

Are You Thankful?

11/14/2015
by Pastor Mike Taylor

1st Chronicles 16: 8Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people.

9Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk ye of all his wondrous works.

10Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD.

11Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually.

12Remember his marvellous works that he hath done, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth; (1st Chronicles 16:8-12)

What does this time of year mean to you? Is it stuffing yourself with turkey and dressing with all the trimmings, falling on the couch where you are stuffed and sleepy, and end the day watching football? For most Americans, that is exactly what they do on a day that is designed from its inception to be a day of thanksgiving for the blessings of Almighty God on this nation, on our families, and each individual that is blessed to live their lives in the most blessed nation on earth.



Those who do not give acknowledgment to the God of the universe and fail to give Him glory and honor, they are guilty of doing the opposite of being thankful. What is the polar opposite of being thankful to God? That question was asked today by a minister in our congregation. Many ideas were given, but the most complete answer to the question is “being forgetful”. Those who forget that our very being is dependent upon our Creator and refuse to

give Him glory or to know where this nation came from. **THEY FORGET THEIR ROOTS!** Let us look at King David in this passage in 1st Chronicles and see how he forgot for a time who exactly God is. For brevity, I will take excerpts of the progression of King David's desire to bring the ark of the covenant from its resting place in Kirjath-jearim to Jerusalem. We have to go back a couple of chapters and pick it up in 1st Chronicles chapter 13:

6 “And David went up, and all Israel, to Baalah, that is, to Kirjath-jearim, which belonged to Judah, to bring up thence the ark of God the LORD, that dwelleth between the cherubims, whose name is called on it.

7 And they carried the ark of God in a new cart out of the house of Abinadab: and Uzza and Ahio drave the cart.....

9 And when they came unto the threshing floor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen stumbled.

10 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God.

11 And David was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzza:”

Here we see David's desire to bring God's ark of the covenant to Jerusalem, but forgot how God had ordained that the things of God should be handled. David had a team of oxen pull a new cart, and a man (Uzza) put his hand on God's symbol of His presence before the nation of Israel. In other words, King David had forgotten how to approach God and it cost a man his life. What happened next?

12 “And David was afraid of God that day, saying, How shall I bring the ark of God home to me?”

13 So David brought not the ark home to himself to the city of David, but carried it aside into the house of Obbedom the Gittite.

14 And the ark of God remained with the family of Obbedom in his house three months. And the LORD blessed the house of Obbedom, and all that he had.”

God's ark of the covenant that housed the 10 commandments, and the rod of Aaron that budded and a vessel of manna, was left in a place that gave blessing to the person who was not an Israelite and stayed in his home for three months, until King David besought God and asked His counsel of how to proceed. God is faithful, if you remember who He is...HE IS GOD.

Finally, David listened to God:

1st Chronicles 15:

11 “And David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and for the Levites, for Uriel, Asaiah, and Joel, Shemaiah, and Eliel, and Amminadab,

12 And said unto them, Ye are the chief of the fathers of the Levites: sanctify yourselves, both ye and your brethren, that ye may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel unto the place that I have prepared for it.

13 For because ye did it not at the first, the LORD our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order.

14 So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel.

15 And the children of the Levites bare the ark of God upon their shoulders with the staves thereon, as Moses commanded according to the word of the LORD.”

What is the Bible trying to convey to us? David was trying to do something good that benefited him being King. He did not inquire of God of how the symbol of His power and might should be handled, so David took it upon himself to bring the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem the way he thought best, not the way God has commanded the ark to be borne on Levitical priest who had been sanctified. In other words, David had forgotten, and was sorely afraid of God and became less than thankful. Finally David got it right when he realized who he was dealing with. God is God, and we are not. We must approach Him with reverence, which the bible calls the “fear of God”. Further on the book, David gets it right.

1st Chronicles 16:1 “So they brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it: and they offered burnt sacrifices and peace offerings before God.

2And when David had made an end of offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD.

3And he dealt to every one of Israel, both man and woman, to every one a loaf of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine.

