

Introduction:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHv6vTKD6lg&feature=youtu.be>
 - *"But Jesus replied, "Leave her alone. Why criticize her for doing such a good thing to me? You will always have the poor among you, and you can help them whenever you want to. But you will not always have me. She has done what she could and has anointed my body for burial ahead of time. I tell you the truth, wherever the Good News is preached throughout the world, this woman's deed will be remembered and discussed.""* (Mark 14:6-9, NLT)
 - Jesus in vs. 9, presents us with a woman whose Thanksgiving would always be remembered. How about yours? How do you weigh in? **A Thanksgiving that is remembered is one that is expressed.**
 - Gratitude is the highest duty of the believer and the supreme virtue, the fountain from which all other blessings flow.
 - If Jesus said she would be remembered and discussed, my thoughts are: Let's do it!
 - First we will be looking at the tragedy of no thanksgiving/no gratitude expressed. Then we are going to look at three passages from which shine Thanksgiving and Fathers pleasure.
- I. **The Tragedy of No Thanksgiving** To have no gratitude is a tragedy.
- A. The potential path of ingratitude is a dark and confused spiritual life. In other words, ingratitude grows severe negatives in your life. We are looking at the opposite of what this woman did in our passage.
1. *"Yes, they knew God, but they wouldn't worship him as God or even give him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of what God was like. As a result, their minds became dark and confused."* (Romans 1:21 NLT).
 2. This is not the sort of verse that is likely to make you feel happy on Thanksgiving Day. Not too many people will read this verse before carving their turkey and sharing a big meal together. It is more like the anti-Thanksgiving verse.
 3. And it does not matter what translation you read this verse from, it still says the same thing. It is pretty bleak no matter how you translate it.
- B. The real problem here is that Paul is talking about all of us, the whole human race, not just some "pagan" part of it that never goes to church and doesn't read the Bible. He is talking about those who 'knew' God but chose:
1. Not to worship Him. They chose to ignore His character and who He is.
 2. Not to give Him thanks. They chose to ignore that it was He who provided for them.
 3. They knew God but did not honor Him nor give Him thanks.
 4. Two of the easiest ways that happens is familiarity and entitlement.
 - a) Familiarity - we take for granted those who are closest to us.
 - b) Entitlement - we begin to believe out of familiarity that we deserve...le.

- c) One of the things I admire about Israeli's is that because they have to serve in the military after high school graduation, there seems to be a greater appreciation for what they have as a nation. You do not get the sense of entitlement that you have in our nation.
- C. The fruit of their action was that their thinking became futile, their hearts were darkened. Because of the darkness of their heart they lost their way in life.
 - 1. God reveals Himself to us, we just refuse to worship and give Him thanks. So the deeper problem is ignoring the knowledge we already have of Him. Truth always demands a response. No one can be neutral in the spiritual arena.
 - 2. We are all unthankful by nature because we all take for granted the goodness of the Lord. We think God owes us something when in fact He owes us nothing at all. We think we are entitled because of who made us. Ingratitude is the leprosy of the soul. It eats away on the inside, destroys our happiness, cripples our joy, withers our compassion, paralyzes our praise and renders us numb to all the blessings of God.
 - 3. The truth is, every good gift comes down from the Father of lights above. James 1:17
 - 4. When we are not thankful for what we have received, we open the door to every other sin imaginable. We must realize that gratitude/thanksgiving is first and foremost a matter of the heart. And we see this in the passages of my next point.

II. The Blessings of Thanksgiving

- A. I want to compare and contrast our text with two other passages.
 - 1. Mark 14:9 a woman anoints Jesus head before He is crucified.
 - 2. Luke 7:36-50 A sinful woman anoints Jesus feet, wipes them with her hair and kisses them over and over.
 - 3. Luke 17:12-19 Ten Lepers are healed by Jesus but only one, a Samaritan, returns to give thanks to Jesus.
- B. There are three parts/people to each account
 - 1. Jesus - everything revolves around Jesus. He is here to reveal the Father.
 - 2. A person who has been touched by His love and responds with expressed gratitude.
 - 3. We have the proud who stand as an antithesis to what is happening in the passage.
- C. Mark 14:1-9. A woman anoints Jesus before His death and burial.
 - 1. While Jesus was eating... a woman enters, breaks open an alabaster jar of oil and pours it out on Jesus head. The crowd thinks she is NUTS! (Never underestimate the Spirit). This is not your family bookstore oil. There is one years worth of wages in that jar! And she pours it on Jesus head. Gratitude expressed!
 - 2. Why does she anoint Him?
 - a) Because this woman has been touched a very deep heart level. That touch by truth demands a response. So she does what she can and unselfishly anoints Him! Jn

