

12 Keys to Thanksgiving

As we prepare to celebrate Thanksgiving on Thursday, I want to briefly examine how the Bible exhorts us to respond to God's faithfulness. The answer is very simple: to be thankful.

King David thought the virtue of thankfulness so important that he appointed a large group of Levites (priests) who did nothing else in the House of God but to thank and praise Him. As Christians, we must continue to show our thankfulness to God.

Here are 12 things for which we should give God persistent thanks.

1. For creating us in His image

Psalms 100:3, 4: "Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name."

How wonderful and comforting to know we have not evolved from some ancient muddy glob, but rather have been created by the hand of the Mighty God. Like God, He made us a trinity: body, soul and spirit.

2. For redeeming us by His blood

Revelation 5:9: "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

3. For sending His Son

Second Corinthians 9:15: "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."

4. For His holiness

Psalm 97:12: "Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness." Unlike the cruel, immoral pagans Gods, our God is holy!

5. For His mercy

Psalm 103:1, 8: "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy."

This virtue is so important that the psalmist refers to it no less than 26 times in Psalm 136.

6. For His shepherding ministry

Psalm 79:13: "So we thy people and sheep of thy pasture will give thee thanks for ever: we will shew forth thy praise to all generations."

7. For other Christians

That's right. We are instructed not only to pray for other believers, but to actually thank God for them. Time and again, the apostle Paul did this. Philippians 1:3 is a great example: "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you"

8. For victory

First Corinthians 15:57: "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." This means we have victory over the world, the devil, temptation, lust, fear and ultimately death itself.

9. For that specific work God has called us to do

Ephesians 2:10: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

10. For allowing us to give to Him of our tithes and offerings

Psalm 50:14: "Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High."

11. For Christ's coming millennial reign

We should be vigilantly thankful to God in advance for the story that will ultimately have a happy ending.

12. For anything and everything

First Thessalonians 5:18: "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

This is certainly the most difficult of all to do. How can we possibly thank God when financial loss comes our way, or when medical crisis comes to us? During these critical moments we must ever remind ourselves that God often permits these tragedies so that through them we might ultimately be blessed.

He is a perfect God, my friends, and worthy of our constant praise. May we all spend time thanking Him for these essential gifts to us this Thanksgiving.

This article originally ran in Jerry Falwell's November 2006 e-newsletter.

What are you thankful for? Let us know your thoughts by commenting below.