THANKSGIVING: COUNTING OUR BLESSINGS

Psalm 103:1-22

A man writing at the post office desk was approached by an older fellow who had a post card in his hand. The old man said, "Sir, could you please address this post card for me?" The man gladly did so, and he agreed to write a short message on the post card, and he even signed it for the man, too.

Finally the man doing the writing said to the older man, "Now, is there anything else I can do for you?"

The old fellow thought about it for a minute, and he said, "Yes, at the end could you just put, 'P.S. Please excuse the sloppy handwriting.'"

Thanksgiving or complaining - these two words express two contrasting attitudes of the souls of God’s children.

Thankfulness or its lack is the thermometer by which our spiritual temperature can be gauged.

Thanksgiving or its lack manifest if we are in the will of God or not. See I Thessalonians 5:18. I have never met a defeated thankful Christian.

Psalm 100:4 tells us to “Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.”

It is good thing that America has set aside a day of THANKSGIVING. The Thanksgiving proclamation was given by Abraham Lincoln in 1863 “It has seemed to me fit and proper that [the gifts of God] should be solemnly, reverently, and gratefully acknowledged with one heart and one voice by the whole American people. I do, therefore, invite my fellow citizens . . . to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next as a day of thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the heavens.”

Thankfulness is a commanded grace, a crowning grace, and a conquering grace.

I believe that INGRATITUDE is the worst of vices.

“When thou hast thanked God for every blessing sent, what time will then remain for murmurs and lament.”
I. I am thankful for the provision of salvation - Isaiah 45:22 “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.”

A. Thankful for the simplicity of the provision of salvation

   Acts 16:31
   John 6:47

B. Thankful for the availability of the provision of salvation

   All are invited.
   2 Peter 3:9
   1 Timothy 2:4

   The death of Christ is sufficient for all - Romans 8:32. There has never been a sinner born that Jesus did not die for.

C. Thankful for the certainty of the provision of salvation

II. I am thankful for the preservation of the Scriptures

   See I Peter 1:23-25. Oh, how thankful I am that I can hold in hand the preserved Word of God.

   The Preserved Word of God:

   A. Provides the church’s message – “the gospel”

   God has not changed the message He wants preached to the world. It is the Bible that gives us the message we are to preach.

   B. Prescribes the church’s method (I Corinthians 1:18,21)

   God has found no substitute for the preaching of the gospel!

   C. Produces the church’s members

   It is the preserved Word of God that comforts the saved, compels the soldier, and converts the soul.
III. I am for the presence of the indwelling Spirit

See 1Corinthians 3:16. Spirit takes up permanent residence in the believer at the moment of salvation.

A. Thankful for His ministry of consolation (John 14:16,17)

B. Thankful for His ministry of education (Titus 3:3:11,12; John 14:26)

The Holy Scriptures is the textbook, the Holy Son is the theme, and the Holy Spirit is the teacher in our education.

C. Thankful for His ministry of illumination (John 16:13)

He sheds light on what He has already written. HE will explain to us what He has written. He is not revealing new truth, but he does cause us to understand the truth He has already revealed.

D. Thankful for His ministry of intercession (Romans 8:26,27)

When we do not know how or what to pray, we have the indwelling Holy Spirit to rely upon. When we pray selfishly, ignorantly, or narrowly, the Holy Spirit comes alongside to assist us in or weakness, interceding for us.

We have two weaknesses in prayer revealed in these verses. We know not what (matter) we should pray for as we ought. As to the matter of our requests, we know not what to ask. We are not competent judges of our own condition. Who knows what is good for a man in this life? (Ecclesiastes 6:12). We are short sighted, and very much biased in favor of the flesh. Jesus even told the sons of Zebedee, “You know not what you ask for,” (Matthew 20:22).

As to the manner, we know not how to pray as we ought. It is not enough that we do that which is good, but we must do it well, seek in a due order; and here we are often at a loss as affections cold, thoughts wandering, and it is not always easy to find the heart to pray.

The apostle speaks of this in the first person: We know not. He puts himself among the rest. If so great a saint as Paul knew not what to pray for, what little reason have we to go forth about that duty in our own strength! Folly, and weakness, and distraction in prayer are all too common upon the saints.

I am thankful for the help which the Spirit gives us in the duty of prayer. He helps our infirmities in the ministry of prayer.
IV. I am thankful for the **possibilities** in supplication

**Matthew 7:7-11** and **Jeremiah 33:3**

**Matthew 21:21,22** “Jesus answered and said unto them, ‘Verily I say....”

**Mark 11:24** “Therefore I say unto you, What things soever....”

**Ephesians 3:19,20**

Prayer has divided seas, rolled up flowing waters, made flinty rocks gush into fountains, quenched flames of fire, muzzled lions, disarmed vipers, marshaled the stars against the wicked, stopped the course of the moon, burst open iron gates, and conquered demons. **WHAT HAS PRAYER NOT DONE?**

A. Thankful I can bring my **frustrations** to God in supplication

B. Thankful I can bring my **feelings** to God in supplication

C. Thankful I can bring my **foes** to God in supplication

D. Thankful I can bring my **family** to God in supplication

E. Thankful I can bring my **failures** to God in supplication

F. Thankful I can bring my **future** to God in prayer

V. I am thankful for the **privilege** of **service** - 1 **Timothy 1:12**

I am so thankful that Christ allows me to serve Him.

What a privilege it is to serve Christ.

A. Privilege of service because of His **position**

B. Privilege because of His **passion**

C. Privilege because of His **power**

D. Privilege because of His **provisions**

VI. I am thankful for the **partnership** with God’s **saints**
How thankful I am for my brothers and sisters in Christian this church! See Philippians 1:3-5. My REMEMBRANCE of you is with GREAT APPRECIATION.

One of the failures in our life is how prone we are to forget. How forgetful are we of those God has put in our life.

A. Thankful for your labor in the gospel

B. Thankful for your love of the gospel

C. Thankful for your loyalty to the gospel

Conclusion:

It was Thanksgiving season in the nursing home. The small resident population was gathered about their humble Thanksgiving table, and the director asked each in turn to express one thing for which they were thankful. Thanks were expressed for a home in which to stay, families, etc. One little old lady in her turn said, "I thank the Lord for two perfectly good teeth, one in my upper jaw and one in my lower jaw that match so that I can chew my food."

If we will just think, we will thank. The folks who are not thankful just don’t think much. The people who are thankful are faithful!