- 12 refers to her as "Mary" the one who sat at the feet of Jesus. She definitely had a revelation of who Jesus is. That revelation always leads to worship!
- b) To anoint the head with oil was a mark of respect. Some thing the Pharisees did not do with Jesus.
 - c) Kings were anointed in the OT
 - d) Priest were anointed in the OT
 - e) Another aspect of anointing is "Chosen One" (Lk 4:18-19 and Acts 10:38)
3. The tragedy is: those at the table were indignant! (Angry, annoyed). Vs 5 the Greek reads they snorted at her. IE. a common response of those who do not want to worship. They are sitting with the Son of God and have no desire to bow to Him.
- D. Luke 7 a sinful woman. Jesus is at another Pharisee's house.
1. In this passage a sinful woman anoints Jesus feet, wipes them with her hair, and continues to kiss His feet. Again this is powerful as it reveals the humility of this woman heart. This underserving woman's heart. Stands behind, bows at His feet, anoints His feet, wipes them with her hair, and continual kisses His feet. All of those reveal her humility. Gratitude expressed!
 - a) The point is made that she is a certain kind of sinful woman. Obviously forgiven.
 - b) In humility her heart has been touched at a very deep level.
 2. The tragedy is - Simon was a man who never felt the need for much forgiveness and therefore felt little love for those who did. Jesus prophetically demonstrates God's heart. He turn toward the woman and turns his back to Simon.
- E. Luke 17:12-19 10 lepers are healed. 1 Samaritan and 9 Jews.
1. All go to present themselves to the priest. As they go they are healed.
 2. The Samaritan perceived (understands) not only that he is healed but that it is Jesus who has done the work. He is overwhelmed with gratitude and returns to give thanks to Jesus. Gratitude expressed!
 3. The tragedy is that 9 of Jesus' own people do not return to give thanks. Ten men were healed that day, but only one came back to give thanks. Are you living with the nine or with the one? Far too many of us take our blessings for granted and groan about duties. Does that sound like you? It doesn't have to be that way. We do not want to be like little kids that down a meal...forget to give thanks...and declare "Lets go play." We want our gratitude to be expressed. Expressed Gratitude gets remembered!
- F. Not only is Jesus blessed by their gratitude, He in turn blesses them! Think about these words. Think of how you would feel being the 'reject' of the prideful yet the recipient of grace by the Prince of Peace. Gratitude moves the heart of humble giver of goodness!
1. To the sinful woman Jesus says, "*Your sins are forgiven*" Lk 7:48

2. To the woman of Mark 14:9 *"She has done what she could...her deed will be remembered and discussed."*
3. To the Samaritan leper, *"Stand up and go your faith has healed you."* Luke 17:19
4. Thanksgiving has rewards. Lets look at a few in closing.

III. The Reward of Thanksgiving - Eternally remembered

- A. Exchanged worth. The three came with their praise and expressed it. Jesus in turn ascribes value to them and to what they have just done.
 1. *"Do you see this woman?"* Luke 7 Restored dignity.
 2. *"What she has done will be remembered and discussed."* Mk 14:9 Made famous
 3. *"Has no one returned to give glory to God except for this foreigner."* Lk 17:18 An outsider welcomed in.
- B. Blessed by God
 1. *Your faith has saved you.* To sinful woman
 2. *Your deed will be remembered.* To a woman.
 3. *Your faith has healed you.* To leper
- C. Another reward of giving thanks is noticeable character.
 1. People that are thankful are less self centered. Humility considers others more than itself.
 2. People that are thankful are less materialistic. Being thankful helps us recognize what we have and lessens our need/want for more. They are less envious.
 3. People that are thankful are more positive in life.
 4. People of gratitude have more self esteem. They feel good about themselves. They are grateful to God for having given them a new identity, new name, a new start.
 5. People who are thankful are generally happier. Robert A Emmons PhD a leading researcher in gratitude conducted several studies linking gratitude and well-being. His research confirmed that gratitude effectively increases happiness and reduces depression.
- D. Being thankful leads to better health.
 1. *"A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit saps a person's strength."* (Proverbs 17:22, NLT)
 2. *"Honor your father and mother. Then you will live a long, full life in the land the Lord your God is giving you."* (Exodus 20:12, NLT)
- E. Those who give thanks are remembered by others.

Conclusion:

- A **Thanksgiving that is remembered is one that is expressed.**
- Lets make this life a Thanksgiving to be remembered!

- Praise is a choice. A thankful heart is a choice you make. The ones who returned to give thanks chose not to forget what Jesus had done for them. The secret of a thankful heart is a conscious choice not to forget what God has done for you.
- Invitation

–When finally we look and see what God has done ...

Then do we begin to praise,
Then do we begin to give,
Then do we begin to sing,
Then do we begin to tell,
Then do we begin to serve,
Then do we begin to enter into the “Abundant Life.”

–When finally we learn that we were born lepers ... When we see what Jesus has done for us ...
When it finally breaks through that only by the grace of God do we have anything valuable ...
Only then does life really begin to change!!!

At that point, wonderful things begin to happen to us:
What was Duty is now Privilege.
What was Law is now Grace.
What was Demanded is now Volunteered.
What was Forced is now Free.
What was Drudgery is now Joy.
What was Taken for Granted is now Offered Up in Praise to God.
When it finally breaks through to us, then we come running gladly!!!