

A WORD ON WORSHIP

NOVEMBER 18, 2012

BY PASTOR ANDREW KICKERT, SUNRISE COMMUNITY CHURCH

Ephesians 5:18-21

“Be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father.”

Thankfulness is an important subject to the Apostle Paul and throughout the Word of God. Some combination of the word appears times 195 in Scripture and Paul uses it more than 40 times in his epistles. The concept of thankfulness in the New Testament comes from two Greek words. The first is *charizomai*, which contains the word for “grace.” The second is *homologeō* which means “to confess or acknowledge”. Thankfulness is the mental and/or verbal expression of your acknowledgment and appreciation of God’s person, grace and sovereign work in one’s life and the world.

So why be thankful? Because it honors our heavenly Father. When we are thankful, we recognize God exists and acknowledging Him as the very source and meaning of our life. True thankfulness recognizes our dependence on God and acknowledges everything going on in our lives is the product of God’s sovereign control. It is important for us to recognize thanklessness is dangerous to ourselves and to others. A thankless heart leads to proud humanism and dependence on man rather than God. Thankfulness becomes a spiritual barometer, reading the condition of our spiritual lives and providing a warning if we have ears to hear.

But is thankfulness a topic only to be considered at this time of the year? Certainly not. Scripture teaches us thankfulness is one of the primary purposes of prayer in the life of the believer. Thanksgiving turns our eyes from our problems and ourselves to the Lord in order that we might see His sovereign grace. Thankfulness is not saying all things in our lives are pain free. But even the most difficult of life situations are used by God for the good of making us like His Son. With our eyes already turned toward God in thankfulness, we encourage an eagerness to go to God in prayer to lay our burdens as well as other matters at His feet.

So where does a thankful heart come from? Do not confuse thankfulness with what provides us with pleasure. True thankfulness requires spiritual understanding of the life situations in which we find ourselves. Because spiritual understanding is so vital to a thankful heart, a Scripture-filled life is necessary. Living in the Word keeps our focus where it needs to be. It is through being in the Word of God that we are encouraged to grow in the Spirit and remember that we are the children of God. May your Thanksgiving this year be the start of a bountiful harvest of joy, as you seek to cultivate thankfulness in your heart and mind about the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Sunrise Community Church

Come acknowledge the Lord in our midst

EVERY SUNDAY BEGINNING AT 8:45 A.M.

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