4And he appointed certain of the Levites to minister before the ark of the LORD, and to record, and to thank and praise the LORD God of Israel:”

What we read here is that King David realized that it was not about him, but about the people...instead of directing his captains of his army to benefit him inwardly, he directed his blessing outwardly to all the people. In this God was pleased and King David along with the people praised the God of heaven and gave Him thanks. King David realized that if you wish God's protection on your people, give God His due respect, glory and thankfulness for His blessings.

If you continue in chapter 16 of this book, then you read what they did to give God glory and thanks, and it continues with this:

34 “O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.”

35And say ye, Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, and glory in thy praise.

36Blessed be the LORD God of Israel for ever and ever. And all the people said, Amen, and praised the LORD.”

SO WHAT'S THE LESSON HERE? WHAT'S THE POINT?

TERRORISM INVADES PARIS, FRANCE:

We see evil around us and it's growing everyday. It may not have invaded your life YET. Let's take an example that just played out in our news alerts just recently. I don't want to give the reader the false impression that what I'm about to say is condoning what happened, likened to “as they deserved it”.

We read with horror what just happened in Paris, France of how Muslim jihadist that claimed to be emissaries of ISIS planned coordinated attacks on 6 different sites around the city and inflicted horrifying carnage on a unsuspecting population. Reports say that they killed 160+ people and the authorities finally killed all 6 terrorist that murdered with impunity those who were innocent and vulnerable to this evil attack. How can this be? Didn't the POTUS say just a few hours before this attack, that ISIS was pretty well contained? Obviously, the man is an idiot and hasn't a clue what is happening around him. What is happening to places like France, or the rest of the EU, that with time is most likely coming to our own shores? Europe is being invaded by Muslims that despise anything that is not of Islam, and any infidel that does not bow to the pagan god, Allah.

Before this happened, France had fallen into a departure from what they had instituted after the French Revolution. We know the atrocities of this horrible time period before-hand, but France finally came to her senses when a new constitution and a democratic state was formed. From Wikipedia:

“France is a country where freedom of religion and freedom of thought are guaranteed by virtue of the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. The Republic is based on the principle of laïcité (or "freedom of conscience") enforced by the 1880s Jules Ferry laws and the 1905 French law on the Separation of the Churches and the State. Roman Catholicism, the religion of a majority of French people,

is no longer the state religion that it was before the 1789 Revolution and throughout the various, non-republican regimes of the 19th century (the Restoration, the July Monarchy and the Second French Empire).

Major religions practised in France include Catholic Christianity, Islam, Judaism, various branches of Protestantism, Hinduism, Russian Orthodoxy, Armenian Christianity, and Sikhism amongst others, making it a multi-confessional country. While millions in France continue to attend religious services regularly, the overall level of observance is considerably lower than in the past. According to the Eurobarometer Poll conducted in 2010, 27% of French citizens responded that "they believe there is a God", 33% answered that "they believe there is some sort of spirit or life force", and 40% answered that "they do not believe there is any sort of spirit, God, or life force". This makes France one of the more secular countries in the world." I see a major problem here about Roman Catholicism being the state religion, but that's in another message.

What has happened to France down through the years? They forgot who God is and did not give him glory, or even believe there was a God, in their majority. Hence, when evil came to their shores, they had no one to rely on, but themselves. God was abandoned, and France became a secular, read Atheistic country who has had no use for the God of the Bible, or His Son, Jesus Christ. I am reminded of Psalm 91 that describes the evil that surrounds mankind, and when evil comes, their only hope for protection is Almighty God.

Psalm 91:1 "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

2 I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.

3 Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence.

4 He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

5 Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day;

6 Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday.

7 A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.

8 Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.

9 Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation;

10 There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

11 For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

12 They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

13 Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.

14 Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.

15 He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him.

16 With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.”

America's hope and that of the world is found in God. Satan the god of this world wishes to destroy mankind that was formed in God's image. Evil has befallen another country to the murderous rampage of Muslim adherents to the doctrines found in the Koran. It's not just ISIS, who actually believe what is written, but every adherent to that of Islamic belief system, if taken literally is the enemy of a free people.

