

Sunday, November 3, 2013—A Heart of Thanksgiving: Ingratitude the Seedbed of Sin

Introduction/Review

- Last week we began a new series titled, “A Heart of Thanksgiving.” To get started, we looked at all the different words in the bible associated with thanksgiving: thank, thanks, thanked, thankful, thankfulness, thanksgiving, thankworthy, and unthankful.
 - Thank--“To express **gratitude** for a favor; to make acknowledgments to one for kindness bestowed.”
 - Thanks—“Expression of **gratitude**; an acknowledgment made to express a sense of favor or kindness received. **Gratitude is the feeling or sentiment excited by kindness; thanks are the expression of that sentiment.**”
- When defined using *Webster’s 1828 Dictionary* each of the English words listed above were associated with notion of “gratitude.”
 - Gratitude—“An emotion of the heart, excited by a favor or benefit received; a sentiment of kindness or good will towards a benefactor; **thankfulness**. Gratitude is an agreeable emotion, consisting in or accompanied with good will to a benefactor, and a disposition to make a suitable return of benefits or services, or when no return can be made, with a desire to see the benefactor prosperous and happy. Gratitude is a virtue of the highest excellence, as it implies a feeling and generous heart, and a proper sense of duty.”
(*Webster’s 1828*)
- So if thankfulness and thanksgiving are the same thing then unthankfulness and ingratitude would also go together. This morning we want to consider the results of ingratitude and how a lack of thankfulness is the seedbed for sin.

The Unthankful Heart

- As we observed last Sunday, the word “unthankful” appears 2 times in 2 verses in the KJB. Each time the word appears there is a clear connection between ingratitude and evil.
- Luke 6:35—notice the connection between the “unthankful” and the “evil” that is made in this verse. The fundamental problem with someone who is evil is that they are unthankful.
 - Matthew 5:44-45
- Unthankful—“Not thankful; **ungrateful**; not making acknowledgments for good received.”
(*Webster’s 1828*)

- II Timothy 3:2—in his final epistle, at the end of his life Paul tells Timothy what the last days of the dispensation of grace are going to look like. Verses 2-7 describe the condition of mankind during that time. How would you describe people that manifest the attitudes and actions described in the passage? I would describe them as “evil.” According to verse 2 they are “unthankful” or in a state of “unthankfulness.”
 - Unthankfulness—“Neglect or omission of acknowledgment for good received; want of a sense of kindness or benefits; **ingratitude. Immoderate favors breed first unthankfulness, and afterwards hate.**”
- An inability to be thankful leads to hatred towards the one bestowing kind benefits. Eventually the unthankful heart seeks to repay kind benefits with evil.
 - Ingratitude—“1) Want of gratitude or sentiments of kindness for favors received; insensibility to favors, and want of a disposition to repay them; unthankfulness. 2) **Retribution of evil for good.**” (*Webster’s 1828*)
 - Ungrateful—“1) Not grateful; not feeling thankful for favors. 2) **Not making returns, or making ill returns for kindness.** 3) Making no returns for culture; as an ungrateful soil. 4) **Unpleasing; unacceptable. Harsh sounds are ungrateful to the ear.**” (*Webster’s 1828*)
 - Ungratefulness—“1) Ingratitude; want of due feelings of kindness for favors received; ill return for good. 2) **Disagreeableness; unpleasing quality.**” (*Webster’s 1828*)
- Romans 1:19-20—the gentiles knew who God was because God has showed himself unto them. One of the ways he did this was through his creation.
- Romans 1:21-23—notice the degenerative spiral in this verse.
 - The Gentiles knew who God was
 - They become unthankful not glorifying God as God *which leads to*
 - Becoming vain in their imaginations *which leads to*
 - Their foolish hearts being darkened *which leads to*
 - Professing themselves to be wise *which leads to*
 - The transferring to the glory due to the uncorruptible God into the worship of images made after corruptible things.
- Romans 1:24-32—all of the evil described in this passage finds its point of origin in verse 21 in their lack of thankfulness and glorifying God as God. Consider all the evil that resulted from a lack of thanksgiving.

The Example of Lucifer

- Isaiah 14:12—Lucifer was the God given name for the being later known as Satan. As the verse states Lucifer was cast out of the third heaven. The question is why?
- Ezekiel 28:12—the person being addressed in this verse is described as sealing up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Lucifer was the sum total of God’s creative genius in terms of wisdom and beauty.
- Ezekiel 28:13—he was decorated or clothed in precious stones. In addition, he had a built in system of musical orchestration.
 - Exodus 28:15-21—these are same stones there were set in the breastplate of Israel’s high priest.
 - Revelation 21:19-20—the heavenly Jerusalem is adorned and decorated with these same stones.
- Ezekiel 28:14—Lucifer was the anointed cherub who covered the throne of God. He had excess to the very presence of God.
- So who was Lucifer at this point in his career?
 - Sum total of wisdom and beauty
 - Clothed in every precious stone
 - Musical instrument for leading the angelica realm in the worship of God
 - Cherub who covered the throne of God
 - Had direct access to the presence of God
 - Second only to God himself.
- Ezekiel 28:15—there was nothing wrong with Lucifer in any way till he sinned against God.
- Isaiah 14:12-14—Lucifer’s fundamental problem was the unthankful, ungrateful, and unsatisfied with the station he had been given and wanted more.
- Ezekiel 28:16-19—he goes out and merchandises and traffics plan to supplant and replace God. The first sin was fundamentally a sin of ingratitude. Lucifer was not thankful/grateful for the exalted position he had been given and wanted more.

The Example of Eve

- Genesis 2:8-9, 15-17, 25—Adam and Eve are placed in the Garden of Eden with the charge of dressing and keeping the garden. Nothing is off limits to them except eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. They enjoy perfect and unbroken fellowship with each other and God.

- Genesis 3:1—Satan comes and subtly questions God’s word.
- Genesis 3:2—Eve takes the bait and engages Satan in conversation about what God said. Eve subtracts from God’s word by leaving off the “freely” (Gen. 3:16).
- Genesis 3:3—Eve adds to the word of God. God never said anything about not touching it (Gen. 3:17).
- Genesis 3:4—Satan flat out denies what God plainly said (Gen. 3:17).
- Genesis 3:5—Satan sows the seeds of doubt causing Eve to think that God was holding out on her. That there was more to be known. That God was not good and was purposely holding back and keeping knowledge from her.
- Genesis 3:6-7—Eve’s problem is the same as the folks we studied in Genesis 1 she was unsatisfied with the knowledge of God she presently possessed and tricked into thinking there was more. Eve was fundamentally unthankful and ungrateful for what God had given her.
- “Adam and Eve are, simply, painfully, ungrateful for what God gave. . . Our fall was, has always been, and always will be, that we aren’t satisfied in God and what He gives. We hunger for something more, something other . . . in the beginning, our eyes were already open. Our sight was perfect. Our vision let us see a world spilling with goodness. Our eyes fell on nothing but the glory of God. We saw God as he truly is: good. But we were lured by the deception that there was more to a full life, there was more to see. And, true, there was more to see: the ugliness we hadn’t beheld the sinfulness we hadn’t witnessed, the loss we hadn’t known. We eat. And, in an instant, we are blind. No longer do we see God as one we can trust. No longer do we perceive Him as wholly good.” (Voskamp, 15)
- Genesis 3:8-13—conflict, strife, and religion immediately enters into the picture. The allure of something more something greater leads to a life anguish and pain (Gen. 3:16-19).
- Ingratitude is the seedbed of sin. We kill contentment by comparison.
- I Thessalonians 5:18