

Text— Lamentations 3:22-25

Fellow redeemed sinners, redeemed by the blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ,

Today is the national Thanksgiving holiday; but unfortunately, to most folks it's simply a time to watch parades and football games, while eating a good meal and downing some alcoholic beverages. Now, there is nothing wrong with enjoying good company, food, watching a game, and having a beer or a glass of wine. However, it's quite sad if the actual purpose of the holiday has been forgotten.

My friends, we all have much to be thankful for not only on Thanksgiving Day but each and every day. Furthermore and most importantly, we owe the greatest thanks to the Lord God. It's as we spoke together moments ago in reading Psalm 136:1, "O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever." We frequently utter those very words in prayer, but maybe we don't always really think about those words regarding the Lord's abundant goodness and mercy.

Therefore, pondering our sermon text can surely be of benefit to us as it gives us reason to:

"BE TRULY THANKFUL TO THE LORD"

With that as our theme may we, in view of our text and with the help of the Holy Ghost, see—

- 1) Why we should certainly be truly thankful to the Lord
- 2) How we should show we are truly thankful to the Lord

-1-

Verse 22, ----- (Lamentations 3:22)

Let's think about our condition by nature, for if we are honest we must all confess as did David the Psalmist: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Psalm 51:5) Yes,

we were all conceived and born in sin; and, we daily commit all manner of actual sins in thoughts, words, and deeds, for Ecclesiastes 7:20 reports: "there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." And what have we earned by our sin? Holy Writ answers in Romans 6:23, "the wages of sin is death; but" – and thank the Lord for that "but" – "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Accordingly, *It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.*

Think about it. The Lord God in great mercy and compassion did NOT leave us without hope and headed for hell, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:44), to suffer never-ending consumption by flames and worms gnawing on us. No, the Lord God in mercy and compassion graciously sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to rescue us from ruin, for, "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. 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." (1 John 4:9-10; 2:2; John 3:16)

And how is it that people come to believe on Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord? Ephesians 2:8-9 answers: "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Holy Writ in the book of Romans adds: "the gospel of Christ ...is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 1:16-17; 10:17)

Thus, *It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not*

consumed, because his compassions fail not. Let us regularly thank and praise the Lord God for His magnificent mercy and compassion shown to us in Christ Jesus our Savior! We should certainly be truly thankful to the Lord.

Let's look again at verse 22, this time coupled with verse 23, ----- (Lamentations 3:22-23)

Observe in verse 22 that we are informed of the Lord's *compassions*— plural. Oh, the greatest compassion is that shown to us by the Lord in Christ our Savior. Nevertheless, the Lord's *compassions are new every morning.* The Lord's *compassions fail not*— they continue day after day in so many ways!

Spiritual blessings from the Lord are many, day after day, for He not only gifts us with faith in Jesus Christ our Savior, He keeps us in the faith, grows us in the faith, and makes us fruitful therein, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure," declares Philippians 2:13. Furthermore, when we blow-it and fall into sin, God forgives us again and again for Jesus' sake when we sincerely repent, for we read in Hebrews 7:24-27 that our Lord Jesus Christ, "because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself." Yes, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (1 Timothy 2:5-6) Hence, we should certainly be truly thankful to the Lord.

Temporal blessings from the Lord are also many, day after day, for Acts 17:28 reports: "in him we live, and move, and have our being." Yes, it is God who keeps our hearts beating and keeps us

breathing. It is the Lord God our heavenly Father who sees to it that we have water to drink and food to eat, "for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." (Matthew 5:45) It is the Lord who gifts folks with the knowledge to invent useful things, such as medicines that actually work and machines with which certain chores can be done with ease and efficiency. Accordingly, we should certainly be truly thankful to the Lord.

Notice in verse 23 of our text that the prophet Jeremiah declares to the Lord: *great is thy faithfulness.* Those words supply us with yet another reason to be truly thankful to the Lord. Think about it.

We often fall into sin and do NOT remain faithful to the Lord; but, the LORD IS ALWAYS FAITHFUL TO US! The Lord always keeps His Word! It's as the prophet Micah declares, Micah 7:18-19, "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea." David, the sweet psalmist of Israel, adds in Psalm 36:5-6, "Thy mercy, O LORD, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep: O LORD, thou preservest man and beast."

Thus, we should certainly be truly thankful to the Lord for all the spiritual and temporal blessings He gives us.

-2-

As we ponder the remaining verses of our text, let us see how we should show we are truly thankful to the Lord.

Verse 24, ----- (Lamentations 3:24)

Observe Jeremiah's personal confession as he says:

The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him. Note well Jeremiah's confession of faith is heart-deep, that is, from his very soul. Likewise, we show we are truly thankful to the Lord when we personally confess from our soul that the Lord is our portion, our all in all, and that we hope in the Lord and in no other. Mere lip-service don't cut it; rather, we need to have heart-deep faith in the Lord, resting all our hope in Him, for Psalm 124:8 clearly states: "Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth."

My friends, realize that to hope in the Lord God is to hope in Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and Lord, for the Apostle Paul reports in 1 Timothy 1:1 that "God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, ...is our hope." And, 1 Peter 1:18-21 declares: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God." Thus, we show we are truly thankful to the Lord when we continue steadfastly in the faith of Jesus Christ, for Hebrews 10:23-25 says: "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." Therefore, let us regularly confess the Lord Jesus Christ by worshiping and praising Him.

Verse 25, ----- (Lamentations 3:25)

We can show we are truly thankful to the Lord by always keeping the fact in mind that *The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him.*

Hence, if we don't turn our backs toward the Lord, but rather wait for Him and continue to seek Him with our soul by clinging to Him and His Holy Word in faith, we will continue to receive His goodness, now and in yonder life, for the Lord Jesus says: "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:31-32) Let us therefore show we are truly thankful to the Lord by persevering in His Word, "...the holy scriptures, which are able to make [us] wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. [For] All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Timothy 3:15-17)

My friends, let us regularly pray to the Lord, because Isaiah 55:6-7 urges: "Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

Let us daily and sincerely repent of our sins; let us keep our full trust and confidence in Christ Jesus as our personal Savior and Lord, patiently waiting for His visible return in glory, for Acts 4:12 plainly states: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Let us go forward remembering to be truly thankful to the Lord, for *It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.* Amen.

m.e.l.