

Barriers To Thanks-Giving

- Thoughtlessness
- Faithlessness
- Discontentment
- Selfishness
- Failure Through Neglect

The lesson is entitled, "Barriers To Thanks-Giving".

Consider, if you would, these few Bible passages...

- "In every thing **give THANKS**:
for this, is the **WILL** of God, **IN** Christ Jesus, concerning you." ([1Thess.5:18](#))
- "**giving THANKS** always, for **ALL things** unto God and the Father
IN the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ;" ([Eph.5:20](#))
- "**By Him** therefore, **LET** us **offer** the **SACRIFICE** of **praise** to God **CONTINUALLY**,
that is, the **fruit** of our **LIPS**, **giving THANKS** to His Name." ([Heb.13:15](#))

A story printed in Dear Abby (dated 11/21/1996),
Tells of a young college student, named **Joe**,
who shared an apartment with three other graduate students,
who also had part-time jobs while in college.

- Each took turns preparing the meals, which usually consisted of canned vegetables, hamburger meat, baked potato, and was barely edible.
- No matter how poor the meal was, **Joe** always said, "**THAT WAS A MIGHTY FINE DINNER.**"
- One evening the meal was worse than usual, and **Joe** made his regular comment.
One said, "*Why do you always say that, when this was hardly fit for human consumption?*"
- **Joe** answered, "I come from a family of 11 children.
My mother would spend all afternoon in the kitchen preparing dinner.
One night when she called us to the table, there was only a plate and straw on each plate.
 - My father looked at it and asked, "What is this straw doing on my plate?"
 - Mother said, "Oh! you noticed.
This is the first time you have given any indication, that you noticed what was on your plate."
- **Joe** then said,
"I vowed that I would always express my appreciation, to the person who had prepared my meal."

We often take for granted, things for which we should be grateful.
Let's consider some "**BARRIERS** to thanks-giving", with a view of breaking down those barriers.

So, one barrier to thanks-giving is,

I. Thoughtlessness

A. It's interesting that "think" (T-H-I-N-K) and "thank" (T-H-A-N-K) Both come from the same Anglo-Saxon root word.

- Often, we are not grateful because we just don't think (T-H-I-N-K).
- We don't **THINK** of what God has done for us.
- We don't **THINK** of God's love and care for us.
- Many are like hogs feeding at the trough, eating, and never looking up, to see where their food is coming from.

B. Many of the Psalms, are beautiful songs of Thanks-giving.

Notice with me, the lengthy reading of [Psm.30:1-12](#), which says,

- "I will **EXTOL** Thee, O Lord; for Thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me.

² O Lord my God, I cried unto Thee, and **Thou** hast **HEALED** me.

³ O Lord, **Thou** hast **BROUGHT UP** my soul from the grave:
Thou hast **KEPT** me **ALIVE**, that I should not go down to the pit.

⁴ Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of His,
and give **THANKS** at the remembrance of His holiness.

⁵ For His anger endureth but a moment; **IN His favour, IS LIFE**:
weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

⁶ And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.

⁷ Lord, **BY Thy FAVOUR**, Thou hast **MADE** my mountain to stand strong:
Thou didst hide Thy face, and I was troubled.

⁸ I cried to Thee, O Lord; and unto the Lord I made supplication.

⁹ What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit?
Shall the dust praise Thee? shall it declare Thy truth?

¹⁰ Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me: Lord, be **Thou** my **HELPER**.

¹¹ Thou hast **TURNED** for me, my mourning into **DANCING**:
Thou hast **PUT OFF** my sackcloth, and **GIRDED** me with gladness;

¹² to the **END**, that my glory may sing praise to Thee, and **NOT BE SILENT**.
O Lord my God, I will give **THANKS** unto Thee for ever." (that's [Psm.30:1-12](#))

[Psa.103:1-5](#) reads,

- “Bless the Lord, O my soul:
and all that is within me, bless His holy Name.

