

## Thanksgiving Sermon Deuteronomy 8:10-18 Don't Forget the Lord

Dear Thanksliving people of God:

It's 4:00 PM this afternoon.

- We have just had a great meal of traditional Thanksgiving lore
- We feel secure, warm, well-fed and content
- We are enjoying the fellowship of family and friends
- Life is good!

Would it be easy to forget?

Would it be easy to forget the Lord and what He has done for us?

Moses warns the Israelites not to forget the Lord. He says here in Deuteronomy 8: "When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Lord your God for the good land he has given you. Be careful that you do not forget the Lord your God..."

9 year old Charlie was asked to say the blessing for the Thanksgiving meal. Charlie began his prayer by being thankful for...

- his family and friends by name
- the food by name: green beans, potatoes, corn, dinner rolls...
- the turkey: mom who made it, the man at the market who bagged the groceries and the man at the meat department and for the people who cleaned the bird and for those who raised it.
- Charlie paused: "Have I left anyone out?"
- Someone blurted out: "You have thanked everyone but God."
- Charlie responded: "I was getting to him."

God is the source of all blessings...we know this...but do we ever thank everyone else and finally get around to God or never get around to God?

Thanksgiving became a national holiday at a time in the history of our nation when Americans saw their good fortune as a direct gift from God. Our Thanksgiving tradition goes back to the Pilgrims of Massachusetts some 400 years ago. The Pilgrims were befriended by the local native Americans who brought them turkeys and venison.

Today turkeys by the millions find their place on the tables of homes throughout our land. Hours after the great meal many of us are struggling to stay awake while we recline around the television watching America's favorite pastime.

Who receives our thanks for the good life we have?

Moses knew that as the Israelites would enter the promise land flowing with "milk and honey" they may be tempted to forget their God.

Israel is about to enter the Promised Land after wandering in the desert for 40 years.

- A good amount of food available to them would lead Israel to feel satisfied.
- This satisfied feeling could lead Israel to forget God
- Forgetting God would mean no longer having him in their daily thoughts

- This forgetfulness would lead Israel to disobey and forget God's commands

Back in the wilderness for 40 years Israel had to depend upon God for the necessities of life. But in the Promise Land which was rich with resources Israel would be tempted to have a sense of self-sufficiency.

In their new-found prosperity Israel may make the claim that their power and strength had produced their good fortune and wealth.

vv12-14

Think of all that the Lord did for Israel those 40 years in the wilderness...vv15-16 God...

- provided Israel with protection from snakes
- provided them with direction through the vastness of the desert
- provided them with food and water
- provided them with the hope of a better land someday – the Promised Land

God knows our sinful human nature. He knew that once Israel became settled in the Promised Land with their newly built homes, with their large flocks and herds, with the increase wealth of their silver and gold, their hearts may become filled with pride.

God knew that Israel would be tempted to forget that it was God who delivered them out of slavery in Egypt, that it was God who gave them manna to eat in the desert, that it was God who protected them from their enemies.

God knew that Israel would become well-fed and satisfied in the Promise Land and would someday say to themselves: “It is by our power and our strength that our hands have produced our wealth.”

Did Israel ever forget God in the Promise Land?

Read the history of Israel in the Old Testament. Time and time again they forgot God. Time and time again they grumbled against God. Grumbling and forgetting how bad it was to be a slave in Egypt. Grumbling and forgetting how much they wanted out of there. Grumbling and forgetting the gracious acts of God. Grumbling and forgetting how much the Lord had given them in the Promised Land. Grumbling and forgetting how the Lord had forgiven them their sins over and over again. Grumbling and forgetting how the Lord has promised them a Savior someday who would be born of their own blood.

- Grumbling is forgetfulness
- Grumbling is forgetting the blessing of life itself and of life’s simple benefits
- Grumbling may become a habit of life.

We can make a habit of ignoring or forgetting God’s goodness.

A man and his teenage son were on a fishing trip miles from home. They decided to attend Sunday worship service at a small rural church. As they walked back to their car after the service, the father was filled with complaints and grumbling. He said: “The service was too long, the sermon was boring and the singing was off key.” Finally

the teenage son had something to say: “Dad, I thought it was pretty good for the dollar you put in the collection plate.”

The Apostle Paul in Philippians says: **“Do all things without murmuring or complaining.”**

- Grumbling and complaining is forgetting God
- Grumbling and complaining may affect our relationship with God
- Grumbling and complaining may affect our relationship with one another

Thanksgiving is the acknowledgement that someone has given us what was not our due. Thanksgiving is recognizing we have been given something not owed to us.

But someone may say...

- I have been a decent person
- I am a good moral citizen
- I believe in God, go to church, pray when I think of it
- Why wouldn't God shower me with blessings?

Thanksgiving is the response to God's grace.

- God's blessings are not earned
- The good things we have in life are from God's hands not ours as he gives us the strength and ability to work and accomplish things
- God doesn't owe us anything

Thanksgiving humbly acknowledges: **“God how good you are to me!”**

Moses warned Israel about taking God’s blessings for granted. He warned them against grumbling and complaining against God.

- There are times when we may take God for granted.
- There are times when we may lapse into grumbling.
- There are times when we may forget that life itself is a gift of grace.
- There are times when we may forget what God has done for us in Jesus.

**Today, tomorrow and the next day and the next.... may we...**

- Thank God for His name - Psalm 8:1
- Thank God for His glory – Psalm 8:1
- Thank God for His heaven – Psalm 8:3
- Thank God for His fingers – Psalm 8:3
- Thank God for His care – Psalm 8:4