**Series Title: The Priority of Jesus Christ: Prioritizing Christ in Every Area of Life**

**Sermon Title: The Priority of Christ in Thanksgiving**

**Sermon Text: Colossians 1:3-8**

**Sermon Purpose: The hearers mandate of thanksgiving is found in the Supremacy of Jesus Christ.**

**Sermon Proposition: There are 5 reasons why Christians are to make thanksgiving a priority of life.**

**Introduction:** The city consisted of a population of Phrygians and Greeks, but also included a number of Jews. The church included mostly Gentiles (**1:21, 27; 2:13**), but also had Jewish members (**2:11, 16, 18, 21; 3:11**).

**I. The mandate of thanksgiving. V.3**

**II. The motivation of thanksgiving. Vv.4-5a**

**III. The message of thanksgiving. V.5b**

**IV. The manifestation of thanksgiving. V.6**

**V. The messengers of thanksgiving. Vv.7-8**

**I. The mandate of thanksgiving. V.3**

 The giving of continual thanksgiving was characteristic of Paul’s prayers to God on behalf of the flock.

 **Romans 1:8** First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

 **1 Corinthians 1:14** I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius,

 **Ephesians 1:6** to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved.

 In this text God is recognized at the 1st cause of goodness in the Colossian saints. (**Colossians 1:7; 4:12**)

 Paul had heard from their pastor Epaphras about the members growing faith, love, and hope in Christ Jesus and for one another, for all the saints in other churches, and for those around them. Prayer in this context is the broader more inclusive act of worship, which included thanksgiving and intercession.

**II. The motivation of thanksgiving. Vv.4-5a**

 A. Faith is the soul looking upward to God. V.4a

 B. Love that looks outward to others. V.4b

 These are the two hallmarks of genuine Christianity.

 C. Hope looks forward to the future. V.5a

 This hope that was focused on the future impacted the early saints present reality, in how they thought, felt, and lived. The basis for all believers faith and love is that they have reserved for them in heaven. (**1 Peter 1:3-9**)

 **Hebrews 11:13-16** These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced *them* and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. **14** For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. **15** And truly if they had called to mind that *country* from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. **16** But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly *country*. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

 **Hebrews 11:39-40** And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, **40** God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

 The hope is “stored up in heaven” because Christ,

 1. has risen,

 2. ascended to heaven

 **Acts 1:10-11** And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, **11** who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This *same* Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."

 3. is presently interceding on their behalf as their High Priest.

 **Hebrews 7:25** Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

 **1 John 2:1** My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

 **1 Corinthians 15:16-19** For if *the* dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. **17** And if Christ is not risen, your faith *is* futile; you are still in your sins! **18** Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. **19** If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.

**III. The message of thanksgiving. V.5b**

 (**1 Corinthians 15:1-3**)

 **Ephesians 1:13** In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,

 **2 Timothy 2:15** Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

 **James 1:18** Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

 **Romans 10:9-10** that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. **10** For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

**IV. The manifestation of thanksgiving. V.6**

 A. The **universality** of the manifestation. V.6a

 B. The **practicality** of the manifestation. V.6b

 The gospel was by God’s grace and power production fruit. As a seed is planted, nurtured, and grows into a tree, and the tree produces fruit, so the gospel produces spiritual fruit in the life of a true believer.

 1. Discipleship fruit. (**Matthew 28:16-20**)

 2. Evangelism fruit. (**Acts 1:8**)

 3. Spiritual gift fruit. (**1 Corinthians 12**)

 4. Fruit of the Spirit fruit. (**Galatians 5:22**)

 5. Spiritual maturity fruit. (**2 Peter 1:5-11**)

 C. The **eternality** of the manifestation. V.6c

 Heresies are normally local and deadly; but the truth of the Gospel is universal and life transforming.

 **Galatians 1:6-7** I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, **7** which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ.

 **Ephesians 2:8-9** For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, **9** not of works, lest anyone should boast.

 **Titus 3:5-7** not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, **6** whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, **7** that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

**V. The messengers of thanksgiving. Vv.7-8**

 A. The necessity of a faithful **speaker** of Jesus Christ. V.7a-8

 Paul did not plant the church at Colossae and Paul had not yet visited there, therefore it was through the faithfulness of a fellow slave and servant, that he learned of the peoples condition.

 B. The necessity of a fellow **slave** of Jesus Christ. V.7b

 C. The necessity of a faithful **servant** of Jesus Christ. V.7c