France had thrown God out of their society long ago. Oh, there are some who still cling to their beliefs of a Holy God, but the numbers are a minority of the population according to population studies. Who would have ever thought that such an evil could come to any EU nation, such as happened to France, and we are horrified and filled with grief. Even some Americans were victims of this ritual slaughter of the innocent population present at concerts and a soccer game playing in the city of Paris. They had forgotten the God of Heaven, and they did not honor or praise His Holy Name, so they were vulnerable. Re-read those first two verses of Psalm 91 and let that sink in for a moment.

In the Old Testament we read about cities of sanctuary, that a person could escape to should they accidentally slay someone and escape the “revenger of blood” that would kill them, as they had killed, even by accident. They would take their life unless they escaped to this city and were given a hearing by their peers and the religious authorities to their guilt or not of the person they had taken their life. They were safe as long as they stayed in that city, but should they go outside the city walls, for any reason, they were vulnerable to the “revenger of blood” and could be killed without the cities protection.

Numbers 35:

26”But if the slayer shall at any time come without the border of the city of his refuge, whither he was fled;

27 And the revenger of blood find him without the borders of the city of his refuge, and the revenger of blood kill the slayer; he shall not be guilty of blood:

28 Because he should have remained in the city of his refuge until the death of the high priest: but after the death of the high priest the slayer shall return into the land of his possession.”

So it is in Psalm 91, God is our refuge, our high tower, our fortress, our shield, and our protector. If we step outside and leave His presence and His shield of protection, then we are vulnerable to the evil of this world. If we reject so great a salvation found in our Jesus Christ:

Hebrews 2:1 “Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

2 For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward;

3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

4 God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?”

If we reject, or yes, forget what God did for us in the sacrifice of Jesus our Lord, then somebody evil like ISIS, can and will take opportunity to slay those who are doing what is “right in their own minds” and following their own desires and do not stay close to or reject the Hope of mankind.

I can hear the wheels already turning in those who read this, and they wonder, why did not God protect those Christians in the Middle East? How many times have we read of people, prophets, and children of the Most High in our Bibles that have faced persecution for their faith? We and they lived as we live in an evil world, full of the sins of men who wish only to destroy other men. Can we know that these people, either Coptics, or Catholics, or some other religion besides Islam were washed in the blood of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ? No, we cannot be sure, because that was/is between them and God, but I believe nothing comes against God's anointed children of God, unless God allows it. Satan has no power over those who are God's chosen, unless they get outside the "city of refuge" that we just discussed and are not right up close to God's altar and in His very shadow. We cannot live willy/nilly our lives and not follow the commandment of Jesus Christ and God our Father. To be out of His will, His fellowship, and His commandments, is to leave yourself vulnerable to Satan who is looking for a reason to attack.

THE USA IN THE CROSS-HAIRS OF ISIS

Those who still believe in the God of Heaven and His Son Jesus Christ, know that our nation is in dire trouble. We could have been the ones in the news, instead of France, as you could have substituted the description above concerning this atrocity, and substituted the USA, instead of France, as in the last 50 years, we have been worse than France, as this nation has become the purveyor of major filth to the rest of the world. A nation that began so right, has become "so wrong" in almost everything that this nation once stood for. Save one thing...this nation has an abundance of God fearing people, but the numbers are dwindling fast, as the greatest generation of all time is dying off, and those born in the last 50 years have not been taught, or abandoned the ways of God. And whose fault is that? The Church has become less than effective in teaching righteousness to the nation's youth. Most of the blame must be laid at the Joel Olsteens of this generation and those who preach a "different gospel". As we have abandoned God, God has turned aside from honoring this country, much as He has turned aside to the likes of France and many of the former democratic institutions that were founded upon Godly principles.

So how thankful are you, my reader? Are you like David and proclaim God's glory and His majesty to the people around you? Let's read what was written in the near end of this chapter of 1st Chronicles:

23 "Sing unto the LORD, all the earth; shew forth from day to day his salvation.

24 Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvellous works among all nations.

25 For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised: he also is to be feared above all gods.

26 For all the gods of the people are idols: but the LORD made the heavens.

27 Glory and honour are in his presence; strength and gladness are in his place.

28 Give unto the LORD, ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD glory and strength.

29 Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

30 Fear before him, all the earth: the world also shall be stable, that it be not moved.

31 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice: and let men say among the nations, The LORD reigneth."

