 1 John 5:14-15). Further, God is glorified in your prayer being answered!

I’ll share more in Part 2...

