

The key to thanksgiving is to completely rely upon the Lord.

1. Thanksgiving flows from a heart that is relying upon God's Word (6-12).

1.A. Creation teaches us that we can trust God's Word (6-9).

1.A.1. The heavens reveal the power of God's Word (6; cf. Ps. 19). The vast, almost infinite nature of the universe is one of the most compelling displays of the power of God's Word. Our galaxy contains 100 billion stars, and it is estimated that there are at least 100 billion galaxies in the universe. God spoke the stars into existence with the same abundance as the sand on the sea shore.

1.A.2. The oceans reveal the power of God's Word (7). Two thirds of the earth is covered by water at an average depth of 14,000 feet. At its deepest point the ocean could cover Mount Everest with over a mile of water to spare. Yet, to God, they are like little mounds of grain kept in storehouses.

1.A.3. Our response to creation should cause us to fear the Lord, to stand in awe of Him, and to trust the power of His Word (8-9). We can trust God's Word. If God's Word has the power to create and sustain such a vast and intricate universe, you can completely rely upon His Word!

1.B. History teaches us that we can trust God's Word (10-12).

1.B.1. God overthrows the counsel of nations (10). He toppled the Tower of Babel; He destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah; He delivered Israel from the clutches of Pharaoh; He cast out the Canaanites from before Israel; He removed King Saul and established King David; He honored the kings who honored Him; He removed the kings who opposed Him; He sent Israel into captivity and brought them back again; He humbled Nebuchadnezzar and set him up again; He delivered Esther and the Jews from wicked Mordecai; He delivered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the fiery furnace, and He delivered Daniel from the den of lions; He protected the little Lord Jesus from the rage of Herod and from the scribes and Pharisees who sought occasion to take His life; He delivered up the Lord Jesus to die on a cruel cross, but He rose Him up the third day! You can trust the Word of God! You have cause for Thanksgiving this morning! God will keep the promises that He has made to you!

1.B.2. God's preservation of the nation of Israel teaches us that just as surely as God has preserved Israel as a nation, God will preserve all His chosen people who have trusted Christ by faith (12). "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." (1 Peter 2:9).

2. Thanksgiving flows from a heart that is relying upon God's working (13-22).

2.A. We cannot rely upon our own strength or resources (13-17). We can trust the Lord who sees all mankind at all times. He sees all our works, and He sees the innermost thoughts and intents of our hearts. God is not impressed with the strength of men or nations and neither should we (cf. 2 Kings 6:8-19).

2.B. We can rely upon the lovingkindness of our God (18-20). God is searching for men and women who are trusting Him so that He can deliver them, sustain them, and bless them. God's picture of mankind is very different than the world's picture. The world displays man as the master of his own destiny. God pictures man as facing death and famine, and in need of help. God is longs to pour out his blessings upon those who recognize their need and place their hope in the mercy of God.

Those who trust in their own resources have a hard time giving thanks in all things (1 Thessalonians 5:18). Your thanksgiving will ring hollow if you are still choosing to trust in your own resources.

3. Thanksgiving flows from a heart that has chosen to rejoice in truth (1-5).

3.A. We are commanded to rejoice (1), to praise the Lord with instruments (2), to sing unto Him a new song (3) and to play skillfully and loudly (3)! Each of these are commands. Praise is not circumstantial. Praise is a choice!

3.B. We are commanded to rejoice in God (4-5). At thanksgiving, most of the things we thank God for are focused on our relationships and circumstances. We should thank God for all those things, but we cannot forget to rejoice in God. We can lose our relationships, and our circumstances will change, but God will not change.

3.B.1. Rejoice that His Word is right (4a)!

3.B.2. Rejoice that He is faithful to His Word (4b)!

3.B.3. Rejoice that He loves righteousness and justice (5a)!

3.B.4. Rejoice that He has filled the earth with demonstrations of His lovingkindness (5b)!

Conclusion:

1. Have you experienced the lovingkindness of God that He has demonstrated through His Son, Jesus (Romans 5:8). Thanksgiving begins with trusting Jesus!
2. Is there an area of your life in which you are not relying upon God's Word?
3. Are you doubting God's faithfulness in some area of your life?
4. Are you willing to choose to thank God in that area?
5. Are you rejoicing in God Himself?