² Bless the Lord, O my soul, and **forget NOT** all His benefits:

³ Who **FORGIVETH** all thine iniquities; Who **HEALETH** all thy diseases;

⁴ Who **REDEEMETH** thy life from destruction;
Who **CROWNETH** thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;

⁵ Who **SATISFIETH** thy mouth with good things;
so that thy youth is **RENEWED** like the eagle's.”

[Psa.105:1-3](#) reads,

- “O **give THANKS** unto the Lord; call upon His Name:
MAKE KNOWN His deeds among the people.

² Sing unto Him, sing psalms unto Him: **TALK** ye, of all His wondrous works.

³ **GLORY** ye, **IN** His holy Name: **LET** the heart of them **REJOICE**, that **SEEK** the Lord.”

And [Psa.106:103](#) reads,

- “Praise ye the Lord. O **give THANKS** unto the Lord;
for He is good: for His mercy endureth for ever.

² Who can **UTTER** the mighty acts of the Lord?
who can **SHEW** forth all His praise?

³ Blessed are they that **KEEP** judgment,
and he that **DOETH** righteousness at **ALL** times.”

Thus, the Psalmist enumerates the ways, in which he had been blessed by God.

In what ways are we blessed?

- We need to give **THANKS** for the printed Word, song books, this building we meet in, our teachers, song leaders, and our spiritual fellowship with the Father and each other.
- We need to give **THANKS** for forgiveness, redemption, knowledge of Truth, and God's mercy and grace.
- We usually give **THANKS** for the big things, but often, we forget the small things.

**Dr. Paul Rees tells the true story,
of a man whose job was to transport people, who had been committed to a mental hospital.**

After delivering a patient one day, he was walking back to his car, when he heard a voice call out,

- **"Hey you!"** (It came from one of the upper floors.)

Looking up, the man called back, **"Are you speaking to me?"** **"Yes, I am,"** came the reply.

- **"I want to ask you a question. Have you ever THANKED God, for having a healthy mind?"**

To say the least, the driver was stunned. He said,

- **"I suddenly realized that I had been bringing people to this facility for some fifteen years; yet, I had never once THANKED God for having a healthy mind!"**

Truly, let us learn to **give THANKS** for the things, we so often take for granted.

barriers to thanks-giving...

II. Faithlessness

A. Giving thanks, is the spontaneous expression of those who have a genuine faith in God.

B. People who refuse to believe, can never really be Thankful.

- “For the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: ²¹ because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him **NOT** as God, **NEITHER** were Thankful; but became **VAIN** in their imaginings, and their foolish heart was **DARKENED**.” (reads [Rom.1:20-21](#))

C. All gifts Come from God

- “Every good **GIFT**, and every perfect **GIFT**, is **FROM** above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” ([Jms.1:17](#))

If we don't give thanks, do we really believe all things come from God?

Could a Poor response to God, be due to a poor faith in God? ...sobering questions, indeed.

barriers to thanksgiving...

III. Discontentment

A. Before we can genuinely be thankful, we must develop contentment.

- Paul said, “**NOT** that I speak in respect of **WANT**: for I have **LEARNED**, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to **Be CONTENT**.
¹² I **KNOW** both **HOW** to be abased, and I **KNOW HOW** to abound:
EVERY WHERE, and in **ALL things**, I am **INSTRUCTED** both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.” ([Phil.4:11-12](#))
- “godliness **WITH** contentment, is **GREAT GAIN**.
⁷ For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain, we can carry nothing out.
⁸ And **HAVING** food and raiment, let us **Be** therewith **CONTENT**.” ([1Tim.6:6-8](#))

Too many suffer from the “thanks...but” syndrome.

- Some are grateful, but are not satisfied.
- Some say “thanks,” but ask, “how can I receive more?”
- Some say “thanks,” but ask “why didn't I receive something else?”

