

SERMON: "Radical Gratitude"  
"God Deserves It"

Text: Ephesians 5:20 &  
1 Thessalonians 5:18

Preached AT/DATE Redland 11/21/99  
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In Just A Few Days We Will  
Be Celebrating Thanksgiving  
A Special Day To Reflect  
on The Many Things We Can  
Be Thankful For.

Now there are many today who  
will be quick to say to you  
"I don't have a thing to  
be thankful for" And they  
are unhappy people.

Isn't that sad // Isn't it sad  
that so many people will  
say to you in so many ways,  
"God has not been good  
to me" or they will say,  
"I've not been blessed" //

Oh But Listeners, all one needs  
to do is look around // there  
are blessings or reminders  
of blessings everywhere Amen

So I say to our hearts, "We  
are daily blessed"

2/  
Listen to this: The Apostle  
Paul writes: "For everything  
give thanks / for this is  
the will of God in Christ  
Jesus" // (1 Thessalonians 5:18)

And in Ephesians 5:20 Paul  
writes "Give Thanks Always  
for All Things unto God  
And The Father in the Name  
of our Lord Jesus Christ" //

< "Let's Pray" >

As we began to prepare for  
this message / and after  
reading these thankful  
words God inspired Paul to  
write, I began to reflect  
on all God has done in our  
life // And let me tell you,  
it wasn't hard at all to  
give thanks to God //

Then  
Looking Back on the life of Job,

And Reading what God said  
to Job in Chapter 37 Verse 14,  
I found some wonderful advice //

Now here was a man who had  
suffered much physical pain  
in his life / a man who had  
suffered great loss / yet  
God said to Job: "Stop what  
you are doing / BE STILL / And  
Consider how Good God has  
been to you" //

Oh listen Beloved / This is  
Great Advice / And we would  
do well to follow it //

<sup>Now</sup> Think back, "Hasn't God been  
Good to you" // Hasn't He blessed  
you // HAVE YOU THANKED HIM? //

Someone has said: Maybe  
God has been too Good to us //

"Maybe in our plenty we have  
forgotten just how Good //

3/ Oh Listen, we have a Good  
God / And Thanksgiving offers  
us a wonderful opportunity  
to do as Job / Stop what you  
are doing / Be Still / And  
Consider Once Again how Good  
God has been to you /

Someone asked "I wonder if we  
would be ~~the~~ <sup>as</sup> Grateful if  
we fell on hard times?" / Oh  
Listen, some would / while others  
would simply get <sup>more</sup> angry with  
God / Let me ask, "Have you  
told God lately how appreciative  
you are for the way He has  
blessed you?" / If not / why not  
do it now = //

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Look back if you will at  
1 Thessalonians 5:18 / Keep  
Prayer Paul writing to believers  
And has already said: 'Rejoice  
ever more' / And then he calls for

The people to do something many  
hadn't done = Paul says: "Give  
Thanks in all circumstances"

It's what some call  
"Radical Gratitude"

And that means Complete/  
TOTAL / Above and Beyond  
the Norm

Let me Ask,  
"Does ~~that~~ <sup>RADICAL</sup> Describe the  
GRATITUDE you have

in your heart for the one  
"Who shall supply all your  
Needs According to His  
Riches in Glory by Christ  
Jesus" (Does it?)

oh listen, perhaps some are not  
Gratefull ~~is~~ because all their  
wants are not met / But what  
did Paul say in Philippians

4:19 / He said: "My God  
shall supply all your Needs"

<Not necessarily all your wants>  
"I thank God anyway" (amen)

4/ Oh but looking back/can't  
you see God Blessing you by  
Not Giving you all you asked  
for? // <I can>

Now

Paul was considered a Radical/

"He was definitely & completely  
Grateful" // No matter what the  
circumstances were, Paul  
could see the Hand of God  
at work in His behalf // He

could smile while everyone else  
frowned // He could laugh while  
everyone else cried, because he  
knew that God had a reason  
and a purpose for all things //

And knowing that "Jesus  
would always be there,"  
gave him reason to be  
thankful //

are you with the Beloved? //

listen, Paul had learned  
a lesson we need to learn —

"He had learned that regardless of God's demands, His resources were ready and available" //

Whatever God called Paul to do, He was confident that God would equip Him for it //

Now Another way of saying this, could be to "believe that when God demands, He always enables / If the requirement is great // Equally great and totally sufficient are the resources of a loving, caring, God" // (Praise the Lord)

Oh listeners, we have good reason to be thankful & grateful today / We have a God who loves us / a God who is concerned for us / a God who says: "Stop where you are and consider the wonderful and all sufficient works of God"



