

Personal/Small Group Sermon Study

Week of November 20, 2022 A.D.

A Faithful Life Is Always a Thankful Life

The most convincing evidence of thankfulness to God is a life of faithfulness to Christ. Let's talk about that in this lesson.

(Note: For every question which appears in this study, always give the reasoning and/or the explanation for each of your answers.)

Read Romans 1:18 – 23

1. Wrath is defined as "strong vengeful anger or indignation; retributory punishment for an offense or a crime; divine chastisement". How is "the wrath of God being revealed from heaven" at the current time in America? (You may need to consider vs. 24 and following for some assistance.) Please distinguish the "revealing" of God's wrath from the "pouring out" of God's wrath. (See Rev. 6:16) Is God justified in revealing His wrath from heaven?
2. Read verse 21. Does God deserve to receive "thanks" from all people at all times? If not, why not? If so, why?
3. There were 102 passengers on the Mayflower which sailed to America in 1620. About half (46) of the Pilgrims died during the first winter. Yet, in the fall of 1621, the survivors celebrated a "thanksgiving" feast to God along with 91 natives who assisted the Pilgrims. Please compare and contrast the activities, the open expressions of thanks to God, and the "attitude of the heart" of this week's celebration with the celebration of the first Thanksgiving.
4. In your opinion, do Americans owe a deeper debt of thanksgiving to God than the other people in the world do? If not, why not? If so, (a) why and (b) how well do Americans express that thanksgiving?

Read Luke 12:47 – 48

5. Are these verses true? In your opinion, of all the countries in human history, to which country has God "given the most"? In your opinion, what does God expect from that country? Based on these verses, what can the people of that country expect to receive from God?

Read Psalm 33:10 – 12

6. Who is in control of the destiny of all nations? What happened to the nation of Israel roughly 40 years after its leaders demanded that Jesus be crucified? Does God hold (a) all people and (b) all nations and (c) the leaders of all nations to account for how they obey Him? In your opinion, what is God saying to (a) America and (b) the church in America?

Read Psalm 2:10 - 12

7. Assume that you have the privilege and the opportunity to speak directly to a gathering of all our nation's leaders at every level of government. Using these verses as your guide, what would you say to them and why?
8. Using these verses as a guide, in your opinion, does every American Christian have an obligation to Christ to vote in every election? If not, why not? If so, on what basis and/or factors should a Christian decide for whom to vote?

Read Matthew 6:25 – 34

9. For which are you more thankful as an American citizen: (a) the economic benefits from government programs (i.e., public education, health benefits, social security and welfare, transportation systems, low mortgage rates, etc.) or (b) the freedom to worship Christ Jesus without fear of physical persecution?
10. If you were required by the government to surrender either (a) or (b) identified in question 9 above, which would you choose to surrender? Why? Is there a real sense in which the requirement to make this choice is already present and becoming more mandatory in America?

Read Ephesians 5:1 – 4

11. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "Thanksgiving to God unleashes within me the power to overcome sin in my life and to become more like Jesus."

Read Colossians 3:15 – 17

12. Please analyze, critique, and discuss each of these verses separately and one at a time.

Consider: Because Christ loves me, He calls me to be in love with my fellow church members and to be thankful. Col. 3:15 Because Christ loves me, He calls me to faithfully meet with fellow church members to study and learn the Bible and to express gratitude to each other. Col. 3:16 Because Christ loves me, He calls me to do everything in the name of Christ always giving thanks to God through Christ. Col. 3:17 "You think about that." Amen.