

THANKS LIVING

Hebrews 13:15-16

ATTENTION:

Thanksgiving Day has passed BUT a life of Thanks Living has not!

- This morning I would like to take a simple look at a couple of things that are a part of the Christian's life of Thanks Living
- How do I show God that I'm truly thankful for what He does?

As Christians we instinctively know that it is not good enough to say that we are thankful once a year.

- I appreciate our national recognition of Thanksgiving.
 - But if we are truly thankful to God there must be more.
 - So how do we express it? ↘ ↘ ↘

ATTUNE: Hebrews 13:15-16 gives insight into that question.

In our text we are in the final words of the Hebrew letter.

- This whole letter has called the Hebrew Christians back to a a surrender to Jesus Christ as Lord Messiah!
 - For some reason it appears the recipients of this letter were being drawn back to the faith they had before Christ.
- To call them back to Christ, there's a theme in Hebrews from **chapter 1-13 CHRIST IS BETTER**
 - Christ is greater than the old law - law of Moses
 - The new covenant is better than the old covenant
 - The sacrifice of Christ is greater than the OT sacrifices
 - Christ as our priest is greater than the priesthood of OT
 - In these final verses the writer leaves the recipients with a list of particulars of how to live out their faith in Christ
 - Love, hospitality, serving the hurting, marriage, morality, love of money, leaders, strange teaching, etc.
- **v.15-16** calls on these Christians to offer sacrifices and thanksgiving to God.
 - In the OT, people did this through rituals and festivals offering Thank Offerings, but in the New Covenant, we do not express our gratitude to God in that way.

Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.¹⁶ Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

Hebrews 13:15-16

Here are a couple of obvious ways to express to God our genuine thankfulness for everything He's done, is doing and will do in future.

BODY/SOLVE:

I. WORDS OF THANKS – FRUIT OF LIPS!

A. The easiest way to express thanks - doesn't cost anything.

1. BUT words SHOULD mean something.
2. Thankful words SHOULD come from a grateful heart.

B. Jesus reminds us - what we say reveals what's in our heart.

The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

Luke 6:45

- We will not speak words of sincere thankfulness if our heart is filled with self-importance and a sense of entitlement.

CONTINUALLY offer up a sacrifice of praise to God that is the fruit of our lips that acknowledge His name.

Hebrews 13:15

- Continually – DON'T STOP!
- Offer a sacrifice – GIVE WHAT IS DUE!
- Of praise – CELEBRATE GOD!
- To God – HE ALONE IS WORTHY!
- Fruit of lips – SAY IT! SAY IT! SAY IT!
- Acknowledge His name – DECLARE GOD AS WORTHY!

– In the OT the priests offered sacrifices for the people but now we are all priests and we offer our own sacrifices.

⁵*you yourselves, as living stones, a spiritual house, are being built to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

1 Peter 2:5

Transition:

It is one thing to say something, but if words have real meaning, we must back them up with life lived!

II. WORKS OF THANKS

Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

Hebrews 13:16

A. We are told to not neglect doing good.

1. This adds legitimacy to words - follow words with works.
 - Tell someone you love them is nothing if not followed up with loving actions, responses and treatment.
 - Saying you're a servant if not serving = nothing
 - Claiming to have faith if not living in faith = nothing
 - We show God we're thankful to Him by what we do.

As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

James 2:26

THANKFUL TO GOD IS NOT ONLY WHAT WE SAY BUT ALSO WHAT WE DO!

Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

James 1:27

B. Also encourages us to *share what you have* v. 16

1. *share* - from the same word - fellowship, partnership and have in common
 - If thankful to God we share our goods in common, participating with one another for the cause of Christ.
- But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?*
- 1 John 3:17
- The way we use material blessing from God shows whether we are thankful to Him or just glad to get.

²⁸ Let the thief no longer steal. Instead, he is to do honest work with his own hands, so that he has something to share with anyone in need.

Ephesians 4:28

2. Believing God has opened the heavens and poured out the blessing on you leads you to trust God to open the heavens in the future to provide what is needed.

- Hoarding what God blesses us with is not the image of God's people responding to His blessing on them.
- Using all of our wealth on ourselves does not do!
- God wants to bless us even more as we trust Him & share in ministry and helping of others.

give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you."

Luke 6:38

- From the time we were children we have heard the words "you must share your toys" Now as adult God says the same!

PROJECT:

These kinds of principles serve as a way to gage our spiritual vitality,

- Are we really surrendered to God as the master over all?
- Words and Works of Thanks Living speak volumes about where God fits in our lives!

ACTION:

Find words and ways to express thanksgiving and trust in God's continued care

- Find ways to bless others with your blessings of all kinds!
- Bless others in the name of Jesus!

PRAYER