

## A Spirit of Gratitude

Deuteronomy 8:6-20

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### I. The Resurrection and Gratitude (cf. 2 Cor 4:13-15)

*13 And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed and therefore I spoke," we also believe and therefore speak, 14 knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you. 15 For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.*

Note that Paul insists that by faith we are able to speak God's praise even when afflicted (13 cf. Ps 116) because *we know* that God has promised to raise all those who love Him from the dead even as He raised the Lord Jesus from the dead (14). So how does the resurrection enable us to speak God's praise in our afflictions? The resurrection reminds us that God always has some good purpose even in our afflictions. Paul writes in v. 15 that "*all things [even afflictions] are for your sakes.*" The resurrection reveals that everything works together for the \_\_\_\_\_ of those who love the Lord (Rom 8:28). This gift of knowing that God is on the side of all those who love Him even in the midst of suffering and affliction *causes thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God*. The resurrection transforms our ingratitude into \_\_\_\_\_.

### II. A Diagnosis of Ingratitude

#### A. The Pervasiveness of Ingratitude (Romans 1:18-21 cf. Titus 3:3)

When Paul indicts the human race in Romans 1, one of the reasons he holds us guilty in God's sight is that we are not \_\_\_\_\_. Paul writes that all men by nature are deserving of God's wrath, "*because although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened*" (Rom 1:21).

#### B. The Source of Ingratitude (cf. Deuteronomy 8:6-20)

The Scriptures declare that *the source of our ingratitude is not in our \_\_\_\_\_ but in our \_\_\_\_\_*. We are envious and, therefore, we are unthankful. After all, we are often unthankful even when we are incredibly prosperous. God warned Israel against such ingratitude as He prepared them to enter the promised land (8:11-17): "*Beware...lest you forget Yahweh your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt...and you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth.'*" In the midst of their plenty, they would be tempted to credit themselves and their own ingenuity for their prosperity rather than thanking their God who "*gives [them] power to get wealth*" (18).

Sadly, our fathers fell into this temptation repeatedly. They forgot God in the midst of their prosperity. God recounts in Hosea 13:6, "*When [My people] had pasture, they were filled; They were filled and their heart was exalted; Therefore they forgot Me.*" This pattern has repeated itself numerous times throughout history and is happening now in America.

### III. Gratitude in Action

#### A. The Call to Pervasive Gratitude (Phil 4:6; Col 2:7; 1 Thes 5:18)

Paul exhorts the Colossians to be “*abounding in [the faith] with \_\_\_\_\_*” (Col 2:7). Similarly, he commands the Thessalonians, “*in everything give \_\_\_\_\_*” (1 Thes 5:18). And he reminds the Philippians that even our prayers of petition are to be offered “*with \_\_\_\_\_*” (Phil 4:6). If we are in Christ, then God is on our side and we can give thanks *in everything*.

#### B. A Proclamation of Thanksgiving (cf. Psalm 117)

President George Washington wrote in the first Thanksgiving Day Proclamation:

*Whereas it is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey his will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly to implore his protection and favor-- and whereas both Houses of Congress have by their joint Committee requested me to recommend to the People of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many signal favors of Almighty God especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness.*

*Now therefore I do recommend and assign [the 4<sup>th</sup>] Thursday ... of November next to be devoted by the People of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being, who is the beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be—*

*That we may then all unite in rendering unto him our sincere and humble thanks...*

*And also that we may then unite in most humbly offering our prayers and supplications to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations and beseech him to pardon our national and other transgressions...*

Our forefathers conceived of Thanksgiving as a day when we as a nation were to give thanks to Almighty God for His blessings and to petition Him to continue these blessings to us as a people. Thanksgiving was oriented vertically; it was an attempt to fulfill Deuteronomy 8:10: “*When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land which He has given you*” (Dt 8:10).

### IV. Conclusion