

Wednesday, November 27, 2013 - Giving Thanks to God

Amazingly, the holiday season is upon us again. Of all the times together with friends and family over the next 6 weeks, Thanksgiving is my favorite time of the year. For the most part, the holiday is still not commercialized. The focus is not on materialism but rather on parades, food, football games and most importantly family.

In America we celebrate it as a chance to be thankful for the freedom we have. We remember our troops who are still in harm's way and the sacrifice both they and their family make every day. There are other things we are thankful for. Some of these things we share in common with the world: food, the blessings of nature, and our families.

As Christians, we also have freedom; freedom from sin through the blood of Jesus Christ. This freedom is provided to us as a gift from God. From Genesis through Revelation, the nature of God, with His power and His attitude of love toward man is clearly on display.

In Genesis we are told that man is created in "His image." His desire for man to be saved so that an eternal home in heaven can be our final destination is of utmost importance to Him. Consider the following passages:

Matthew 28:18-20 - And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

John 14:1-3 - Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

Romans 5:1-11 - Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. For when we were still without strength, in due

time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more

then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

1 Timothy 2:1-6 - Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all.

As we examine our lives, these passages demonstrate the core of what we should be thankful for. We give thanks to God for His love, His blessings and the opportunity we have at eternal life through the gift of His son Jesus.

We are also thankful for the day to day blessings we receive. The disciples were a very thankful people for the blessings given to them by God.

1 Thes. 5:16-18 – Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Christians have the right to pray, and we should never forget to give thanks for all things. Our gratitude is to be continual because our blessings are continual (1 Thes. 5:17).

Eph. 5:20 - giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ

Our life, our breath, our family, our food, clothes and all other things that sustain us in this world would not be without God. May we always give him the thanks, reverence and praise that is due him.

A life dedicated to praise and thanksgiving unto God will help you overcome all obstacles placed in your path. And never forget the words of James, “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he hath been approved, he shall receive the crown of life, which [the Lord] promised to them that love him.”

My prayer is that God continues to be with each of you and your families as you continue to strive to live a life pleasing to Jehovah.