B. Consider how the early pilgrims were grateful.

- Of the 102 who started on the voyage of the Mayflower, 46 had died in the first year.
- They had only a few personal possessions and lived in crude log huts.
- After those first hard years, they had a custom, that at their Thanks-giving Day dinner
 - there would be five kernels of corn on each plate.
 - Before the meal, each person would be required to mention five things for which to be thankful.
 - The five kernels reminded them, that at one time, it was the daily allotment of corn
 - five kernels per person, per day.

Instead of complaining about our hardships and problems, let us enumerate the things, for which we CAN be Thankful.

IV. Selfishness

A. Those who have been blessed by God, must learn to Be a Blessing to others.

Consider with me, the lengthy reading of,

B. [Matt.18:23-35](#)

- “Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.

²⁴ And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.

²⁵ But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

²⁶ The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

²⁷ Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

²⁸ But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

²⁹ And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

³⁰ And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

³¹ So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord, all that was done.

³² Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:

³³ shouldest not thou also, have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?

³⁴ And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

³⁵ So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, IF ye from your hearts forgive NOT every one his brother their trespasses.”

The servant owed his master an enormous sum.

Those who are much smarter than I, have said,

- Each talent equaled 91 pounds.
- There are 16 oz. in a pound.
- He owed 10,000 talents, and when multiplied, equaled about 16 million dollars.
- It took about 15 years of labor to earn one talent;
- thus, it would take 150,000 years of labor, to pay his debt.

His fellow servant owed him 100 denari,

- which was the common day's wages;
- thus, it would take about 100 days of labor to pay his debt.

Not showing mercy to others

- indicates that we are not **THANKFUL**, for the mercy God has shown to us ([Matt.18:35](#))

C. Selfishness says:

- "Why should I be thankful? I earned it myself."
- "I deserved more, than I received."
- "Why help others, they haven't helped me."

barriers to thanksgiving...

V. Failure Through Neglect

Consider,

A. [Luke 17:11-19](#)

- "And it came to pass, as He (that is, Jesus) went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

¹² And as He entered into a certain village,
there met Him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off:
¹³ and they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

¹⁴ And when He saw them, He said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests.
And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.

¹⁵ And one of them, when he saw that he was healed,
turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God,
¹⁶ and fell down on his face at His feet, **giving Him THANKS**: and he was a Samaritan.

¹⁷ And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?

¹⁸ There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.

¹⁹ And He said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole."

No doubt, the other nine lepers were thankful for their healing,

- but they failed to show their appreciation.

Most of us are thankful for God's blessings,

- but through **NEGLECT**, we fail to **EXPRESS** our appreciation.

IN-CLOSING,

A. Let's resolve to be a **THANKFUL** people.

B. In Africa, there is a fruit called the “sweet berry” (also “miracle berry”).

- It is so called because it changes a person's taste, so that everything eaten tastes sweet and pleasant.
- Sour fruit, even if eaten several hours after the “sweet berry”, becomes sweet and delicious.

Thanksgiving is the "sweet berry" of christianity.

- When our hearts are filled with gratitude, nothing seems unpleasant, or overbearing to us.

When Sorrowed,

- we can sweeten our grief, with gratitude.

When Burdened,

- We can lighten our burden, by singing God's praises.

When Disappointed,

- we can dispel our heartache, by making others grateful.

When Sick,

- we can grow strong in our soul, **THANKING** God that we are healthy and strong **SPIRITUALLY**.

C. Have we shown our appreciation to God, for what He has Done for us?

- We need to be **THANKFUL** for the salvation God has provided.
- We should show our appreciation, by Obeying Him, and continue in faithfulness.

If you have a spiritual need, the Lord invites you, and we await to assist you.

Come **believing** ([Heb.11:6](#)), **repenting** ([Lk.13:3](#)), **confessing** ([Acts 8:37](#)), and be **Baptized** INTO Christ ([Rom.6:3-4](#)),
While together we stand and sing.