

Thanksgiving That Is Intentional I Chronicles 29:10-22

I truly hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving celebration and that you are slowly emptying the refrigerator of leftovers.

A couple weeks ago I was listening to the Christian radio station and the question came up about which you prefer – Thanksgiving dinner or leftovers. While I enjoy leftovers, there is something special about the meal on Thanksgiving Day.

While preparing for the message I felt a bit inspired and wrote a little poem to reflect on Thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving is a day we feast on the bounty of the land.

Do we recall that all we have comes from our gracious Lord's own hand?

So let us then give thanks to our Lord God above,
Who, of His will, looks down on us with everlasting love.

To Him then we shall by faith with thankful hearts believe,

It is His hand that does provide all blessings we receive.

Our text today is from the Old Testament, book of I Chronicles. King David has grown old. His many battles are now behind him: the battles with Saul before he was anointed king, the battles with the Philistines, the battles within himself of pride and lust. Not all that long ago he had overcome an attempt by his son Adonijah to usurp the throne. Everyone knew his reign was coming to an end, and Adonijah took it upon himself, with the aide of some of David's advisors who had defected to him, decided to declare himself the new king of Israel. His attempt was quickly crushed, and David named Solomon to reign in his stead.

As David's departure to his eternal destination draws closer, he turns his attention to something that has been on his heart for a long time. It was his intention to replace the Tabernacle of God's presence as the place of worship with a permanent Temple. His heart was truly in the right place but

that honor would not be given to him, but to Solomon. But that didn't mean he couldn't prepare and provide for its construction. That brings us to our text for this morning **I Chronicles 29** where I invite you to turn in your Bibles. After collecting a vast amount of resources for the Temple's construction, David pauses to offer a prayer of thanksgiving. This prayer, offered by the one of whom it has been said was a man after God's own heart, is considered by many to be one of the greatest prayers in the Bible. If we were to compare it with the Lord's prayer in **Matthew 6**, we would find similar components to how Jesus instructed His disciples to pray. You will notice from David's prayer the similarities of how Jesus instructs us to pray.

In David's prayer, we find ample reasons to give our thanksgiving to God. In **chapter 22**, David gives the charge to Solomon who will succeed him on the throne that he is to build the Temple. In **chapter 23**, David organizes the Levites into various groups. Up until this time the Levitical families had certain responsibilities in caring for and moving the Tabernacle. With a permanent location and building, those duties were no longer necessary. Each division would rotate and provide care for the Temple. Some were assigned as musicians, others to the service of making sure dedicated items were cleansed, and still others were responsible as gatekeepers.

From the time David had it in his heart to build a Temple, he had begun the process of drawing up plans. These he presented to Solomon in **chapter 28**. Such a magnificent structure would require generous contributions because it would be a magnificent building for a majestic God. He deserves the best. In the beginning of **chapter 29**, David recounts his personal contribution of gold, silver, bronze and other materials. **Verse 4** tells us he gave 3,000 talents of gold and 7,000 talents of silver. Let me just say it was a lot both in weight and value.

Additionally, we read that the leaders contributed 5,000 talents of gold, 10,000 talents of silver,

18,000 talents of bronze and 100,000 talents of iron.

More importantly than the amount given is how they gave. It is a lesson for us as we consider how much to give to the Lord as offerings to Him. **Verse 9** reads **“Then the people rejoiced because they had given WILLINGLY, for with a WHOLE heart they had offered freely to the Lord.”**

Their gifts were given voluntarily, without coercion and they were given with a whole heart. There was no reluctance. In essence, they gave joyfully with an open and eager hand.

With all that has been given, David stops to offer this prayer, one we would do well to model.

There are times in our Board meetings after we have had the financial report and we see how has blessed and continues to bless, especially during this past almost two years of COVID, that we just stop and give thanks to the Lord. He has so richly blessed, and we offer our thanksgiving.

What are you thankful for this year?

What can we learn from this praise and prayer?

The first thing I see is that our praise should be intentional.

I. OUR PRAISE SHOULD BE INTENTIONAL – vs. 10-13

When we praise God we ought to be intentional, purposeful, deliberate. This is more than just a quick prayer at meals as we thank the Lord for what we are about to eat. While God hears the spontaneous prayers for sure, those times we call for His help when we are in need, or when we burst out in a shout of thanksgiving for a blessing received, we must set aside regular times of intentional praise.

