

Thanksgiving Sunday

## A Thankful Heart

1 Thessalonians 5:4-25

### "Thank You"

- Thank you derives from "think," it originally meant, "I will remember what you did for me"
- Obrigado (Portuguese) "I am in your debt"
- Merci (French) is even more graphic: derived from "mercy," as in begging for mercy

### The Condition of Our Hearts

But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

1 Samuel 16:7

Guard your heart with all diligence, for from it flow springs of life.

Proverb 4:23

What does it mean to have a thankful heart?

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

### A Stark Contrast

"They knew God," that is through conscience and creation, God was visibly manifest to them and experientially manifest to them. But even though they knew God through creation and conscience, he says, "They did not honor Him as God or give thanks."

Romans 1:21

### Understanding Who We Are: The Beloved

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good.

Genesis 1:1-4

The world tells you many lies about who you are, and you simply have to be realistic enough to remind yourself of this. Every time you feel hurt, offended, or rejected, you have to dare to say to yourself: 'These feelings, strong as they may be, are not telling me the truth about myself.'

The truth, even though I cannot feel it right now, is that I am the chosen child of God, precious in God's eyes, called the Beloved from all eternity, and held safe in an everlasting belief.'

Henri Nouwen  
(The Life of the Beloved)

But when I let these voices move to the background of my life and listen to that small soft voice calling me the Beloved, I know that there is nothing to fear and that dying is the greatest act of love, the act that leads me into the eternal embrace of my God whose love is everlasting.

Henri Nouwen



- Above all the kingdom of God is about a love relationship with the greatest lover of the universe.
- The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save. He will rejoice over you with gladness, he will quiet you by his love, he will exult over you with loud singing. Zephaniah 3:17

The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin

Exodus 34:6-7

Neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God

Romans 8:39

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ.

Mark 10:21

I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.

Ephesians 2:4-5

"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love."

## Awareness Of God's Work In Our Lives

Turn to me now, while there is time.  
Give me your hearts. Come with  
fasting, weeping, and mourning.  
Don't tear your clothing in your  
grief, but tear your hearts instead.

Joel 2:12-23

- ▶ We seek to be transformed because we are overtaken by this grace, overwhelmed by God's love and grace.
- ▶ "Just as Christ made the ultimate sacrifice for us, He desires that we learn to be givers in our everyday lives in response to His generosity." (John Frank)

Transformation originates from the One who transforms. As leaders, we never do the changing. We never have the total power of insight. We never carry the power on our own shoulders. We can merely enter the drama, the first part of which is allowing our feet to be washed.

David Young

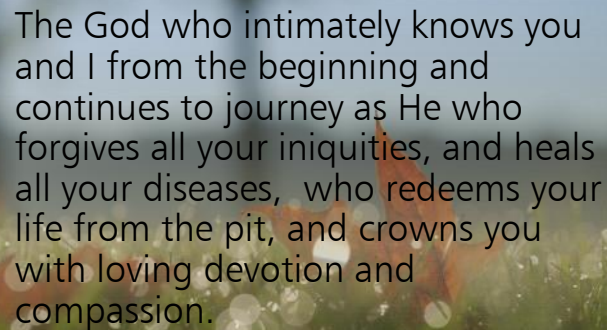
Looking to Jesus the pioneer and  
perfecter of our faith,

Hebrews 12:2

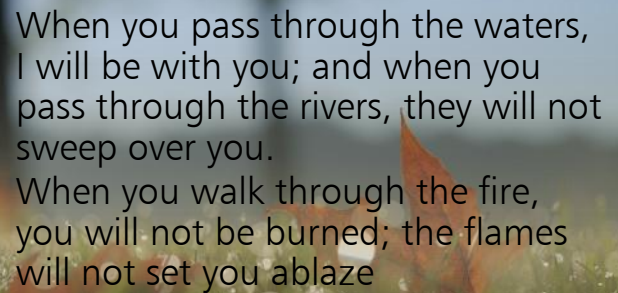
Let Us make man in Our image,  
after Our likeness, to rule over the  
fish of the sea and the birds of the  
air and the livestock, and over all  
the earth itself and every of creature  
that crawls upon it.

Genesis 1:26





The God who intimately knows you and I from the beginning and continues to journey as He who forgives all your iniquities, and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, and crowns you with loving devotion and compassion.

