

WEEKLY DEVOTION – Tuesday, November 26, 2024
Pastor Bruce Kischnick, Grace Lutheran Church, New Albany, IN

“Thank You, Thank You, Thank You”

READING: Psalm 105:1-5, 8 – Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done. Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts. Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice. Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always. Remember the wonders he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he pronounced. He remembers his covenant forever, the word he commanded, for a thousand generations.

I just did the math. God gave the covenant to Abraham about 2040 years B.C. So that’s about 4060 years ago. If we take 20 years to be the average time between generations, God’s covenant has been in force about 203 generations, give or take. Since the Psalmist says that God’s word will hold for at least 1000 generations, there’s still at least 16,000 years left in that promise! Of course I’m being a little facetious here. The Psalmist isn’t speaking in literal time, and I’m not going to either.

God made a promise to Abraham that he would use his descendants as the nucleus of all those who would trust in the one true God. They would forsake the idols of the world and the false gods of every kind, and lift up the name of Yahweh, the Great “I Am”, and praise him only. You and I understand and believe that the promise was not for Israel only, but for all those who would come after the fulfillment of God’s promise in the coming of his Son, the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

A year has come and gone since our last Thanksgiving Day. Think back over that year: have you had more blessings than you can count? More blessings than you deserve? More blessings than disappointments? I’ll wager you have. God has kept us supplied with everything we needed for both body and soul. And even if you have suffered grief, even if you have suffered ailments, even if you have struggled, God has not forsaken you. The fact that you are listening to this devotion tells me that. He has kept you in his family. He has sent his Holy Spirit to keep you in the one true faith. He has blessed you with his presence, his Word, his Sacraments, and his promises. And note: those promises are the very same promises he gave to Abraham – “Trust and serve me, and I will make of you a great nation.”

No, your descendants probably won’t establish their own nation on the map of this world. But they will receive a “Promise Land.” They will be part of a “great multitude that no one could count.” They will be blessed by the same God you have been blessed by. The same God who blessed Father Abraham. And even if you have no descendants following in your footprints, you are still part of the greatest family in the history of the world: the Family of God.

So as you contemplate Thanksgiving, the service tomorrow evening at 7:00, or your family dinner on Thursday, or just a quiet day on your own – give thanks to God for all his benefits. Be reminded that you are known by the Creator of the universe BY NAME! That you are offered the same blessings, the same future as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, Daniel, Peter, James, and John. The One who blesses you has shown you salvation by bringing you to faith in his Son. Jesus has told you, “Because I live, you will live also.” And if that’s not enough, you live in a great and spacious land, free to worship your Lord as you see fit.

Thanksgiving Day has its traditions: turkey, dressing, pumpkin pie, afternoon football games, and left-overs for days on end. But do not forget who the real center of the day should be. Take some time to give God thanks...for EVERYTHING. Physical blessings, yes. Personal blessings, yes. National blessings, yes. But

especially those blessings that the world has nothing to do with: his love, his truth, his Son, his promises, our hope. Have a Happy and a Blessed Thanksgiving in Jesus' name. Amen.

PRAYER:

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1) THANKSGIVING SERVICE – 7:00 PM tomorrow, Wednesday, November 27. My last Thanksgiving sermon at Grace (probably). “O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, and his mercy endures forever!”

2) ADVENT SERVICES: There will be three mid-week Advent services on Wednesdays, December 4, 11, and 18 at 7:00. A reminder to those affected, Grace on Wednesday will move up supper to 5:15, and classes from 5:45-6:45. Church then follows. Our theme this year is: “Signs of Messiah: Isaiah Speaks”. We will look at Isaiah’s prophecy in Isaiah 7, 9, and 11: “A Virgin”, “A Son”, and “A Branch”. Plan now to join us as we prepare to celebrate our Savior’s birth.

3) GIFTS for KIDS: we will again be gifting need families within and outside our congregation with clothes, toys, and other things for Christmas. We can only do this with the money you provide for us. You can mail it to the office or drop it in the offering in an envelope that simply says, “Gifts for Kids”. Thank you on behalf of every child we make smile on Christmas morning.