

True Thankfulness Is To Accept All That God Gives

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Thanksgiving
INI – SDG

Job 2:1-10 Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD. ² And the LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it." ³ Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that *there is* none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil? And still he holds fast to his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to destroy him without cause." ⁴ So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. ⁵ "But stretch out Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will surely curse You to Your face!" ⁶ And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, he *is* in your hand, but spare his life." ⁷ So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. ⁸ And he took for himself a potsherd with which to scrape himself while he sat in the midst of the ashes. ⁹ Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!" ¹⁰ But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

There are many things in this world which even if I don't like them, I can see why they are good. Onions are a good example. They are not my favorite food, but they are a source of many good things.

There are other things which don't seem to have any good qualities. Mosquitoes, poison ivy, or ticks are good examples. Why did God make mosquitoes? I don't know. They annoy me and therefore I call them evil and am unthankful for their presence. God however pronounced them good.

Learning true thankfulness goes beyond simply remembering to thank God for the gifts he has given us. It means learning to be thankful even for those things that we don't think of as good.

This is the lesson Job reminds us of in our text.

Job 2:10 Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?

Job teaches us a lesson which is at the very heart of the word contentment. True contentment is not only the absence of coveting, but also the acceptance of all that God has given.

We see a mosquito and we call it bad, but God saw it and said it is good. The Psalm we read this morning reminds us to accept God's judgement not our own.

Psalm 19:9 The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

This is true thanksgiving to accept whatever we receive from God with a joyful heart. Whether it is onions or tomatoes, sunshine or rain, mosquitoes, or suffering.

Paul reminds us "**giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ**" Ephesians 5:20

He does not say that we ought to find a reason to give thanks in all things. He simply says give thanks for all things.

Most colleges have a short course in morality or ethics. They may call it something else, but the essence of the course will be a discussion of right and wrong.

Such courses usually begin with the following postulate:

1. Morality exists apart from God in which case men can seek it out without God. OR
2. Morality is simply God's arbitrary rules, in which case why should we be bound by it?

The truth is something else entirely. Man is like a child who is not capable of discerning right from wrong, therefore we need God's law. We need God's judgement.

Our inability to correctly discern right from wrong is seen from the very beginning. Adam and Eve though they knew better than God. The result was death. Paul reminds us:

Romans 3:4 let God be true but every man a liar

True thanksgiving is to acknowledge all that God has made and given as good.

As we look forward to the future of our nation. And what this world will be like for our children. There are many things we might think are serious wrong with our society: abortion, marriage, drugs, education.

Underlying all of these surface problems is a deeper issue. Something we ourselves are often guilty of. We tend to judge God's law rather than to be judged by God's law.

We tend to say, "this is good, and I will be thankful for this, but this is bad, and I will not be thankful for this."

A few weeks ago, the kids had the story of Ruth. Naomi, her mother-in-law lost her husband and both her sons. Her reaction was to simply accept that this was from God. She didn't like it, but she did accept it. She didn't attempt to judge God but accepted what God sent.

Romans 12:2 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

We need to learn not to conform God's law to our understanding, but rather to be transformed by his law. We need to learn what it means not to judge God, but to be judged by him. We need to learn not to

say this is good or this evil, but rather to say in all things, thank you Lord for light and dark, for flowers and mold, for birds and mosquitoes. This doesn't mean that we should let the mold grow on our walls in our homes, any more than we should let the flowers grow among our peas. But in all things, we ought to be thankful.

God's law has judged us today and like King Belshazzar we too have been found wanting.

Psalm 19:11 by them Your servant is warned

God has warned us about our sin not to condemn us, but so that we might repent and be saved. For this too we ought to give thanks. We give thanks that God has warned us of our sin and has also provided the body and blood of his son to wash away our guilt.

Psalm 19:12 Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret faults.

Although God has revealed the depth of our sin, he has also cleansed us from it.

Psalm 19:14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer.

The thoughts of our hearts and our prayers this morning are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ who has washed us of our sin and presented us blameless before God.

We rejoice that another year's harvest is gathered in. We rejoice that we still, at least for now live in a free and strong nation. We rejoice that we will soon gather with our families.

But above all we rejoice that God's grace is so great that he takes the time to give us his law, remind us of our sin, and discipline us as children. He sent his Son to die for us. He even give us his holy supper to restore his grace and strengthen us for our life today.

Let us pray. Lord, give us faith like Job, Naomi and Paul which is able to accept all things from your hands in thanksgiving, and forgive our ungratefulness when we doubt your goodness. Amen