What should be included in such times of prayer?

We have talked in the past about our ACTS of prayer – adoration, confession, thanksgiving and supplication. They are evident in David’s prayer and should be intentional when we talk with God.

David begins with a **“therefore”**. It is a link to the

opening verses of the chapter. His **“therefore”** is intended to be a reflection on what was given by the assembled people which resulted in the offering of praise as He thinks about God. Because of their generosity, David blessed the Lord.

Now we tend to think of a blessing as something that benefits the recipient, something given to us. The Lord has blessed us with good health. The Lord has blessed us with a good job. The Lord has blessed us with a wonderful family. The Lord has blessed us (and you fill in the blank). When He blesses us, our blessings are totally undeserved. His blessings are given because He is both gracious and merciful toward us. When He blesses us, we benefit from His blessings.

But when we bless the Lord, our blessing does not benefit Him in any way. When we bless the Lord, as David does here, it means to praise Him or honor Him, in essence, to give Him thanks. The word literally means to kneel, which is an indication of honor and reverence bestowed on the one before whom we kneel. We recognize that what He has blessed us with deserves our blessing and praise in return. We bless Him because He deserves it.

That’s what we see in **Revelation 4**. When the four living creatures declare **“Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come”** the 24 elders fall down in worship and declare **“You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created.”**

They are blessing the Lord.

David’s natural response for all God had done through them was to bless Him. We will discover why as we go on.

Warren Wiersbe writes that **“God had blessed David richly, so he blessed God thankfully.”**

Andre Crouch wrote a simple song that expresses our blessing God.

Bless the Lord, Oh my soul

And all that is within me

Bless His holy name.

He has done great things
 He has done great things
 He has done great things
 Bless His holy name.

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When was the last time you blessed the Lord?

David gives us three reasons why we can intentionally bless the Lord.

A. Bless God For His Sovereignty – v. 10

He begins by referring to God not as the Creator God but as the Covenant God, the one with whom He made promises to Abraham that his descendants would be His people, people who would be called by His name, people who would be in a covenant relationship with, people who would receive His special blessing, provision and protection if they remained obedient to Him.

Throughout Scripture, we see the evidence of God's sovereignty, that He created everything. As its Creator, He also rules it, is in control of it. His attributes clearly reveal to us His sovereignty.

There is no power that is greater than His. There is no authority that can usurp Him. Nothing has greater glory.

He is not subject to anyone or anything.

Lewis Sperry Chafer in Major Bible Themes writes that God "represents perfection to an infinite degree in every aspect of His being. He can never be surprised, defeated, or uncertain."

The nature of His sovereignty is evident in His presence everywhere, along with His being all powerful and all knowing. GotQuestions defines it this way: "His sovereignty essentially means that He has the power, wisdom, and authority to do anything He chooses within His creation." Let me add that He has power, wisdom, and authority to anything He chooses within His creation that in accordance with His holy nature. His power and actions are always in line with His holiness.

In His sovereign control of everything He is not the author of evil, although He allows evil to be done because mankind has been given the ability to make

choices. When someone chooses to do evil, God is not somehow less sovereign with an inability to stop the evil, nor is it outside His knowledge meaning that it took Him by surprise.

Joseph understood this when he explained to his brothers that what they meant for evil against him, God intended for good.

Paul understood it when he declared that all things work together for good, to them who love God and are the called according to His purpose.

Christ understood that the evil done to Him that led to His crucifixion would result in the good offered to those who by faith be given eternal life.

We are to bless God who is eternally sovereign resulting in praise that is eternal as we see in Revelation. We bless Him because He is worthy of all praise.

Do we bless God for His sovereignty? David did. Next, bless God for His substance.

B. Bless God For His Substance – v. 11

By that I mean His nature, His character, His attributes – who He is. Our passage lists five.

1. Bless God for His greatness

Psalm 145:3 "Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised and His greatness is unsearchable."

The scope of His greatness is beyond our comprehension. We will never understand it but that shouldn't keep us from blessing Him.

One author wrote "Scripture's description of God as great demonstrates that He is the pinnacle of every admirable quality, making God alone worthy of our worship."

Psalm 86:10 "For You are great, and do wondrous things; You alone are God."

Job 5:9 [God] does great things, and unsearchable, marvelous things without number."

Job 9:10 "He does great things past finding out, yes, wonders without number."

