

Is God Thankful?

11-25-18

I wanted to keep things light this morning and focus in on thankfulness. We will get back to our study on Ephesians next week.

So many times, during this Thanksgiving holiday, I have preached or heard being preaching about us being thankful but as I was praying and thinking about what God wanted me to say, I had a unique question come up in my heart. Is God thankful? Is God thankful? That is the question I want to pose to you this morning, is God thankful?

After hearing some passages read from Revelation at the funeral I did on Monday, I decided to read through the Revelation this past week. I had not done this for a year or two and I would recommend that you read through it before Christmas. I think it will help you be more thankful for the work of Christ in your life and from what you have been delivered.

The book of Revelation is a vision into the things that will take place at the end of this age and a lot of those things are terrible and frightening. Depending upon your theology it is possible that you might be here, on the earth, going through these things. You will be spared, protected physically just as the Israelites in Egypt were protected during all the terrible plagues God brought upon the Egyptians but also like the Israelites, you will see as those around you who are not saved go through them.

In God's love I personally believe there will be a remnant of His people on earth so they can be the light of salvation during this very dark time. But as God's judgment, His wrath is brought upon the earth and upon those who have chose not to receive the salvation He made possible through His Son, it is His love and thankfulness for His children that is His driving force.

I think He is not as much bringing judgment as much as He is cleansing the world of all unrighteousness, impurities and ungodliness for the children He loves and is thankful for. He is going to do this so they can live in a world with Him that is pure, undefiled and that will remain so.

I think His wrath is driven from a place of love and thankfulness for His children.

Is God thankful? Not a question you have probably ever thought about. I know I haven't. But throughout the Bible we are encouraged, exhorted and instructed to be thankful. Twenty six times in the Psalms alone we are encouraged to give thanks.

The Old Testament saints were constantly stopping to present offerings to the Lord, to give Him thanks for the victories in battle and in other significant events.

When we come to the New Testament we see even more thankfulness. Paul said in his letter to the **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**, **“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”**

And we have the familiar verse in **Philippians 4:6**, **“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.”**

Being thankful is so good for us that even the secular world taps into it. I am sure you have heard motivational speakers talk about the importance of having an attitude of gratitude. But what about God? Does thankfulness apply to Him too? Is God thankful?

I believe the answer is a definite yes. And here are some reasons why I think so.

First let's think about it from a natural perspective. We know that good leaders do not ask anything of their people that they are not willing to do first. If this is true doesn't this apply to God? Isn't He our leader? And if we are encouraged to be thankful doesn't this mean that thankfulness is part of His nature?

Look at a couple of scriptures from Genesis. **Genesis 1:27, "God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."**

We were created in His image so that means to me that being thankful is part of who He is.

Also I believe God is thankful for His creation. Numerous times throughout Genesis you find the term, "And God saw that it was good." At the end of creation God not only said it was good but He said what? It was very good.

I know when I am building something or doing something and I am pleased with the result I exclaim that it is good. I am thankful that I was able to do it, thankful it got done and thankful for the results.

I think the same was true of God. I think He was able to set back and look upon His creation and the man and woman He created, He was pleased, He found joy and thankfulness in what His hands made.

Pause...

As we look upon Jesus' life we know He was thankful as well. Jesus was always giving thanks for things. He gave thanks before the miracle of the feeding of the 5,000, at the resurrection of Lazarus, at the last supper the night before His crucifixion. He gave thanks for the men and people who were His disciples and many other times. Jesus was always showing that He had a thankful heart.

Now here's the kicker about Jesus having a thankful heart. Who was Jesus the physical representation of?

In **John 10:30** Jesus said, **“I and My Father are one.”**

Colossians 1:15, “He (Jesus) is the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation.”

In a great spiritual way that we truly cannot grasp but we believe, Jesus, God and the Holy Spirit are one yet separate. It is the Trinity. They share the same attributes. If one is thankful then the others are too.

Since Jesus is God in human form and He gave thanks throughout His life then obviously God is thankful.

I know God was thankful for His Son. Twice God said, “This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.” He said it at Jesus' baptism and also up on the mountain when Jesus appeared in His spiritual / physical state. God was thankful for His Son.

I would have a hard time separating love and thankfulness. If someone truly loves something or someone then they are thankful for them or it aren't they?

If this is true then the statement Jesus made about God, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whoever would believe in Him would not perish but have eternal life” means to me that God is thankful for us.

We also know God is thankful for the people who He created by the announcement of the angels on the day Jesus was born. The multitude of angels sang out, **“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.”**

We know God is thankful for us by His actions. Again, He gave His Son that we might be saved. He made a way that we could be holy and blameless so that we could be with Him and He with us. He choose us to be His Son's bride. He choose us to be with Him for eternity.

I tell you, most people believe God is a angry God, a God of wrath. He *is* a God of wrath against unrighteousness and sin because it traps His creation, the people who He created and loves, into bondage, into sin, into His judgment. But God is forever thankful for His children as any father would be.

Michal and I experienced this thankfulness on Thanksgiving. Our son and his family from Denver as well as my sister and her family from Denver joined us on Thanksgiving. We had a great meal and a great time of being together.

As Michal's son was leaving he expressed his thankfulness that we had moved close. His thankfulness brought out our thankfulness. That is the way it works in family and we are the family of God, we are His family and He is thankful for us.

Did you know that God is so thankful for you that He created a way to become part of Himself?

Look at this wonderful passage. This is how thankful He is for you.

Jesus was speaking to His disciples specifically about us. **John 17:20-21, "I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us..."**

You see, it is not just the Trinity any longer, it is you and the Trinity. According to Jesus' words here, we are grafted into God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. You are part of God and God is part of you. This works in a spiritual way that we don't fully understand but that is what it says here. We are one with God and Christ and He is one with us.

Now this doesn't mean that you have the place or power of God, you are not God but you get to be god-like. God is sharing His glory and most of what He is with you. This wouldn't happen to just anyone but only to those He is happy and thankful for and if you have accepted Christ as your Savior this is you.

Our God is a thankful God. He is thankful that you are here this morning. He is thankful that you are in a relationship with Him and His Son. He is thankful that you are going to be in eternity with Him. He is thankful for you being the light and the salt in the world. He is thankful for you being His ministers of reconciliation in this world.

He is thankful when you give someone a glass of water when they are thirsty. He is thankful when you love, serve and bless someone. He is thankful that you are displaying His righteousness in the world. He is thankful you are sharing His love and the love of His Son to the world. He is thankful for you loving Him.

Our God is a thankful God. In closing I wanted to share a couple of scriptures.

Psalm 18:19, "He brought me forth also into a broad place; He rescued me, because He delighted in me."

Psalm 147:11, "the Lord delights in those who fear Him, who put their hope in his unfailing love."

Beyond being thankful for you, God delights in you. I don't think we hear this message enough.

Our God is a thankful God and He is thankful for you.

Let's pray