

Sermon Title: The Thanksgiving Prayer for What the Gospel of God Produces

Sermon Text: Romans 1:8-15

Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to a lifestyle of faithful service in light of the Gospel of God.

Sermon Proposition: There are 7 characteristics of true spiritual service, motivated by the Gospel of God.

(key phrase: **Romans 1:9** For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers,)

Introduction: Thankfulness, gratefulness, appreciation!!! How thankful are we for our Great Salvation, that is a result of the Gospel of God? We are very skilled at talking about being thankful, but what does your thankfulness produce in your life?

What according to Scripture should a truly thankful life, which reflects on the Gospel of God, and is a reflection of the active work of the Gospel of God look like in a Christian's life?

1 Corinthians 4:7 For who makes you differ *from another*? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive *it*, why do you boast as if you had not received *it*?

Philippians 2:12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; **13** for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure.

Ephesians 3:20 Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, **21** to Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service. **2** And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Colossians 1:28 Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. **29** To this *end* I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.

A life motivated by true thankfulness for what the Gospel of God represents produces a lifestyle of sacrificial service and unselfish giving of oneself in prayer and service toward sinners, saints, and Savior.

I. The Gospel of God produces a thankful heart. V.8

Acts 25:10-28:14-16

Isaiah 53:11 He shall see the labor of His soul, *and* be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities.

Luke 2:1 And it came to pass in those days *that* a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.

Spending 2 years in the city preaching the gospel "without hindrance (**Acts 28:31**). Believers must learn to be thankful in all things, and learn that God works out events in ways we could never imagine.

A. Jesus the mediator leads to thankfulness.

Hebrews 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

1 Timothy 2:5 For *there is* one God and one Mediator between God and men, *the* Man Christ Jesus,

B. Jews were plotting to kill Paul leads to thankfulness. (**Acts 20:3**)

C. Prison Epistle Paul is thankful.

Ephesians 1:16 do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers:

Philippians 1:3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,

Colossians 1:3 We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,

II. The Gospel of God produces a **sacrificial** service. V.9

The word serve literally, “to serve as a priest.” In the Old Testament it refers to the service of the priests in the temple, including the idea of worship. The same word is “worship” in [*Philippians 3:3 For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.*]. This word is a commentary on what true Christian service ought to be: we serve God as priests, and therefore every act of service should be rendered to God as an act of worship.

Service must find its origin in the power of the Spirit, [*John 4:22 "You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. 23 "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. 24 "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."*], not the flesh.

Hebrews 9:14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

The altar of our service [*Hebrews 13:10 We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat.*] is the gospel of the Son of God. Our place of service, is at the altar of the cross of Christ.

III. The Gospel of God produces a **passionate** prayer life. V.9b-10

A. Produces a prayer life that is **constant**. V.9b

Paul says he prays “without ceasing ... always.” Prayer is a service to God in which we can serve God day and night continually. (**Luke 2:36-38**)

B. Produces a prayer life that is **personal**.

“Making mention of you.” Paul mentions no less than twenty-six of the members of this church. There is power in personal prayer, in mentioning names.

C. Produces a prayer life that is **particular**.

Paul’s prayer included various details. He even asked for a prosperous journey to Rome. Every detail of your life matters to God.

D. Produces a prayer life that is **submissive**.

Paul realized that the request must be in line with the will of God.

1 John 5:14 Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.

Matthew 26:39 He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."

E. Produces a prayer life that is **undemanding**.

His prayer was not dictatorial. Paul desired that he might go to Rome, but he made no attempt to dictate to God by what means he should go.

F. Produces a prayer life that is **genuine**.

Paul could say, “For God is my witness” that he prays for them unceasingly. It is a great thing to call upon God to witness that one’s prayer life is genuine. This is a part of the Christian life where there can exist much falsehood, because God alone witnesses it.

IV. The Gospel of God produces an **unquenchable** longing. V.11-12

This section begins with an expression of love, “I long for you,” literally, “I am homesick for you,” and then he mentions his immediate purpose.

A. Paul wants us to share some spiritual gift. V.11a

B. Paul wants us strength the believers and the church. V.11b

C. Paul wants us to encourage one another. V.12a

D. Paul wants us to focus on the common faith. V.12b (**Eph 4:11ff**)

Romans 15:32 that I may come to you with joy by the will of God, and may be refreshed together with you.

V. The Gospel of God produces an eternal purpose. V.13

To have a harvest among them is his eternal purpose. "Harvest" refers to the product of his apostolic labors [*Philippians 1:22* *But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell.*] including probably at least 3 areas.

- A. Increase in numbers of Christians through the sharing of the Gospel of God. V.11b
- B. Increase in the strengthening and maturing of their faith. V.11b
- C. Increase in their obedience to the faith. V.5

VI. The Gospel of God produces a worldwide indebtedness. V.14

There is a sense of divine obligation to mankind, especially Jews, as well as Gentiles that Paul is always sensitive to.

Paul is always deeply aware of his reason for being called, sent, and set apart for the Gospel of God (v.1), and it is this divine obligation to use his gift [*Acts 9:15* *But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. Acts 13:47* *"For so the Lord has commanded us: I have set you as a light to the Gentiles, That you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth."*] or gifts [*Ephesians 3:8* *To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,*] that motivates Paul [*1 Corinthians 9:16* *For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!*].

- A. Paul is indebted to serve Greek and Barbarians. V.14a
Barbarians included people from Spain and Asia Minor (*Acts 14:11-18*)
- B. Paul is indebted to serve wise and unwise. V.14b
People who thought they were wise by virtue of their own thoughts, or those who claimed some intellectual attainment and some did not.

VII. The Gospel of God produces a constant readiness. V.15

There was always a readiness to fulfill his purpose and indebtedness [*Matthew 24:44* *"Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."*] God is always ready, the problem is we are not ready always.

In view here are the Roman Christians, Paul wants to "preach the Gospel" referring to the ongoing work of evangelization. As P. Bowers has pointed out, "the gospel" in Paul includes "not simply an initial preaching mission but the full scope of activities resulting in settled churches." [P. Boewrs, "Fulfilling the Gospel: The Scope of the Pauline Missions," JETS 30 (1987), 198.]