Some men we consider great like Abraham Lincoln. Others consider themselves great like Muhamad Ali. But when we say God is great, that sets Him apart and above any human we might consider great. He has no equal in His greatness. His greatness calls attention to His worthiness to be worshipped.

In **II Kings 17**, after Assyria threatened to defeat Judah, King Hezekiah prayed to the Lord recounting God's greatness in delivering Israel in the past from her enemies.

Could we generate a list of ways God has demonstrated His greatness in our lives?

As we think about His greatness, let's take a page from Hezekiah and reflect on all the great things God has done for us in the past, knowing that won't change in the future and bless Him.

In **I John 3:1** we see God's great love.

In **Romans 9:22** we see God's great patience.

In **Lamentations 3:22-23** we see God's great faithfulness.

In **Ephesians 1:9** His greatness is unsurpassed.

In **Titus 2:13** we see God as our great Savior.

In **John 3:16** we see God's great salvation.

Our response to His greatness is echoed in **Psalms 150:2** **"Praise Him for His mighty acts; Praise Him according to His excellent greatness."**

2. Bless God for His power

That's His ability to do all things. Nothing is too hard for Him.

Luke 1:37 **"For with God nothing will be impossible."**

Job 42:2 **"I know that you can do all things and that no plan of yours can be thwarted."**

Psalms 29:4 **"The voice of the Lord is powerful. The voice of the Lord is full of majesty."**

His power is seen in the opening chapter of the Bible in three simple words: **"let there be."** When He spoke, whatever He said came into existence – something from nothing. That's power. His power is seen in the many miracles recorded in Scripture from the parting of the Red Sea and its subsequent

crashing down on the Egyptian army destroying it, to delivering Daniel from lions or his three friends from the fiery furnace to raising the dead to life. His power is evident not only in that He is the giver of life, but He is also its sustainer. We are to bless Him for His power.

If God were to recap of our day and show us the many ways He demonstrated His power in our lives through the day, we would bless Him more than we do. We would bless Him because He deserves it.

3. Bless God for His glory Revelation 5:13

Glory refers to God's splendor and greatness and means that He deserves praise, something we were created to do. It speaks of a radiance that emanates from Him because of His splendor. After spending time in the presence of God, the face of Moses shown with God's glory. When the angel announced the birth of Christ to the shepherds, we are told that he shown with the glory of God.

We are to bless the Lord for His glory, a glory that should be evident to others the more we spend time with Him.

4. Bless God for His victory

Victory speaks of His kingship and authority, a reign that will never be conquered.

Psalms 47:6-7 **"Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises! For God is the King of all the earth; Sing praises with understanding."**

If God is Creator of the earth, then He is also its King, reigning over it, and because He is all powerful He will always be victorious.

5. Bless God for His majesty

Psalms 93:1-2 **"The Lord reigns, He is robed in majesty; The Lord is robed in majesty and is armed with strength. The world is firmly established; it cannot be moved. Your throne was established long ago; You are from all eternity."**

The word majesty refers to being more highly

thought of than anyone else in all heaven and earth. It is a position of honor, reverence, authority and splendor.

Because of His substance – His nature, character, and attributes – we are to bless Him.

Psalm 34:1 “I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.”

Psalm 100:4 “Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him and bless His name. For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations.”

Bless God for His sovereignty.

Bless God for His substance.

Bless God for His supply.

C. Bless God For His Supply – v. 12

Philippians 4:19 “But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”

David understands here that everything we have is a gift from God and comes from Him. He has graciously bestowed it on us making us its stewards.

In his book Design for Discipleship, Dwight Pentecost writes “the disciple (of Christ) recognizes that everything he has belongs to God. The question he faces then is not how much he must give to God, but how much of what he has that belongs to God will God give Him permission to use for himself?”

In essence the author is saying that if what we have belongs to God, we should get His permission to use His money before we make a purchase so that we don’t cheat God out of what belongs to Him. The principle in **verse 9** is repeated in **II Cor. 9:6-7**. Giving is done generously and cheerfully, because we recognize that He has provided for our needs. Whether it is riches or honor or authority or power, all of it comes from God and we are to bless Him for the gifts He bestows on us. It is an admission from David of His dependence on God, who supplies everything we need.

Psalm 68:35 “O God, You are more awesome than Your holy places. The God of Israel is He

who gives strength and power to His people.”

