

Spiritual Knowledge Available



Thoughts for Thanksgiving (Part 5)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again as we draw near to the end of another week. In my talks this week I've been sharing with you some lessons from Scripture on the importance of thankfulness and thanksgiving. Then I followed that up by a practical application to our situation in the United States at this time. Each day I focused on some particular aspect of American life for which we need to thank God. The four special themes for Thanksgiving that I focused on in my previous talks were: religious liberty, gospel outreach, limitless opportunities and Godly heritage.

The theme that I'm going to focus on in my closing talk today is the spiritual knowledge available to us here in America.

But first, let me share with you a simple lesson from Scripture which reveals the tremendous potential for good that there is in the simple act of giving thanks. My lesson is taken from John chapter 6, the account of the feeding of the five thousand by Jesus. That's five thousand men and doesn't include women and children—the total company was probably well over ten thousand. They'd been with Jesus a long time, they were in a desert place, no food was available, but a little boy came up and offered to Jesus his own lunch: five loaves and two fishes. Jesus took the loaves and the fishes and with that tiny quantity of food, He fed about ten thousand people and there was a surplus over. How did that happen? Here's the account, John 6:10 and 11:

> "Jesus said, 'Have the people sit down.' There was plenty of grass in that place, and the men sat down, about five thousand of them. Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish."

Do you notice that? Jesus didn't even pray. All He did is give thanks, in faith. And giving thanks changed that little boy's lunch into a supply of food for ten thousand people. Can you see the miracle-working power there is in the simple act of giving thanks? Don't you think that you and I need to give thanks much more often than we do?

Now, contrast what Paul says in Romans chapter 1. What's the opposite? Unthankfulness, failure to give thanks. What's

the result? Let me read Romans 1:21. Paul is speaking about the whole human race.

> "For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened."

Notice there two basic mistakes when they knew God: first, they didn't glorify Him; secondly, they failed to give Him thanks. The result was their minds and hearts were darkened. And then Paul describes the ensuing results. He mentions three specific things: idolatry, immorality, and perversion. And then he sums up the end state of these people in verses 29–32 of Romans chapter 1. I want to read these and as I read them, I want you to see that's the end result of failing to give God thanks.

> "They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them."

Isn't that something of a description of our current situation in the United States? Don't we see most of those moral blemishes and evils rampant in our nation? Has it ever occurred to you that probably one main reason why this has come about is that we have failed to give God thanks? So, let's make this Thanksgiving week an occasion to repent and to express our thanks to God.

Our special theme for thanking God today is the unique amount of spiritual knowledge available in this country. I wonder whether you appreciate this. Let me just give you three points from which to look at it. Think of the number of Bible translations, Bible paraphrases, Bible commentaries. You probably have several in your home. I have a shelf of them. I thank God for them, but do you realize that there are many, many nations that don't have the Bible in their own language? There are many, many countries where even if the Bible has been translated, the government keeps it from them. Think of all the preachers and teachers. It's been estimated that almost half the evangelical preachers and teachers on earth are ministering in the United States.

And then think of the means of disseminating the truth. There's print, radio, television, tape recorder. That's not true in most other countries. Either they don't have these technical facilities or the use of the technical facilities for transmitting the truth of God is deliberately withheld.

Let me tell you a simple story of a friend of mine who was ministering the gospel in a remote part of Southeast Asia. He came to a village in a jungle and he started to talk to the people about Jesus and one man said to him, "We've never heard of Jesus. Is he a Communist?" Can you imagine that? And that's true of perhaps a billion people in the world today. They've never heard of Jesus. And think of the opportunities we have, not merely to hear but to learn; the almost inexhaustible sources of spiritual knowledge that are available to us today.

I believe there's never been a group of people in the world at any stage in human history that have had more spiritual knowledge available to them than this generation in the United States today. But bear in mind that privileges carry corresponding responsibilities. Listen to what Jesus says in Luke 12:48:

> "From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked."

