

Sunday, July 4, 2021—Colossians 3:15 And Be Ye Thankful

Colossians 3:15

- **And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.**
- The final expression “be ye thankful” is also in the imperative mood. Paul is commending the Colossians and extension us to “be thankful.”

The Unthankful Heart

- 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 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

The Seedbed of Joy

- Ephesians 2:4—speaks of a God who is rich in mercy and the great love wherewith he loved us. The Psalmist repeatedly pleads with Israel to give thanks unto the Lord because “his mercy endures for ever.”
- Where did the Godhead most visibly demonstrate the mercy and great love he had for us? At the cross.
- Genesis 3:15—immediately after giving into ingratitude God promised that he would send a seed to redeem mankind for their sins. To do for man what he could not do for himself.
- Acts 2:23—in eternity past the Godhead had an eternal life conference at which time it was decided the God the Son would die as a payment for sin.
 - Philippians 2:5-8—this is why Christ was incarnated. For the purpose of suffering the death of the cross.
- Luke 22:19—on the eve of fulfilling the reason for which Christ came, knowing that the time of his death was at hand, and with full knowledge not only the impending physical agony but spiritual separation from the father that he would endure Christ gave thanks.
- Matthew 26:27—Jesus Christ gave thanks both for his broken body and his shed blood. Jesus offers thanksgiving for that which will break him, crush him, and cause separation from God the father. Christ was thankful for the privilege of being able to lay down his own life in payment for and they by accomplish eternal salvation for you and I.

- Hebrews 12:2—why did Christ endure the cross? For the joy set before him. Christ could give thanks to God despite pain, anguish, suffering, and separation because he knew the joy it would produce to have made satisfaction for sin.
- There is no joy without thanksgiving. This is the Grace Life, the life of *charis*, the life of “thanksgiving” (*Eucharistia*), the life that offers itself service to God motivated by a profound appreciation for what God has done on our behalf. It is the only life and lifestyle capable of experiencing joy to its fullest capacity.
- When we quench thanksgiving we kill joy.
- Colossians 3:15—Paul is literally telling the Colossians and by extension us to be *Eucharisteō*. To have the same mindset and attitude that Christ had on the eve of his death.
 - Colossians 1:12
 - Colossians 2:7
- I Thessalonians 5:18—in everything give *Eucharisteō*. God’s will is for us to have the same mental and heart attitude that Christ demonstrated for us. To be able in the midst of the circumstance and situation to be able to find something to be thankful for.
- Philippians 4:6—this life of continuous prayer (I Thess. 5:17) that we are to be living as members of the body of Christ does not and cannot function outside the realm of giving thanks. Paul tells us to make our requests known unto God with “thanksgiving” (*Eucharistia*). The ungrateful heart is not capable of offering prayers with “thanksgiving” because it fundamentally believes that God is not good and is hardened from seeing the goodness of God and is evil.
 - “Evil is that—a hole in the goodness of God. Evil is all that lacks the goodness of God, a willful choice to turn away from the full goodness of God to that emptiness of His goodness.” (Voskamp, 88)
- Psalm 100:4—“The only real prayers are the one mouthed with thankful lips. Because gratitude ushers into the other side of prayer, into the heart of the God . . . Prayer to be prayer, to have the power to change anything must first speak thanks . . . Prayer without ceasing is only possible in a life of continual thanks.” (Voskamp, 60)
- Colossians 2:7—a life lived with knowledge of and in gratitude for all Christ has done on our behalf ought to be abounding with “thanksgiving” (*Eucharistia*).
- Ephesians 4:29-31—Ann Voskamp in her book *One Thousand Gifts* of why we choose to kill joy in our lives with bitterness and ingratitude.

- “Do I really smother my own joy because I believe that anger achieves more than love? That Satan’s way is more powerful, more practical, more fulfilling in my daily life than Jesus’ way? Why else get angry? Isn’t it because I think complain, exasperation, resent, will pound me up into the full life I really want? When I choose—and it is a choice—to crush joy with bitterness, am I not purposefully choosing to take the way of the Prince of Darkness? Choosing the angry way of Lucifer because I think its more effective—more expedient—than giving thanks?” (Voskamp, 1236)

Thanksgiving The Key to Contentment

- Matthew 15:32-39—notice how the crowds not enough became more than enough through the giving of thanks. Don’t misunderstand me what I am after here is the principle. I am not suggesting that God is working this way during the dispensation of Grace. No matter how much or how intently you pray over your food God is not going to physically multiply it as he did here. If you are counting in this sort of divine working to furnish your Thanksgiving table this Thursday you will be sadly disappointed.
- I am after the principle here. When give thanks for what we currently have and possess we are able to find our stratification and contentment in what and who we already are not in what we do not currently possess.
- Philippians 4:6—as we saw last week all our prayers and requests are to be offered with thanksgiving.
- Psalms 100:4—thanksgiving is the proper heart attitude to enter his courts with.
- I Thessalonians 5:17-18—as we pray without ceasing Paul instructs us to give thanks IN every circumstances or situation.
- It is giving of thanks IN EVERYTHING that teaches us to be content. WE ARE NOT BY NATURE CONTENTED PEOPLE! CONTENTMENT IS A LEARNED PROCESS.
- Philippians 4:11—Paul had to learn to be content in “whatsoever state” state he found himself. Paul had to learn to be content regardless of his circumstances.
- According to *Webster’s 1828 Dictionary* the English word “learn” means “To gain knowledge of; to acquire knowledge or ideas of something before unknown.”
- Philippians 4:12—Paul “learned” to be content regardless of his circumstances.
- Please notice that within the context of the passage Paul’s learning to be content in verses 11-12 does not happen apart from his IN EVERYTHING offering PRAY AND SUPPLICATION WITH THANKSGIVING in verse 6.

- Through the process of practicing I Thessalonians 5:18 “IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS” in his pray and thought life Paul LEARNS to be content regardless of the situation he finds himself in.
- A Heart of Thanksgiving is able to turn Paul’s WANT or NOT ENOUGH into CONTENTMENT.
- Philippians 4:13—the “all things” in this verse has a context in verse 12. Paul can handle and face time of not enough as well as times of more than enough through Christ working in Paul.
- Today in this dispensation when you pray and give thanks over the seven loaves of bread and few small fish God will physically multiply them he will teach us to be content with what we have regardless of the number.