

November 2018 ~ A Thankful Heart!



It was a month ago when I walked into a store and already, the Christmas decorations, cards, and advertisements were out in grand fashion. Don't get me wrong. I love the Christmas season and why we celebrate it but I was taken back by the earliness of Christmas this year. Maybe I haven't noticed it so much in the past but I was caught off guard by the transformation of this store into the Christmas season.

It was the middle of September and already the season of Christmas was upon us. Looking forward we still have those days we celebrate such as Halloween, which we as Christians celebrate as a Harvest Celebration. Then there is All Saints Day, Veteran's Day, & on to Thanksgiving. Finally, we enter into Advent and Christmas itself. All of these celebrations come prior to Christmas.

What I find with all of this preoccupation regarding holidays is we often forget why these holidays are thought of in the ways they should be. The emphasis points to the idea of collecting things in order to be happy. When the real focus should be on our thankfulness to our God who has provided us with everything we have.

King David, in the Psalms, was always making it an important aspect of his life to give God praise and thanksgiving for not only all he had but especially his life and the God who created him.

All throughout the Bible we read about giving God thanks but how often do we really offer up our thanks to Him? If you have a Bible that has a concordance in the back of it, or maybe you use the internet to look things up, you will find a multitude of verses that speak of giving God thanks and being thankful for the things we have.

Even in these last several days I've seen combines in the fields and semi's loaded with crops, bringing in the crops that have matured and are ready to be brought in. That being said, I know it has been a difficult season with the crops but God has still provided these things for us in His grace and mercy, and His love for us. It is hard to offer up thanksgiving when difficult times are upon us but the apostle Paul puts life into perspective in Philippians 4: 4 – 8:

“Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say, Rejoice...in everything let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.”

It is easy to get caught up in all of the worldly passions that surround us but God makes it abundantly clear in His Word our focus should be upon Him and what He has done for us through Jesus' death and resurrection. The only thing that matters for all of us is where our hearts are in our day to day routines and whether or not God, in Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, is our focus as we are surrounded by the early seasonal bombardment of worldly pleasures and the demands of our own daily routines placed upon us.

May God's Spirit and His love for you fill your hearts with thankfulness as we are fast approaching the wonderful season of celebration when Jesus made His presence in our world to show God the Father's love for us and how important each one of you are to Him.

In Joyful Celebration of our Lord,

Pastor Rich