That applies to us in America today. Let me tell you my own personal response to this situation. One thing I'm going to do each day this week—I'm giving God thanks publicly for this radio ministry which is just one of the many ways in which spiritual knowledge is being made available to the people of this land. Will you join with me for a moment in giving God thanks for this ministry?

"God, we thank you today for all the privileges, the opportunities, the spiritual knowledge which you've made available to us. We thank you particularly for this ministry. I thank you for those who listen, for those who support, and for those who help me with all the technical details and with the organization. Lord, I want to give you thanks for every person that is associated with this ministry and for this tremendous opportunity I want to thank you publicly today, in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Now let me share with you some facts about this ministry before I close my message today. Each week I receive letters from listeners thanking me for the help and the blessings that they receive from this ministry. I believe you'd like me to share with you just a few of these letters. For example, a Methodist minister writes:

> "Thank God for your message this morning. It was just what I needed to speak about to my people. I want to give them the whole truth about the Holy Spirit. I know He is real and He is moving in our church now. Pray for me as I work to bring this message to the Methodist church."

And then from Washington, D.C., the capital of our nation:

> "Thank you so much for broadcasting in the Washington, D.C. area. Your books and radio teaching are building my faith daily. I shall send contributions as often as I can. I had been praying for God to raise up one of His spokesmen in this area to teach the deeper secrets of the faith. I believe you are the answer to my prayer."

And then from New Jersey:

> "My husband and I just started listening to you on radio. The Lord's timing is perfect. My husband and I have been praying for a long time for our marriage to be healed. Your program, book and other things the Lord is bringing up in our marriage, I just know it's time for ours. This way, we can go out and help others as we are being helped. God is good. Would you send us your book The Marriage Covenant?"

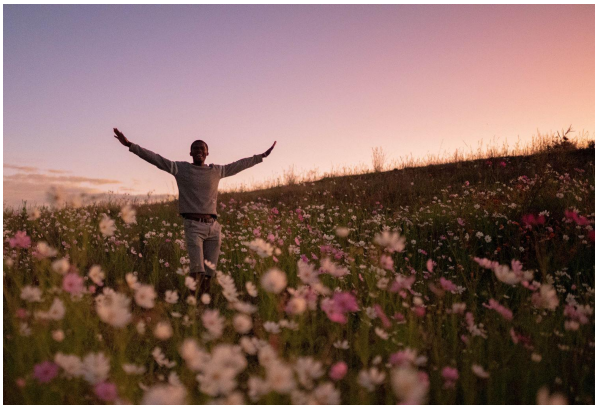
Before I close this talk today, I'm going to make a special request of you. I want you to pray about something. This week we're asking our listeners across the nation to express their appreciation of this radio ministry by sending us a special thanksgiving offering. I'm sure you understand this ministry is kept on the air by the offerings of people just like yourself. People who believe in its message and want to support it. If this ministry is a source of help and blessing to you, will you pray about helping us, in turn, this week with a special thanksgiving offering? Let me suggest that your offering will do two important things. First, it will express your appreciation for help that you yourself have received through this ministry. Second, it will enable us to bring the same kind of help to someone who needs it as much as you do but may not be in a position to support us financially.

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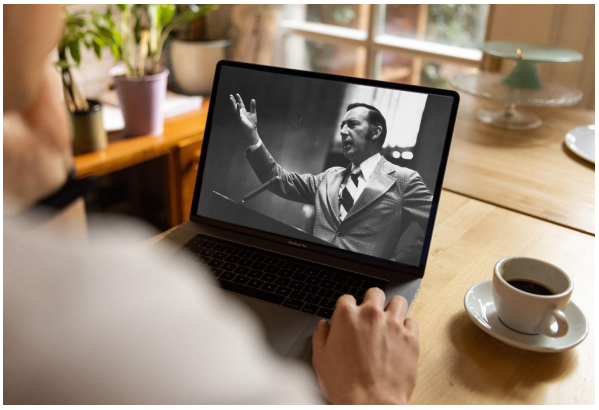
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