

Are you Thankful? November 23, 2014

We live in a culture where many people feel “entitled” to the blessings that we enjoy as Americans. Patriotism is not being taught in our schools anymore and parents are not respected in many homes. Children feel entitled and when they don’t get what they want, they rebel, run away from home, and they cause heartaches to those who have sacrificed that they may have their needs met.

The Bible discusses the outcome of a person who has an ungrateful heart. Look at Romans 1:23-24. In these verses it says that God’s wrath is going to be revealed to those who are godless and wicked and who suppress truth by their wickedness. What may be known about God is known to them by God because he has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities, his eternal power and divine nature have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made so that man is without excuse, for although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. Therefor God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator who is forever praised. Amen

Look at Exodus 20:12: Honor your father and your mother that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you. Children need to be taught to obey and to honor their parents. (Proverbs 5:21, Ephesians 6:1, Proverbs 18:9)

Proverbs 5:21 says that a man’s ways are in full view of God and God examines all of his paths. The evil deeds of a wicked man ensnare him; the cords of his sin hold him fast. He will die for lack of discipline led astray by his own great folly. Proverbs 6:20 warns a son to keep his father’s commandments and don’t forsake your mother’s teaching. Bind them upon your heart forever; fasten them around your neck. When you walk, they will guide you; when you sleep, they will watch over you; when you awake, they will speak to you for these commands are a lamp. This teaching is a light and the corrections of discipline are the way of life. If you read this chapter you will understand that it is warning against adultery. It cautions men to stay away from immoral women and the smooth talking of a wayward wife. Don’t lust after her beauty or let her captivate you with her eyes. Lack of discipline in a person’s life will cause him to go astray and reap a painful and destructive end.

Ephesians 6:1 commands children to obey their parents in the Lord for this is right. Honor your father and mother which is the first commandment with a promise, “that it may go well with you and they you may enjoy long life on the earth.”

Children need to be disciplined and taught to be thankful. Jesus gave us an example by submitting his will to his Father and becoming obedient even to the death on the cross. In 1 Corinthians 11:23, it speaks about the night that the Lord partook of the Passover with his disciples. On the same night that he was betrayed, he took bread and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “Take, eat this is my body which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me”. After the same manner also he took the cup when he had supped, saying,” This cup is the New Testament in my blood; this do ye, as oft as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you do show the Lord’s death till he comes. If you read the account of Jesus praying just before he was betrayed, his prayer was, “Abba. Father, all things are possible for you; Take away this cup from me, nevertheless not what I will but what you will”.

In the story of the rich fool, the main character of the story was not thankful to God for his blessings. His last crop was a bumper crop so much so that he was having trouble figuring out what to do with all of his produce. He thought about the fact that he didn’t have any place to store his excess of food. He thought to himself, “This is what I am going to do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger barns and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I’ll say to myself, you have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy, eat, drink and be merry.”

There is no indication that the man gave God thanks for his blessings. He had no thought about those who were less fortunate than he. He made no plans to share with others or to give a tithe of it to the Lord. All of his plans were to benefit himself. He decided that he could sit back, relax, and not work ever again and he would just eat, drink and be happy.

God said to him, “You fool! This night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself. This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich towards God.”

The Bible says that whatsoever you do in word or in deed, do all in the name of Jesus. Whether we reach out to help the poor among us or if we give money to further the cause of Christ, we must give from a willing and thankful heart, remembering that Jesus reached down and rescued us from the bondage of sin. We could not save ourselves; Jesus Christ chose to go to the cross that we might have a chance to accept the sacrifice that he made on Calvary and enjoy eternal life with him. I’d like to end my sermon this morning but reading Psalms 136. I will read the first lines and I’d like you to say “His mercy endures forever!” Let’s give the Lord a heart full of thanksgiving this morning.