

Sunday, October 27, 2013—A Heart of Thanksgiving: Defining Our Terms

Introduction

- Two weeks ago before the Bible Conference we concluded our series of studies on the Battlefield of the Mind by looking at Philippians 4:6-8. Throughout that series I mentioned in passing the importance of the role of Thanksgiving in the battlefield of the mind, however, we did not stop to discuss it in any detail. My reasoning was that I did not want the series to get bogged down or become muddled or confused.
- What I decided to do is take a couple Sundays between the conference and the Thanksgiving Holiday to study the issue of Thanksgiving exclusively. I fear sometimes that we have superficial or even commercialized concept of Thanksgiving. A heart of Thanksgiving ought to be part of the grace life all the time and not just during certain seasons of the year.
- Philippians 4:6—we are supposed to with “thanksgiving” let our requests be made known unto God.
- So what is thanksgiving and why is so important in our lives as believers? I hope you will make a point to join us every Sunday over the next month as we consider this important subject from God’s word.

Defining Our Terms

- There is a cluster of related words used throughout the Bible to express the notion of thanksgiving.
- Thank—occurs 27 times in 26 verses in the KJB. This English word serves as the root word for all the other related words so it is a critical word to understand. *Webster’s 1828 Dictionary* defines “thank” as: “To express **gratitude** for a favor; to make acknowledgments to one for kindness bestowed.”
 - Romans 1:8—“I thank my God”
- Thanks—occurs 73 times in 71 verses in the KJB.
- *Webster’s 1828 Dictionary* defines “thanks” as: “generally in the plural. 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.** Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory. 1 Cor.15. He took bread and gave thanks to God. Acts.27.”
- As the dictionary indicates, “thanks” is a noun and it denotes action. Therefore, in the Bible we find the words give, gave, giving attached to the word “thanks.”

- Psalm 106:1—“give thanks”
 - Daniel 6:10—“gave thanks”
 - Mark 14:23—“had given thanks”
 - I Corinthians 14:6—“giving of thanks”
 - I Corinthians 14:7—“gives thanks”
 - II Corinthians 1:11—“thanks may be given”
- “Thanks” is something that needs to be given as an expression of the feeling of gratitude.
 - **Thanked**—occurs 3 times in 3 verses in the KJB. Denotes the one who receives expressions of **gratitude** from another. “Having received expression of gratitude.” (*Webster’s 1828*)
 - Acts 28:15—“he thanked God”
 - Romans 6:17—“God be thanked”
 - **Thankful**—occurs 3 times in 3 verses in the KJB. “**Grateful**; impressed with a sense of kindness received, and ready to acknowledge it. The Lord’s supper is to be celebrated with a thankful remembrance of his sufferings and death.” (*Webster’s 1828*)
 - Romans 1:21—“neither were thankful”
 - Colossians 3:15—“be ye thankful”
 - **Thankfulness**—occurs 1 time in 1 verse in the KJB. “Expression of **gratitude**; acknowledgment of a favor. 1) **Gratitude**; a lively sense of good received.” (*Webster’s 1828*)
 - Acts 24:3—“with all thankfulness”
 - **Thanksgiving**—occurs 28 times in 27 verses in the KJB. “Rendering thanks for good received. 1) The act of rendering thanks or **expressing gratitude** for favors or mercies or good.” (*Webster’s 1828 Dictionary*)
 - Psalm 26:7—“publish with the voice of thanksgiving”
 - Isaiah 51:3—“thanksgiving, and the voice of melody”
 - II Corinthians 4:15—“thanksgiving”
 - II Corinthians 9:11—“thanksgiving”
 - **Thankworthy**—occurs 1 time in 1 verse in the KJB.
 - I Peter 2:19—“thankworthy”
 - **Unthankful**—occurs 2 times in 2 verses in the KJB. “Not thankful; **ungrateful**; not making acknowledgments for good received.” (*Webster’s 1828*)

- Luke 6:35—“unthankful and to the evil”
 - II Timothy 3:2—“unthankful”
- Please note the connection in these verses between a lack of thankfulness/gratitude and evil. *Webster’s 1828 Dictionary* defines the state of “unthankfulness” as: “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.**”
 - Throughout this study I have bolded a key synonym for “thank” and all its related descriptors in each definition, the word “gratitude.” For the sake of completeness we need to define “gratitude” and its related descriptors.
 - 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*)
 - 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*)

Conclusion

- Luke 6:35—notice the connection between unthankfulness, ingratitude, and evil.
- II Timothy 3:1-7—what would you call the person described in these verses? I would call them evil. Notice that tucked within this description of the evil that will comprise the last days of the body of Christ is “unthankfulness.”
- In our next study we will demonstrate from the Word of God how unthankfulness and ingratitude are the seedbed of sin.