

Be Thankful  
Fairview Texas Church of God  
February 27, 2010

Happy Thanksgiving!

Does that sound strange to you at any time other than November?

Actually, the US Thanksgiving holiday is one of my personal favorites. It represents, to me, a day when our family spends the greater part of the day together. It means turkey and each person's favorite side dish, football and watching the kids play.

As far as setting aside a single day each year to give thanks to God, I submit that is falling very short of God's expectations. He expects us to be thankful, but He expects us to be thankful every day!

**Colossians 3:**

- 12 Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;
- 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.
- 14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.
- 15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.
  - Being thankful includes being at peace.
  - We can be at peace when we live according to God's ways, focusing on one another.
- 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.
- 17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.
  - Give thanks to God for every word or deed!

One of the first things to do each morning is to thank God for the day. This day was not guaranteed to me or to you. We have awakened this morning by the grace of God. At 1:30 am local time this morning, February 27, 2010, an 8.8 magnitude earthquake hit Chile. The town of Concepcion was horribly hit as the epicenter. The experts expect aftershocks measuring up to 7.8.

Tsunamis have hit already and more are feared. As far away as Hawaii they are preparing for serious tsunamis. Historically, earthquakes hitting Chile have sent tsunamis that have killed

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people in Hawaii. We don't yet know how many people have lost their life on this day. Of course, those reading these notes later will have history to tell them the results.

This quake is estimated to be 500 times the power of the one that recently hit Haiti (a 7.0 rating).

**Psalm 118:**

- 1 Oh, give **thanks** to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.
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- 6 The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me?
- 7 The LORD is for me among those who help me; Therefore I shall see my desire on those who hate me.
- 8 It is better to trust in the LORD Than to put confidence in man.
- 9 It is better to trust in the LORD Than to put confidence in princes.
  - When we are going into a situation such as a medical operation, we submit to the knowledge of the physician and the attendants, but our faith and trust needs to be in God.
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- 14 The LORD is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation.
- 15 The voice of rejoicing and salvation Is in the tents of the righteous; The right hand of the LORD does valiantly.
- 16 The right hand of the LORD is exalted; The right hand of the LORD does valiantly.
- 17 I shall not die, but live, And declare the works of the LORD.
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- 24 This is the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it.
  - This day is ours to share with the Lord by His grace.
- 25 Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity.
- 26 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.
- 27 God is the LORD, And He has given us light; Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar.
- 28 You are my God, and I will praise You; You are my God, I will exalt You.
- 29 Oh, give **thanks** to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.

For whatever we have, we should give thanks to God.

**Matthew 6:**

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- 25 "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?"
- 26 "Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?"
- 27 "Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?"
- 28 "So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin;
- 29 "and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.
- 30 "Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?"
- 31 "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'"
- 32 "For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.
- 33 "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.
- 34 "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."
  - We need to live in "day-tight" compartments
  - We don't do that very well
    - We spend today fretting and stewing over yesterday
      - Things that we did wrong
      - Things that caused pain for today
      - Things done by others
    - We spend today worrying about tomorrow
      - Will I be happy; will I be pretty according to Doris Day's hit record "Que Sera"
      - Will we have enough money
      - Will ...
  - Jesus tells us to plan for tomorrow, learn from yesterday – but live for today!
  - After all, this day is all we have.

David put it all in perspective in the Psalms. But one in particular is dedicated to the thought.

**Psalm 136:**

- 1 Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.
- 2 Oh, give thanks to the God of gods! For His mercy endures forever.

