
Worship: Thankful in Every Season

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Thanksgiving often gets forgotten: both the biblical concept and the holiday

Thanksgiving gets forgotten —

- Debate about when to play Christmas songs
- Store decorations change from Halloween to Christmas overnight.

I LOVE THANKSGIVING like Buddy the Elf loves Christmas

- Sweet potato casserole with brown sugar pecan topping.
- Cool weather, flannel shirts, naps, boots
- Cousins playing together,
- The Macy's parade/Purina Dog Show/football — trifecta.
- The food, the food, the naps, the food. Did I mention the naps and food?
- The family sitting around a table talking about what we're thankful for.

Everything I'm describing boils down to one thing, **A COMMUNITY GATHERED TOGETHER TO EXPRESS GRATITUDE FOR THE GOOD THINGS IN OUR LIVES.**

Does that sound familiar? (*look around the room*) **a community, a family gathered together to express gratitude for the good things in our lives. THAT'S WORSHIP.**

WHATEVER IT LOOKS LIKE FOR YOU, As we move into a new month I WANT TO INVITE YOU INTO:

A SEASON OF WORSHIP THROUGH THE PRACTICE OF THANKSGIVING

Home base for sermon today will be Psalm 100

- **Psalm 100:1-5**

A Psalm of Thanksgiving. Make a joyful shout to the LORD, all you lands! Serve the LORD with gladness; Come before His presence with singing. Know that the LORD, He is God; *It is He who* has made us, and not we ourselves; *We are* His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with **thanksgiving**, And into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, *and* bless His name. For the LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting, And His truth *endures* to all generations.

Dr. Rutland preached a series called Meetings with God. **LOOKING AT WHO GOD IS. HOLY, POWERFUL, AND GOOD**

- **How do we relate to this God?**
- **How do we interact with the God who is better than we can ever imagine?**

One of the ways is through Worship.

Let's start with Worship — what is it?

- Wester's Dictionary says:
 - i. to honor or reverence as a divine being or supernatural power
 - ii. to regard with great or extravagant respect, honor, or devotion
- Old Testament:
 - i. **shâchâh** *shaw-khaw'* A primitive root; to *depress*, that is, *prostrate* (especially reflexively in homage to royalty or God): - bow (self) down, crouch, fall down (flat), humbly beseech, do (make) obeisance, do reverence, make to stoop, worship.
- New Testament:
 - i. **proskuneō** to *kiss*, like a dog *licking* his master's hand); to *fawn* or *crouch to*, that is, (literally or figuratively) *prostrate* oneself in homage (*do reverence to, adore*): - worship.
- Example of the dog from the movie "Up"
- **How does this relationship work?**
- **GOD INITIATES, WE RESPOND.**
 - i. **1 John 4:19** We love Him because He first loved us.
 - ii. **John 3:16** For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.
 - iii. **Romans 5:8** But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
- I'm sure we've all heard the question "What came first, the chicken or the egg?" What's the answer? **The answer is God. God is always first.**
- Son Luke's story... as a young child, he initiated with, "I love you, too."
- **WORSHIP IS "I LOVE YOU TOO." GOD INITIATES, WE RESPOND.**

How do we express that worship? — *One expression of worship that we see in Psalm 100 is the expression of thanksgiving.*

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

What is Thanksgiving?

WHO WANTS TO SPEAK SOME HEBREW?

- **tôdâh** an *extension* of the hand, that is, *avowal*, (open declaration or acknowledgement) or *adoration*; specifically a *choir* of worshippers: - confession, (sacrifice of) praise, thanks
- **THANKSGIVING is: an expression of gratitude**
 - What do you say when someone gives you something?
 - What is one of the first things we teach our kids to say?

- **THANKSGIVING is: an expression of gratitude for something we have received.**

“Thanksgiving is but the expression of an INWARD CONSCIOUS GRATITUDE TO GOD for mercies received.”¹ ~ E. M. Bounds

God’s initiation and our response

- **Psalm 100:4**
Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, *And* into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, *and* bless His name.
- **What are gates for?**
 - Control access
 - When closed they deny access, when open they grant access.

In Psalm 100 we are told to enter God’s gates with thanksgiving.

What does that say about the gates? His gates are open.

- I’ve always thought this verse was saying that thanksgiving unlocked the gates so we could come in...
- What does that say about the gates? **His gates are already open.**
- Doesn’t say we are to open them. Doesn’t say unlock, doesn’t say “speak the password.” It says enter.
- GOD INITIATES—WE RESPOND.

If the gates are open, who opened them?

- WHO OPENED THE GATES? WHO MADE A WAY?
- It’s not our thanksgiving that opened the gates
- Does the gate make you think of anything? **Anyone?**
- Jesus never fretted. He never stewed, or panicked with terror.

Follow me over to John Chapter 10: 9, 11, 15, and 16

- **John 10:9**
I am the door. If **anyone** enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.
- **John 10:11**
I am the good **shepherd**. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.
- **John 10:15**
As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.

