

Thanksgiving!!!

Philippians 4:4-7

INTRODUCTION:

This morning we gather here to prepare ourselves for one of the major holidays of the season, Thanksgiving. It is a time when our country and society recognize the need to give thanks. The oddity of this holiday, now in the present, is that it increasingly finds itself lost to the nature of our culture and our ever-growing “me-centered” way of thinking because to give thanks is to express gratefulness beyond oneself.

I hear more and more people speak of their love for Thanksgiving, and I believe that is the case because "Thanksgiving" is a value that our culture is quickly doing away with. So, this holiday, for many, is the last straw in which to hold on to this wonderful value that influences a culture that gives peace. We are not at present that culture in our country. We are a very ego-centric culture that focuses solely on ourselves.

Philippians 4:4-7

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I will say, rejoice. ⁵ Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; ⁶ do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

I. Rejoice in who God is!

- A. He is worth rejoicing in.
- B. To rejoice is a choice.
- C. There has to be a conscious effort on our behalf to enter into an attitude of rejoicing.
- D. There is so much to realize in the goodness of God, yet most of our thoughts are placed on wasted efforts that never truly bring joy or gratitude.
- E. The overflow of rejoicing is gratitude.

J.I. Packer

“We need to discover all over again that worship is natural to the Christian, as it was to the godly Israelites who wrote the psalms, and that the habit of celebrating

the greatness and graciousness of God yields an endless flow of thankfulness, joy, and zeal.”

Kay Arthur

God is in control, and therefore in EVERYTHING I can give thanks - not because of the situation but because of the One who directs and rules over it.”

II. Recognize God is near you!

- A. Recognizing God’s presence in our lives is a grace source of gratitude.
- B. The fact that God has placed us in His creation to have the chance at living.
- C. The fact that God has given us a second chance in Jesus is a source of gratitude.
- D. The amount of grace and mercy that is ours in Him is so much to be thankful for.
- E. The reason that we often neglect being grateful is that we take His presence in our lives for granted.
- F. God never leaves us and is nearby through it all.

Hebrews 13:5

“I will never fail you.
I will never abandon you.”

Charles Swindoll

“Gratitude is a decision of the will, and if a decision of the will, the choice resides squarely with us. Deciding to be thankful is no easy task. It takes work.”

III. Reject Anxious living!

- A. Anxiety pushes out any gratitude we may recognize in our lives.
- B. Fear is a power motivator and manipulator.
- C. It keeps us tangled up inside, and Paul states to “not be anxious about anything.” Anything Paul?
- D. Yes, because God is in control. He is present in all of our situations.
- E. Learn to trust.

A.W. Tozer

“Gratitude is an offering precious in the sight of God, and it is one that the poorest of us can make and be not poorer but richer for having made it.”

G.K. Chesterton

“When it comes to life the critical thing is whether you take things for granted or take them with gratitude.”

IV. Reflect through Prayer & Supplication with Thanksgiving

- A. Our prayers should be bathed in gratitude because we have a God who listens.
- B. We should be grateful because we have a God who cares about the details.
- C. We should pray with thanksgiving because it changes who we are in our situations.

C.S. Lewis

When asked concerning his wife’s cancerous condition does he believes that prayer will change the situation, Lewis responded, “I pray because it changes me.”

- D. Everything about the Christian life is motivated by gratitude because of the grace of the Almighty.
- E. We should pray with gratitude because it gives strength and peace to our souls.

John Bunyan

“A sensible thanksgiving for mercies received is a mighty prayer in the Spirit of God. It prevails with Him unspeakably.”

CONCLUSION:

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

“It is only with gratitude that life becomes rich!”

Rick Warren

“In happy moments, PRAISE GOD. In difficult moments, SEEK GOD. In quiet moments, WORSHIP GOD. In painful moments, TRUST GOD. Every moment, THANK GOD.”