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- 3 Oh, give thanks to the Lord of lords! For His mercy endures forever;
- 4 To Him who alone does great wonders, For His mercy endures forever;
- 5 To Him who by wisdom made the heavens, For His mercy endures forever;
- 6 To Him who laid out the earth above the waters, For His mercy endures forever;
- 7 To Him who made great lights, For His mercy endures forever-
- 8 The sun to rule by day, For His mercy endures forever;
- 9 The moon and stars to rule by night, For His mercy endures forever.
- 10 To Him who struck Egypt in their firstborn, For His mercy endures forever;
- 11 And brought out Israel from among them, For His mercy endures forever;
- 12 With a strong hand, and with an outstretched arm, For His mercy endures forever;
- 13 To Him who divided the Red Sea in two, For His mercy endures forever;
- 14 And made Israel pass through the midst of it, For His mercy endures forever;
- 15 But overthrew Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea, For His mercy endures forever;
- 16 To Him who led His people through the wilderness, For His mercy endures forever;
- 17 To Him who struck down great kings, For His mercy endures forever;
- 18 And slew famous kings, For His mercy endures forever-
- 19 Sihon king of the Amorites, For His mercy endures forever;
- 20 And Og king of Bashan, For His mercy endures forever-
- 21 And gave their land as a heritage, For His mercy endures forever;
- 22 A heritage to Israel His servant, For His mercy endures forever.
- 23 Who remembered us in our lowly state, For His mercy endures forever;
- 24 And rescued us from our enemies, For His mercy endures forever;
- 25 Who gives food to all flesh, For His mercy endures forever.
- 26 Oh, give thanks to the God of heaven! For His mercy endures forever.

David took great pains to point out that every aspect of our life and of history is due to God and His mercy.

**Luke 18:**

- 9 Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:
- 10 "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.
- 11 "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men--extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector.
- 12 'I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.'
  - The Pharisee was quite disciplined.
  - But his prayer was not genuine.
  - A religion based upon a merit system leads to religious pride.

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- 13 "And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!'
- 14 "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."
  - Jesus' teachings tell us the importance of humility.
  - Our attitude is well known to God.
  - We cannot hide our pride from Him.
  - He knows when we are sincere.

**Matthew 11:**

- 25 At that time Jesus answered and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes."
  - Most Christian teaching of this verse focuses on the revelation, but ignores the point that many wise and prudent people have the message hidden from them.
  - There are many well-educated people with deep understanding of the Bible, of Greek and of Hebrew, that disagree on the message.
  - Their time to understand will come, but not in this life,
- 26 "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight.
- 27 "All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.
- 28 "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.
- 29 "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
- 30 "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."
  - Only God's Way given through Jesus Christ gives us a life of peace.

Finally, let's look at selected verses from another of David's Psalms of praise.

**Psalm 107:**

- 1 Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.
- 2 Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, Whom He has redeemed from the hand of the enemy,
- 3 And gathered out of the lands, From the east and from the west, From the north and from the south.
- 4 They wandered in the wilderness in a desolate way; They found no city to dwell in.
- 5 Hungry and thirsty, Their soul fainted in them.

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- 6 Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, And He delivered them out of their distresses.
- 7 And He led them forth by the right way, That they might go to a city for a dwelling place.
  - People were homeless; they were hungry; they were thirsty; they were distressed.
  - Redemption to the Israelite carried a very specific meaning that we may go into at a later date.
  - It is tied to the Jubilee Year.
- 8 Oh, that men would give **thanks** to the LORD for His goodness, And for His wonderful works to the children of men!
- 9 For He satisfies the longing soul, And fills the hungry soul with goodness.
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- 15 Oh, that men would give **thanks** to the LORD for His goodness, And for His wonderful works to the children of men!
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- 21 Oh, that men would give **thanks** to the LORD for His goodness, And for His wonderful works to the children of men!
- 22 Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of **thanksgiving**, And declare His works with rejoicing.
  - Not just one day each year – but we should declare thanksgiving daily.
- 23 Those who go down to the sea in ships, Who do business on great waters,
- 24 They see the works of the LORD, And His wonders in the deep.
- 25 For He commands and raises the stormy wind, Which lifts up the waves of the sea.
  - I left these verses in today to remind us of the tsunamis that may be hitting as we speak.
  - Tsunami warning sirens are blaring and the big island could be hit by 3:05 pm Central Time today.
  - The waves will have traveled an estimated 6700 miles across the Pacific by then.
  - American Samoa and the Polynesian Islands may also be hit, along with Taiwan and Japan much later.
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- 31 Oh, that men would give **thanks** to the LORD for His goodness, And for His wonderful works to the children of men!
- 32 Let them exalt Him also in the assembly of the people, And praise Him in the company of the elders.
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- 42 The righteous see it and rejoice, And all iniquity stops its mouth.

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- 43 Whoever is wise will observe these things, And they will understand the lovingkindness of the LORD.

What are some of the things for which you can give **thanks**?

I urge each one of you to create a list of things for which you are thankful.

For now, I will ask each of you to volunteer at least one thing in your life for which you can clearly give thanks to God.