

Meeker Christian Church
11-24-24
THANKSGIVING

The potluck dinner after church last Sunday was just wonderful. Great food and fellowship. In fact it was so good that it was decided to go ahead and have one in December. It is scheduled following morning service on December 15th. Do you suppose the cooks followed recipes for those great dishes and desserts or did they just make them up as they went along? Seriously from that tasty turkey and ham and all the rest did they do it the first time, and just off the cuff?

Let's make a little comparison here. In like manner the dedication for being a great cook is like the dedication it takes to be a great Christian. We are especially impressed to be expressive of thanks this week and scripture encourages us as well: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 16 Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing, 18 in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Our service is straightforward obedient to that instruction in singing, communion and offering, expressions of thanks.

As another expression of giving thanks this week I have asked our elders to express their thoughts regarding this congregation. Their leadership vision becomes our mandate inspired by Micah 6:8 He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you But to do justly, To love]mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?

This morning we will hear from Leonard Caldwell and Frank Sampson. Just so you know, this is a two part sermon and will be concluded next week.

Thank you elders...

Most of you know that last Sunday evening Jean and I were invited to Vernal Christian Church for their 50th anniversary celebrated as a THANKS GIVING dinner. We had been involved from the original home Bible studies in the early 1970's in the Meeks home. I am so thankful to announce that those 8 or 10 folks from two families are now some 200 plus with a large facility and K-8 school to their credit. With our elders blessing, perhaps we

would pray that a vision of 200 attenders or more be the goal for which this body of believers would commit. That would be a giving of thanks celebration for the ensuing generation if the Lord tarries until then. But hear me well - that is why God put you and I here now...not to sit on our laurels waiting for the trumpets to call us to meet Jesus in the air - rather Jesus put us here to work on the inspiration and resource of God -- to prepare for those whom HE is even now preparing their hearts!!!

After the Bible books of Old Testament history to receive foundation for our belief system and relationship to God understanding --- came the 4 gospel books of the New Testament giving us knowledge and understanding upon whom salvation is based and the responsibility of that good news of salvation to be broadcast unto all the world. Acts through the Revelation describe the duty, opportunity, and obligation of the Church through this final era of mankind on earth called the church age.

So in this church age, today's world in which we live we realize all these things and look for guidance for lives to be about what we are called in and through our birthright to be involved.

A sample of that guidance is Colossians 3:12-14 Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, long-suffering; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. 14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.

God has been with mankind from creation. Some 4,000 years later He inspired the New Testament to be written for every person of every generation, for every committed believer hungering and thirsting for His Righteousness in their lives on earth in preparation for eternal life.

Colossians 3:12 begins --- Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved ...

will you please hear your name written in here? Therefore, Frank, Leonard or put your own name - this is written for you:

... as the elect of God, holy and beloved.

do you see how esteemed by the Heavenly Father you are in His eyes, in His calling to you for Kingdom service? Quit letting satan try to convince you otherwise - you are the elect of God because you have had

opportunity to hear the gospel message and responsibly responded to it in baptism. That makes you holy and beloved. Will you pay attention to the Holy Word recorded here for you? Therefore, Jim, John and Suzie as the elect of God, holy and beloved learn and live accordingly for the sake of the lives whom you encounter in your earthly sojourn.

Colossians 3:12-13 Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another,

Very specifically we are given some life living instructions. Let me pause a minute right here. When we were called to be the minister in Vernal in the 1990's it went through a plethora of problems, but we were blessed and the church grew. The next preacher was there approaching 20 years. They experienced their own trials, but went with them through them all and they have flourished abundantly. I pause and really want to shout out - but this once I will constrain my emotions - and say as forcefully as I can--- pay attention to this list from Col 3 and MCC can avoid some of the trials, and be carefully Heavenly guided throughout. Thank You Lord God for these people, this instruction, our resources and prayer warriors to be a significant righteous difference maker: Agree right now to this - we want to go to heaven and take lots more with us. Then ...

Colossians 3:12-13 Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies,/// kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another,

Tender mercies - I see as the general heading of the character traits that follows. That summarizes the difference between Christianity and most other religions... others say join our way of thinking and do what you are told or it is our prerogative to rid the world of your presence. Christians follow the example of Jesus of love, instruction, and personal choice and response.

Kindness - heads the list. The simple way of handling kindness is to remember and live the 10 Commandments. Kindness has the divine reward starting with earthly pleasure, faith assurance and eternal inheritance..

Humility - I can give you a verse that takes care of this one.

Philippians 2:3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.

When we are lifting up others, we are relieved of the load of lifting up ourselves! Yes I am aware there are plenty of charlatans inspired by satan - but with integrity in prayer, and practice - you will quickly learn where to focus and recognize humility.

Here is a little tool to ask yourself ... will this word or action honor and glorify God, myself or someone or something else?? Be sure God is the answer. If not - then do over until God IS the answer.

Meekness - is like tender mercies - a result of a balance of the rest. But listen carefully to this Greek word definition: Meekness, gentleness. Usage: The Hebrew word "anvah" primarily denotes a quality of humility or meekness. It reflects an attitude of lowliness and modesty, often in relation to one's standing before God and others.

I believe this Holy meekness is a reckoning of God's gifts from the Holy Spirit. It is His Divine power so assured of righteous strength because of God's favor and encouragement. Meekness is having learned to give all things to God's credit and glory with confidence and assurance in His divine guidance. Meekness therefore is not a lack of strength as our English word suggests, but rather true meekness I believe is a manifestation of Heavenly strength sustained through God's purposes in our lives and cooperative group.

Longsuffering, perseverance... or let me put it this way. When a door closes in life -look for another door. It is one way God directs you and the body for whom you are involved.

Colossians 3:13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.

This last verse has one phrase that years of experience have proven as an ultimate victory for life, for church, and for God to bless the efforts and ministry of the church; forgiving one another...even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do..

Colossians 3: 14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.

The Elders gave us a vision upon which to build and the scripture has given us directions how to accomplish the improbable and unlikely and it comes to this. 14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.

You know as Godly parents, and many other parents as well - they will do anything for the well-being of their children to give them the best chance at life possible. God is doing that with us as well and as a church we are to do it for the children.

Have a very thanks filled Thanksgiving and Christ centered and motivated Christmas as we prepare for the inevitable changes coming with the New Year!