

THE POWER OF THANKSGIVING

Dated 03/6/2018@ Concord Church

Bible readings: Psalm 121 & 100, Philippians 4:4-7

In America the thanksgiving holiday was established so that people can focus on their blessings and express their gratitude to God for them. But thanksgiving should be on our lips every day. When thanksgiving becomes an integral part of our life, we will find that our attitude towards the life will change. We will become more positive, gracious, loving and humble.

The need to give thanks to God for all that He has done for His people is clear throughout the Scripture. It is common theme in the Psalm. Even at the last supper, we see Jesus Christ gave thanks to God for the bread & juice and commanded His followers to do likewise. In the New Testament, there are repeated calls for believers to give thanks to God in all circumstances. Today, I am glad that the Bowen family is honoring the given commandment in giving thanks to God for the blessings they have received from heaven. Thanksgiving for believers is an expression of their dependence upon & gratitude to God.

The word “thanksgiving” can be defined as the expression of gratitude, especially to almighty God. One of the great commandments is to give thanks to God, for all he has done for us. According to Psalm 100:4 we are to “enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his Courts with praise; be thankful unto him, and bless his name”. Christ, himself, was the perfect example of obeying this commandment.

It is also giving thanks to God for many blessings which should not be limited to only good times but also bad times thereby giving us the

opportunity to demonstrate our faith in God. Thanksgiving will draw our hearts out to God and keep us engaged with him, it will take our attention from ourselves and give the Holy spirit room in our hearts. Amongst many benefits of thanksgiving are-

- (1) Giving thanks to God unlocks many doors
- (2) Whenever thanksgiving goes up, showers of blessings automatically comes down-Ps 100:5.
- (3) It strengthens faith-strengthens our dependence on God for every provision and upholds the biblical truths on the faithfulness of God.
- (4) It keeps our lives clear of darkness, anxiety, sin and deception. Rom 1:21, Phil 4:6
- (5) It draws us closer to God.

We can show thanksgiving to God –

(1) By remembering him in our thoughts, words and deeds. It is impossible to give gratitude to God if we never think or speak of him. We can also memorize the scriptures to remember his promises and show gratitude.

(2) By identifying his lordship over our lives-Counting our blessings and realize that we are what we are because of God. 1 Thessalonians 5:18...Reflecting on all God has done for us in all areas of our lives--spiritually, financially, physically etc. especially the sacrificing of our Lord Jesus Christ which is the greatest gift of all.

(3) By giving thanks in prayer-We should thank God as often as we pray that we should have his spirit in us to teach us to pray. We should bear it in mind that the prayer that begins with trustfulness and passes on into waiting, will always end in thankfulness, triumph and praise. We show

our dependence on God through prayerful thanksgiving which should be done daily.

(4) By praise: We should praise and thank God through songs with the use of musical instruments, clapping of hands etc. Eph 5;19, Ps 69:30 and Jeremiah 30:19

(5)By repentance- Always being conscious of our wrongdoings and confessing our sins is a way of showing gratitude to God .Gratitude is also the foundation upon which repentance is built because it shows we acknowledge the mercy of God. Repentance cleanses us of our sins and brings about additional blessings if done with a sincere heart and willingness to desist from such sins.

(6)By expressing gratitude to others: showing gratitude to people and helping others is a way of showing gratitude to God. This is seen in Matt 25:40- which says “Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me”. This is thanksgiving to God by serving Him through others.

Thanksgiving to God is fundamental to a believer because it is the only means of communicating with God which is inclusive of worship, prayer, faith, holiness, giving and sacrifice. May we remember the importance of thanksgiving & practice it in our lives, in the light of God’s Word, so that our relationship with the triune God grow from strength to strength.....Amen.