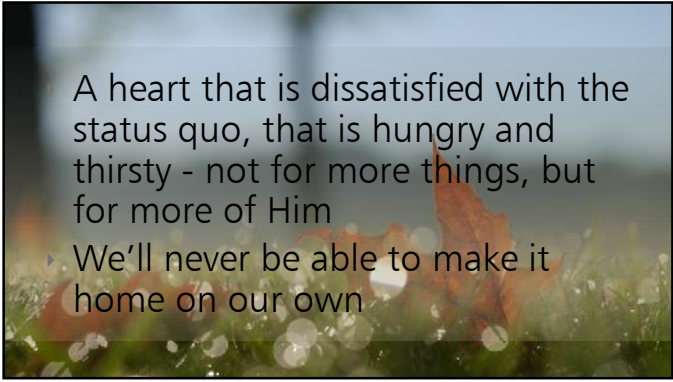


When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze

Isaiah 43:2

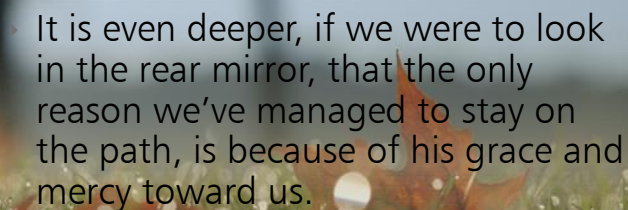


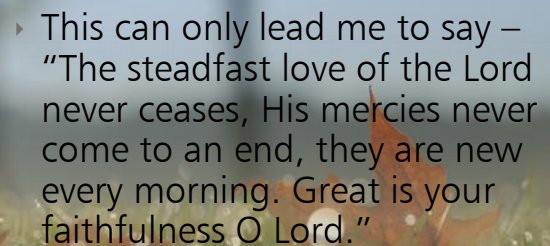
## A Thirsty Heart



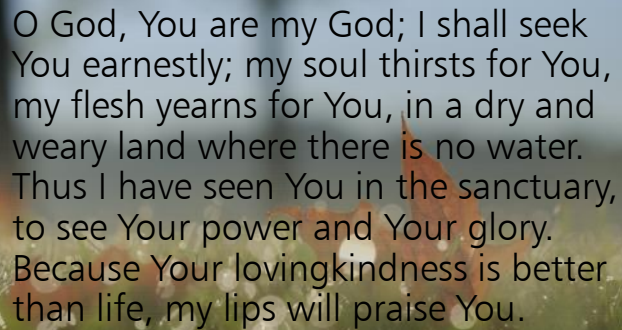
A heart that is dissatisfied with the status quo, that is hungry and thirsty - not for more things, but for more of Him

- ▶ We'll never be able to make it home on our own

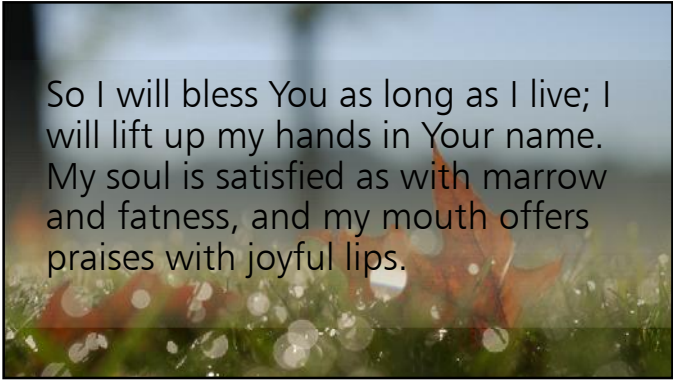
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- ▶ It is even deeper, if we were to look in the rear mirror, that the only reason we've managed to stay on the path, is because of his grace and mercy toward us.

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- ▶ This can only lead me to say – "The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, His mercies never come to an end, they are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness O Lord."

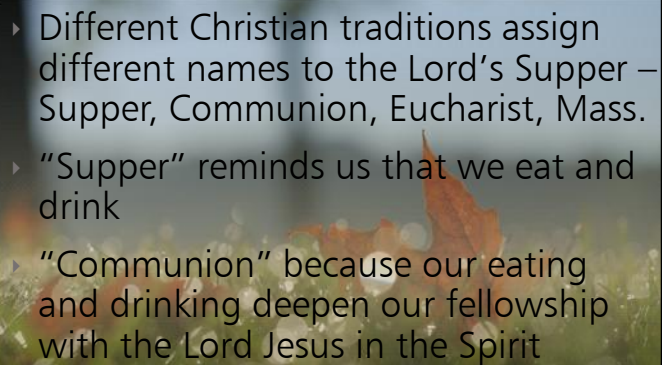
Lamentations 3:22-23

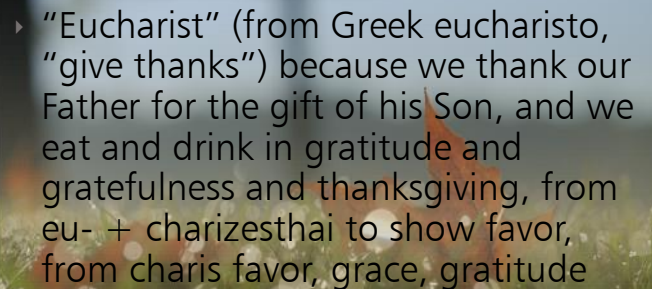


O God, You are my God; I shall seek You earnestly; my soul thirsts for You, my flesh yearns for You, in a dry and weary land where there is no water. Thus I have seen You in the sanctuary, to see Your power and Your glory. Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, my lips will praise You.



So I will bless You as long as I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name. My soul is satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth offers praises with joyful lips.

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- Different Christian traditions assign different names to the Lord's Supper – Supper, Communion, Eucharist, Mass.
  - "Supper" reminds us that we eat and drink
  - "Communion" because our eating and drinking deepen our fellowship with the Lord Jesus in the Spirit

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- "Eucharist" (from Greek eucharisto, "give thanks") because we thank our Father for the gift of his Son, and we eat and drink in gratitude and gratefulness and thanksgiving, from eu- + charizesthai to show favor, from charis favor, grace, gratitude