5/

There is a Song we used  
to sing much more often  
than we do today, It's called  
"Count Your Blessings" Here  
are some of the words to the  
Song: "When upon life's billows  
you are tempest tossed /  
When you are discouraged  
Thinking all is lost, Count  
your many blessings, Name  
them one by one, And it  
will surprise you what  
the Lord hath done"

And the last verse says this:  
So amid the conflict  
Whether great or small / Do  
not be discouraged, God is over  
all / Count your many blessings  
Angels will attend / Help  
and comfort give you to  
your journey's end" //

And the Chorus Repeats:

"Count your Blessings, Name  
them One By One, Count  
your Blessings See what  
God hath done / Count your  
Blessings / Name them One By One  
Count your many Blessings,  
See what God hath done //

Have you found it to be done? /

Have you done it lately? /

If you have / you will find  
it being thankful a lot  
easier // you will find that  
God has been so much better  
to you than you ever thought //

oh but please hear this:

"Genuine Gratitude is rooted  
in a divine / human relationship"

There was this kind of  
relationship between David  
and God -

6/

In the 23rd Psalm He Said:  
"My Cup Runneth Over" / My  
Heart is filled with the  
deepest appreciation possible //

You See David had A Divine /  
Human Relationship With God /  
Here He was / Counting  
His Blessings / He was  
Naming them one by one /

And As He did, He Saw Once  
again "How Much God had / And  
Would Bless Him" // Haven't You  
Found That To Be True //

Oh Listen Beloved, As I ask  
Questions of you, I also  
ask them of myself. // Amor  
now, "Could it be that God's House  
is Not Full, Because people  
are Not Counting their Blessings ?

Perhaps they have turned  
to Complaining About what they  
Don't Have, Rather than <sup>Thanking</sup> ~~What They Do~~  
Thanking God For what they do have //

listen / "Our Gratitude ought  
to be just As Radical As  
Paul's was" // We ought to  
be willing to say Amen when  
we read 1 Thessalonians 5:18  
when Paul writes, "Rejoice ever  
more" And when you do/you  
will be able to give 2 hands  
(to) everything // "Knowing that  
this is the will of God for  
Christ concerning you" //

when we sing "Praise God from  
whom All blessings flow" / It  
ought to be An expression  
of "Radical Gratitude" //

It ought to be our "Prayer  
without ceasing" // Our  
testimony of the goodness  
of God" //

And when we sing: "O  
Worship THE King"

7/

It Ought to Be More than  
Just Words = It Ought to  
Be a Result of what  
Divine/Human Relationship  
We spoke of earlier. And it  
ought to be an thankful hearts  
smiling

a Relationship <sup>is</sup> Born when  
a Lost Sinner reaches  
up to a Merciful God  
knowing full well that He  
has a great need only God  
can fill. And That's so true

This Relationship stems from  
a Lost Sinner crying  
out to the long suffering God and  
saying "Have Mercy on Me"  
Forgive My Sins and Save My  
Soul"

This Human/Divine Relationship  
is possible when the seeking  
sinner says to the loving  
God "But Out Are My Transgressions

"Wash Me thoroughly From  
my iniquities And cleanse  
me from my sins." Psalm 51:1/2

And the Relationship Becomes  
Real when "The Grateful  
Sinner Says to My Searching  
Savior "Come into my heart  
Lord Jesus And Save My"  
Soul."

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Let Me Ask, "Is there anyone  
here who needs to say "Come  
Into my heart Lord Jesus"  
And Save My Soul."

Anyone here who needs to say  
"Wash Me Lord/ Cleanse Me  
Lord" If so, you need to get  
this matter settled today."

Oh listers, when you do, the  
Angels in Heaven are Overcome  
with Joy"

8/ And here's Why Another ~~the~~  
Divine / Human Relationships  
Begins "Do you need it to  
Happen?" It can today And  
this Thanksgiving will have a  
Wonderful New Meaning For  
You When We Sing You Come

Perhaps there is someone here  
who can say, "I've had that  
Human / Relationship a long  
time / But the joy & grace belt  
is not there"

If that's you, then you need  
to pray as David did in Psalms  
51 Verse 12 "Restore Unto  
Me the joy of my Salvation"  
"Create in me a clean heart  
O God, And Renew a bright  
Spirit within me" (V.10)

Oh listen, you need to do this  
now And God is waiting you to  
do so

"Let me tell you,  
Radical Gratitude" Pleases  
God, Let Him know how you  
Feel Now!

Invitation Hymn # 308

Lets pray - then as we  
sing you come - it will  
make this thanks giving  
a joyful season and you  
will be in the heart of God!

Prayer

Lets Sing -