

## THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER (2010)

### **TEXT: I CHRONICLES 29:10-13**

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

1. Thanksgiving is one of my favorite holidays. It does not have all the materialism, drunkenness, and heathenism attached to it that Christmas has.
2. Thanksgiving is a simple Christian holiday – we simply set aside one day to give thanks to God for His goodness to us.
3. I often wonder who atheists and other unbelievers give thanks to on Thanksgiving, to themselves?
4. William Bradford, the governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony, wrote these words in 1623:  
"Inasmuch as the great Father has given us this year an abundant harvest of Indian corn, wheat, peas, beans, squashes, and garden vegetables, and has made the forests to abound with game and the sea with fish and clams, and inasmuch as He spared us from pestilence and disease, has granted us freedom to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience.

Now I, your magistrate, do proclaim that all ye Pilgrims, with your wives and ye little ones, do gather at ye meeting house, on ye hill, between the hours of 9 and 12 in the daytime, on Thursday, November 29, in the year of our Lord, 1623, and the third year since ye Pilgrims landed on Ye Pilgrim Rock (Plymouth) there to listen to ye pastor and render thanksgiving to Almighty God for all His blessings."

5. George Washington gave his famous Thanksgiving Proclamation right here in NYC on October 3, 1789, assigning Thursday, November 26<sup>th</sup> to be Thanksgiving Day. Please allow me to read part of it to you:  
"Whereas it is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor: and

Whereas, both houses of Congress have, by their joint committee, requested me 'to recommend to the people of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer, to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many and signal favors of Almighty God, especially by affording them an opportunity peacefully to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness.'"

6. In 1846, Mrs. Sarah Hale, an editor of a ladies' magazine, began a campaign to have Thanksgiving Day established as a national holiday. Several states responded but it took President Abraham Lincoln to officially declare Thanksgiving Day a national holiday (18 years later).
7. President Lincoln appointed the last Thursday of November, 1864, as Thanksgiving Day, and the tradition has been firmly established. To this we can only add: THANK GOD!
8. The word "thanks" (thanksgiving, thankful, etc.) in one form or another is found some 140 times in the Bible. David used it more times than anyone else in the Bible, with the apostle Paul a close second.
9. Tonight, I would like for us to look at David's prayer of thanksgiving found here in I Chronicles 29.

### **I. DAVID'S PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING WAS TO GOD (29:10, 11).**

1. That sounds rather obvious, but consider this – most Americans prefer to leave God out of Thanksgiving.
2. To worldlings Thanksgiving means a four-day weekend, football games, and a turkey dinner. I am not knocking those things (especially the turkey dinner!), but beloved, this is not the real meaning of Thanksgiving.
3. The Bible says "David blessed the LORD" (29:10). To bless the LORD means to ascribe grateful praise to Him.
4. Praise was ascribed to God "for ever and ever" (29:10). We will be praising God for all eternity.
5. There are some similarities between David's prayer of thanksgiving and the Lord's Prayer (Model Prayer). Our Lord instructed His disciples to pray, "For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen" (Matt. 6:13).
6. David prayed: "Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the majesty..." (29:11; cf. Matt. 6:13).
7. What this means is God is sovereign over heaven and earth. "Thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and Thou art exalted as head above all" (29:11b; cf. Matt. 6:13). David recognized this. And we need to recognize this.
8. Let us stop here for a moment and take note of the context: David's prayer followed his exhortation to the people to give for the building of the temple (I Chron. 29:1-5; esp. vs. 5b).

9. The people responded (29:6-9) and so David "rejoiced with great joy" (29:9).
10. Then David offered up this magnificent prayer of thanksgiving to God.

## II. DAVID RECOGNIZED THAT ALL THINGS COME FROM GOD

1. "Both riches and honor come of Thee" (29:12).
2. First Samuel 2:7 says, "The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up."
3. This is the basis for Christian stewardship. Psalm 50:10-12 says, "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof."
4. David goes on to say in verse 14, "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee."
5. And then down in verse 16 we read, "all this store that we have prepared...cometh of Thine hand, and is all Thine own."
6. If every member of Bible Baptist Church truly believed this, and understood this, and obeyed this, I think we could get a lot more done -- with our work on this building, with supporting more missionaries, and so on.
7. But we have to have a "willing heart." The words "willing" and "willingly" are found seven times in this passage of Scripture (29:5, 6, 9 twice, 14, 17 twice).
8. Exodus 35:5 says, "Whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the LORD; gold, and silver, and brass."
9. When we give to the Lord's work, we are only giving back that which rightfully belongs to God in the first place. "For all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee" (I Chron. 29:14b).
10. When we pay our tithe, when we put in our faith promise, when we contribute to our building fund, we must remember – "and of Thine own have we given Thee" (29:14; cf. 29:18).

## III. DAVID RECOGNIZED THAT THE THINGS OF GOD ARE ALL THAT REALLY MATTERS

1. In verse 14, David asks, "But who am I, and what is my people?" In verse 15, he answers his question – "For we are strangers before Thee, and sojourners, as were our fathers..."

2. "Our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding" (29:15). Life is fleeting. Soon 2010 will soon be over. Our days on earth will soon be over.
3. James 4:14 says, "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."
4. Our Lord said, "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4).
5. These important principles – the brevity of life, the importance of serving God while there is still time, the judgment of God – are repeated over and over for us in the Word of God. Moses said, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Ps. 90:12).
6. And yet some Christians still do not get it. They run to and fro, engaged in all sorts of foolish and worldly activities, not realizing that "Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last."
7. The kingdom of God is all that really matters. David prayed, "Thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all" (29:11).
8. Our Lord taught His disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven...For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen" (Matt. 6:10, 13).
9. David recognized that the things of God are all that really matters. And so he wanted to build a temple for God (29:16; cf. 17:1, 2).
10. Do you have that same kind of zeal? Do you want to see this "temple" fixed up for the glory of God?
11. Even though David himself was not given the privilege of building the temple, his son Solomon was (22:7-11; 28:2-6).
12. But David did all he could to help in the preparation for building the temple (22:1-6).
13. Why?
14. David was a great soldier, a great king, a great poet and musician; David had everything money could buy. And David realized that the things of God are all that really matters.

### **CONCLUSION:**

Only One Life" by C.T. Studd

Two little lines I heard one day, Traveling along life's busy way;  
Bringing conviction to my heart, And from my mind would not depart;  
Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last.

Only one life, yes only one, Soon will its fleeting hours be done;  
Then, in 'that day' my Lord to meet, And stand before His Judgment seat;  
Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last.

Only one life, the still small voice, Gently pleads for a better choice  
Bidding me selfish aims to leave, And to God's holy will to cleave;  
Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last.

Only one life, a few brief years, Each with its burdens, hopes, and fears;  
Each with its clays I must fulfill, living for self or in His will;  
Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last.

When this bright world would tempt me sore, When Satan would a victory  
score;  
When self would seek to have its way, Then help me Lord with joy to say;  
Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last.

Give me Father, a purpose deep, In joy or sorrow Thy word to keep;  
Faithful and true what e'er the strife, Pleasing Thee in my daily life;  
Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last.

Oh let my love with fervor burn, And from the world now let me turn;  
Living for Thee, and Thee alone, Bringing Thee pleasure on Thy throne;  
Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last.

Only one life, yes only one, Now let me say, "Thy will be done";  
And when at last I'll hear the call, I know I'll say "twas worth it all";  
Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last.