I fear greatly for the citizens of the USA, and for that matter, those of other democratic countries that have a symbol of freedom guaranteed to their people.

CAN WE MAKE A CONNECTION HERE?

As France has no protection against Islamic jihadist, we have no protection either, because we have abandoned the foundation structure of our civilizations. Because each country has abandoned God, He has abandoned us. Because they, and we have the same liberal bleating lines of tolerance, this is what happens when you give God the boot out of either society.

So be honest with yourself for a moment. When was the last time that you thanked God for the provisions that He alone has supplied? Or have you praised your own ability to get wealth and the ability to take care of yourself, without "God's Help"?...are you of the same mold as God judged Nebuchadnezzar the Babylonian king who God abased for 7 years because of his pride and was driven mad out into the wilderness, eating grass like a cow, his hair growing long and tangled, and the fingernails like claws of an eagle? God has a way to humble the proud, even to the extreme. (Daniel 4:30-37). The USA has become a nation not unlike France has become that they have no use for the God of Heaven. We have driven God out of our government, our schools, our institutions, and our very lives as they have. But God has a way to humble even the greatest nation on earth that has ever lived. Are you ready for an attack on our shores that rivals 9/11?

It would be a perceived great victory for Islam if they succeeded in a major terrorist attack in this country. I read about where the POTUS...(you know, the idiot in chief) has by executive order allowing Syrian refugees into this country and have distributed their numbers all over the USA in the major cities. Report have it that ISIS jihadist have infiltrated their ranks and are amongst the refugees being allowed into this country. First off, the refugees are Muslim and completely anathema to our way of life or our constitutional way of government, embracing Sharia Law. Add that the total disregard for human life of every "infidel" that makes up the citizens of this country by the demonic inspired adherents of ISIS, then we have a recipe for a major terrorist attack in some large city close to you. What will it take to wake up America? Will the next terrorist attack be another 3000 souls lost? No, I would imagine that the next attack will be 3 million, not 3 thousand, as the next attack will be more horrific, as ISIS has been trying to get their hands on a nuclear weapon that can be carried in a suitcase.

I remember not too long ago, when a madman named Osama Bin Laden envisioned an American Hiroshima, and detonating multiple nuclear bombs simultaneously in the most populated cities of this nation. Are we coming closer to that dream of this long dead madman? The more we walk away from God, the less we can ask for His protection and blessings on this country. As the manslayer being outside the walls of safety in the city of sanctuary, we are vulnerable to the evil of ISIS, or any terrorist that wishes to do us harm.

How thankful are you this Thanksgiving? Are you worshiping the true God of the Bible, or relying on your own power as King Nebuchadnezzar did, or forget the blessing of God, as King Saul did, and as King David temporarily forgot how you approach a most Holy God? How will you approach a most Holy God this Thanksgiving? Will you praise Him and give Him glory for His provision and His blessing? Will you give Him praise for the offering of His only Son, Jesus Christ for the sins of the world? Romans 8:32,

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

John 3: 16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

17For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

18He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

Jesus is the source of all blessing that are given to mortal man. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the last. Our worship this time of year, should be directed at Him, the One who loved us, before we loved Him.

This Thanksgiving season, let us give God all the glory and honor and praise Him, for He is good, as His mercy is endureth forever. Pray for His protection and the revival of this nation. Pray for France and all of Europe, that they will turn toward Almighty God and humble themselves in His presence. Let us also pray for this nation that we humble ourselves also, and return to the roots of the founding of this republic. If not, then this nation will most likely fall, and fall hard. If this nation is to fall, let those who proclaim His Name in faith and hope, claim His promises and turn to Him in faith and love blessing His Name. Come soon, Lord Jesus.

This is Pastor Mike Taylor, praying God's provision in your lives, and it's protection is this darkening hour. If you need counseling, prayer, or just a listening ear, then email me at realteam1999@sbcglobal.net, or visit me at www.churchofgod-usa.org. God bless you all

TILL WE MEET AT JESUS FEET