When we bless God for His supply, we admit it all belongs to Him.

For all that God is and does, he concludes in **verse 13** thanks and praise for God’s glorious name.

Remember that a person’s name is the summation of who he is, their character or nature. God, for all He is, characterized in His name, is to be praised.

Our praise should be intentional.

Our prayer should be intentional.

II. OUR PRAYER SHOULD BE INTENTIONAL – vs. 14-19

In **verses 14-16** we notice that when we approach God in prayer, we must have a humble spirit. Let me add that whether in prayer or praise, we must approach God with humility. Humility acknowledges God for who He truly is.

A. We Must Have A Humble Spirit – vs. 14-16

David asks in **Psalms 8:4** “What is man that you are mindful of him, or the son of man that you should care for him?” The answer comes in **verse 5**. We have been crowned with glory and honor. **Why does He look our way and give thought to us?** Because we are created in His image. That should humble us.

David asks, who are we that we should have so much to give to You, God? He says they gave because it all belongs to Him. It is a humble heart that gives generously. It is a humble heart that gives willingly. They were both generous and willing.

1. He acknowledges his submission to the Lord 2. He acknowledges the swiftness of his life

Life is fleeting, it’s brief. What we have is God’s and they willingly gave it back. The gifts they gave God were made possible because He gave it to them in the first place. When we petition God, we must have a humble heart. Only then can we acknowledge our submission to Him and remember how swiftly this life passes.

Second, we must have a heart of integrity.

B. We Must Have A Heart Of Integrity – vs. 17-19

In **verse 17**, an upright heart delights God.

1. An upright heart delights God

God is pleased with us when we walk with integrity, when we obey His commandments. How important for us to spend time in confession that He might show us areas needing repentance. May it be our prayer that we would give the Lord freedom to search our heart and reveal sin that we might confess it and be led in the way of righteousness.

Paul tried to live in such a way that he wouldn't offend God or others (**Acts 24:16**). He desired a heart that God would be delighted in, so that God would look not just at his conduct but also at his character and say well done good and faithful servant.

We need to have integrity of heart when it comes to obeying God's commandments, but David's prayer is specific here. He speaks of his integrity in giving. Their motives were with a heart of integrity. It naturally follows that an upright heart God is delighted in, is a heart that demonstrates generosity.

2. An upright heart demonstrates generosity

There wasn't any ulterior motive. They weren't trying to get something in return from God: "we'll do this for you, if You do this for us." The motives of their heart were right and that led to their generosity in giving willingly and abundantly to the Lord's work. An upright heart is a grateful heart. A grateful heart is a generous heart. They gave generously to the Lord for His Temple. But knowing the fickleness of the heart, David prays in **verses 18-19** that their heart would desire genuineness forever.

3. An upright heart desires genuineness

David wanted them to love the Lord with all their heart, all their lives. He wanted them to seek after God with their whole heart, let their heart always be fixed on the Lord because then they would delight the Lord and continue to be generous.

He prayed the same thing for his son who was

taking over as king. He wanted Solomon to walk in obedience, to seek after God, to be loyal to the Lord, to obey His commands. As the heart of the king goes, so goes the people. Sadly, the record of his life shows us that his heart had been turned from God by his many foreign wives.

Our prayers should be intentional.
Finally, our petitions should be intentional.

III. OUR PETITIONS SHOULD BE INTENTIONAL – vs. 20-22

In **verses 20-21**, we see that our homage must be intentional.

A. Our Homage Must Be Intentional – vs. 20-21

When David had concluded his praise and prayer, he invited all those assembled to worship God.

They blessed God.

They bowed before God.

They offered their burnt sacrifices to God.

They paid homage to God as they worshipped Him for who He was and what He had done for them.

Matthew Henry writes "It well becomes aged saints and dying saints, to have their hearts much enlarged in praise and thanksgiving."

Do you have a heart of integrity that intentionally worships God, giving Him the glory He deserves?

Then in **verse 22** we notice that our happiness must be intentional.

B. Our Happiness Must Be Intentional – v. 22

"So they ate and drank with great gladness that day. And they made Solomon the son of David king."

As you think back over the past year, is your heart filled with thanksgiving for who God is and what He has done for you? David prayed that the Lord would help them to always have the same heart for Him as they did that day.

Is your thanksgiving intentional?