¹ E. M. Bounds, *The Essentials of Prayer* (Charles River Editors, Mar 22, 2018)

- **John 10:16**
And **other sheep** I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock *and* one shepherd.
- Verse 9: Jesus is the door, Jesus is the gate, Jesus is the access point, and His sheep enter by Him and are saved.
- Verse 11: Jesus is the Good Shepherd who gives His life for the sheep.
- Verse 16: “other sheep which are not of the fold” one flock, one shepherd. **THAT’S US.**

JOHN 10	PSALM 100
V9. Jesus is the door, he’s the gate, we enter through him and are saved and find pasture.	V4: enter the open gate
John starts with the Word is God. John 1:3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.	V3: The LORD made us.
V11. Jesus is the shepherd. He gives his life for his sheep.	we are the sheep of his pasture
V16. Jesus brings other sheep. That’s us.	V1: all the lands are joyful. Not just Israel.

Entering his gates with thanksgiving isn’t a to do list, it’s a celebration that THE GATES ARE OPEN.

- **Psalm 100:3**
Know that the **LORD, He is God; It is He who has made us**, and not we ourselves; **We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.**
- **Psalm 100:4**
Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, *And* into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, *and* **ble**s**s His name.**

BLESS HIS NAME! BLESS HIS NAME!

HIS NAME IS JESUS, IMMANUEL our GOD WITH US,

HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED WONDERFUL COUNSELOR, MIGHTY GOD, EVERLASTING FATHER, THE PRINCE OF PEACE AND THE GOVERNMENT SHALL BE ON HIS SHOULDERS.

GOOD NEWS!!!

JEHOVAH JIREH OUR PROVIDER WHO HAS PROVIDED A WAY WHERE THERE WAS NO WAY.

THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS WHO MADE US RIGHTEOUS WITH HIS BLOOD.

All you lands!

- **Psalm 100:1**
A Psalm of Thanksgiving. Make a joyful shout to the LORD, **all you lands!**

WHO?

- All you lands. Not just Israel and Judah. All lands.
- Jerusalem and Leipers Fork. Jews and Gentiles.
- Everyone can come to God through Jesus.
- No wonder He tells us to enter with Thanksgiving.

If **THANKSGIVING** is the expression of gratitude for something that God has done, what is there to be more grateful for than the salvation that Jesus bought for us by laying down His life and calling us His own?

Remember what worship is? I love you, too.

God initiates – we respond.

NOW THE PICTURE IS CLEAR:

We don't open the gates by being thankful, we respond to open gates with thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving changes us

- **Thanksgiving doesn't change our circumstances, it changes us.**
- **Thanksgiving doesn't open the gates, it reminds us to go through them.**
- **Thanksgiving that is rooted in remembering what God has done can sustain us when we feel like He isn't doing anything.**

What do we do when our hymn of Thanksgiving fades, when the city of God seems less real than the thing we are facing right now?

REMEMBER:

- God healed Jonathan after a decade of panic attacks
- During that time he was sustained by the peace found through thanksgiving
- Singing worship songs brought peace to his panic

Remember what the Lord said through Isaiah:

- **Isaiah 43: 11-13, 19 (The Message translation)**

I, yes I, am GOD. I'm the only Savior there is. I spoke, I saved, I told you what existed long before these upstart gods appeared on the scene. And you know it, you're my witnesses, you're the evidence." GOD's Decree. "Yes, I am God. I've always been God and I always will be God. No one can take anything from me. I make; who can unmake it?" Be alert, be present. I'm about to do something brand-new. It's bursting out! ***Don't you see it? There it is! I'm making a road through the desert, rivers in the badlands.***

He is the Way Maker.

Remember what the Lord said through the Apostle Paul:

- **2 Corinthians 4:16-17 (The Message translation)**

So ***we're not giving up.*** How could we! Even though on the outside it often looks like things are falling apart on us, on the inside, where God is making new life, not a day goes by without his unfolding grace. **These hard times are small potatoes compared to the coming good times**, the lavish celebration prepared for us. **THESE HARD TIMES ARE SMALL POTATOES COMPARED TO THE COMING GOOD! WRITTEN BY A MAN WHO EXPERIENCED SHIPWRECKS, BEATINGS, AND WHO DIED BY HAVING HIS HEAD CUT OFF.**

Thanksgiving today

Let's make this practical.

Take it home:

- Make a gratitude list
- Use Philippians 4:8 as a framework
- **Philippians 4:8**

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

Make a list of things that are true, noble, just, pure, lovely, of a good report, virtuous, and praiseworthy.

- Meditate,
- Remember,
- Be grateful,
- Enter His gates with thanksgiving.

His Steadfast Love Endures Forever

- **Psalm 100:1-5**

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His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, *and* bless His name. For the LORD *is* good; His mercy *is* everlasting, And His truth *endures* to all generations.

Discussion Questions

1. Are there any special worship traditions your family has at Thanksgiving?
2. How is thanksgiving an expression of worship — in your life?
3. Before today had you thought that it was your thanksgiving that allowed you to enter the gate, and your praises that gained you to entry into His courts?
4. React to the statement: “entering his gates with thanksgiving isn’t a to do list, it’s a celebration that the gates are open!”
5. What are some things you are thankful for that you can bring to mind during hard times in the future?
6. How has being thankful been proven faithful in your life?