

Message Series: **Simple Prayers that Strengthen the Soul**

Message Title: **'Lord, Thank You.'**

Scripture Sources: **Psalm 100, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**

Date: Sunday, July 30, 2017

Teacher: John Garner

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**In the Blur and Noise of Life**

Take time to be thankful, in specifics. Sometimes a heartfelt thank you can mean much to the recipient, whether spoken or written. Illustrate:

**'Lord, Thank you.' Psalm 100**

So often we relate to God on the basis of need, sometimes desperately so! Yet, to come to give God thanks, that must be refreshing for Him! This psalm, or song, was written for Jewish worshippers enroute to the Temple in Jerusalem. Yet, the invitation of these words is as relevant to us today as when first penned thousands of years ago in a foreign land.

Read the Message rendering

**Engage with God...**

Purposefully, thoughtfully, and passionately.

VSS. 1-2: there is an undeniable 'vibe' of joy and purpose in these vibrant and colourful words of invitation. Why is that? "...these words or their Hebrew roots repeatedly convey the thrill of liberation." (Derek Kidner) God's goodness and grace has been 'tasted' and people want to praise and thank God for his character and care. They must speak up! Illustrate: when a person has experienced something significant to them personally in a positive way, they must share their story and the reason for their enthusiasm.

This psalm is part of a collection of Psalms beginning at Psalm 93 and concluding here highlighting the truth that God is King. Over all the earth. To that end, the people of God are boldly and warmly directed to engage with God, warmly, willingly and thoughtfully.

A Pause for Reflection: What holds you back at times from enthusiastic thanksgiving and praise of God? Often it can be the fear of what others will think or say...of us! Let us ask God to help us worship and engage more freely, joyously, and thoughtfully...for His sake. To thank Him.

VS. 3: Remember who God is and who you are to him! Worship and relate to God with your mind fully engaged in the moment. Put aside distractions like devices, and consider God. "Know that the LORD is God..." Note the declaration of both 'character and care' ascribed to God. Consider Psalm 23 and Isaiah 40:10-11. Read. God has created us. Genesis 1-2. We believe the Bible teaches the creation story, including the creation of man and woman. We are the LORD's handiwork...he who is "eternal, immutable and faithful."

A Pause for Reflection: How can we help you grow in understanding accurately the character of God? You may have all sorts of questions, we would enjoy a conversation with you. Let's talk!

VS. 4: Purposefully seek to connect with God, through faith in Jesus. That is core to the reason Jesus came, to provide salvation so that we can be in a relationship with God as our Father. These words speak powerfully and poignantly about being in relationship with God. And coming with something in heart and hand...thoughtful reasons for giving God thanks and praise. This is our simple prayer this week...

'Lord, thank You.'

I love and appreciate the discipline of heart and mind this simple prayer can bring about. How easily we can come to God with requests and questions...all of which can have a place, and should have a place,

an unashamed place in our relationship with God. Yet, sometimes in the blur and noise of life, giving thanks to God can be hurried or rote. How we...I need to slow the pace and give voice to God the reasons for thanksgiving.

A Pause to Reflect: what are some of your reasons to give thanks to God?

VS. 5: Note the focus again on the character of God towards us. And, take note of the present tense revealed in the word 'is'. That's today, in whatever your circumstance is. He is good, loving and faithful to his promises, character, purposes...and you. Romans 8:28-29

Consider Psalm 107:43

Back to the phrase 'The LORD is good and his love endures forever...' Compare Psalm 23:6

"Mercy is the covenant-word rendered steadfast love...together with 'goodness' it suggests the steady kindness and support that one can count on in the family or between firm friends. With God these qualities are not merely solid and dependable, but vigorous..." (D. Kidner)

When we think about these realities, the simple prayer, 'Lord, thank you' should come from us regularly.

A Pause to Reflect: what truth about God's character and care do you need to more fully ponder?

### **Deeply Affected...and Affecting Others**

Genuine and thoughtful thanksgiving to God can have profound and every day consequences... think about these and maybe you could add more to the list!

Thanksgiving can shape and mature perspective...especially when times are really good or very difficult. I can choose to believe that God is good, loving and faithful and that he can "cause all things to work together for good to those who love God..." Romans 8:28

Thanksgiving can strengthen relationships with others. Often, God's goodness and love is mediated through others. Thanking God and his 'conduits' can enrich relationships.

Thanksgiving can open doors of conversation with spiritual seeking or spiritually curious people.

Thanksgiving can deepen faith in Jesus, God's Son and infuse us with hope, courage and wisdom along the way. Our relationship with God can deepen as we grow to understand his character, purposes, and care for us. Illustrate:

Thanksgiving can influence others to think about God and the Christian message...and consider their response to God. Psalm 40:3

So...what about you? What can you give thanks to God for, today?