

Let us thank God

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“In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you” (1 Thess. 5:18).

In this Thanksgiving season – and throughout the year – let us thank God for Who He is, what He has said and what He has done, is doing and will yet do.

We thank God the Father for His perfect holiness and His infinite love: “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son...” (John 3:16). He did not simply forgive our sins, He maintained His holy character and standards by paying the essential price for our sins. “He loved...He gave!” This was not cheap grace. “He...spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all” (Rom. 8:32). Thank You, Heavenly Father for giving Your Son for us!

We also thank God the Son for the marvelous display of His wisdom and power in creating the universe, the earth and all living things. “All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:3). “For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible” (Col. 1:16). “In Him we live, and move, and have our being” (Acts 17:28). Thank You, Lord Jesus, for creating us!

We also thank God’s Son for His moment-by-moment work of maintaining the universe which He created (“by Him all things consist [i.e., hold together]” [Col. 1:17]; He “uphold(s) all things by the word of His power” [Heb. 1:3]). Not only does He prevent things from sinking into non-existence, He also directs everything toward a God-honoring ultimate goal by His providence. Thus, the Father has appointed Him to be “heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds (literally, the ages; i.e., mass-energy through time)” (Heb. 1:2). It is only because the Son of God is in charge of the universe

(not Satan or chance) that “all things” can “work together for good to them that love God” (Rom. 8:28). Thank You, Lord Jesus, for preserving and guiding all things!

We must especially thank our Lord Jesus Christ for dying on the cross for our sins. As a perfect man, He would not have wanted to experience the wrath of His Father for those three hours (from noon to 3 p.m.). Therefore He cried out, “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup (of temporary but total separation from the Father) pass from Me.” We must be eternally grateful that He added these words: “Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt” (Matt. 26:39).

Amazingly, the Father was “pleased (i.e., it was His eternal purpose, cf. Acts 2:23)...to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief” (Is. 53:10), in order that we might be saved. “He (the Father) hath made Him (the Son) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Cor. 5:21).

Thus, our sin was transferred to Jesus Christ, and He became our substitute before the Father the moment we believed in Him. When God the Father looks at believers, He sees us through the sacrificed blood of the Lamb of God because “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us” (Gal. 3:13). His righteousness was imputed (i.e., transferred, counted, reckoned) to us, just as our sin was imputed to Him: “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me” (Gal. 2:20).

For all eternity we shall be thankful to God our Father, who “quickened us together with Christ...and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:4-6).

We are positionally, judicially perfect, in the mind of God, who sees us as we shall be. But now, “it doth not yet appear what we shall be” (1 John 3:2). Even the great

Apostle Paul, keenly discerning the depth of his sin nature, representing all of us, exclaimed: “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” (Rom. 7:24). What is the answer to this awful bondage to sin? “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 7:25)!

As believers, we must say, then, “Thank You, our Father, for counting us as righteous in Your sight, because of the infinite work of substitutionary sacrifice our Savior performed that afternoon, nearly 2,000 years ago, outside of the walls of Jerusalem on the central cross between two thieves.”

“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all” (Is. 53:6).

Hundreds of millions of people who claim to be Christians are to some extent haunted by the ultimate consequences of their sins. They are not really satisfied with the price our Savior paid on the cross. They do not understand what He meant when He said: “It is finished” (John 19:30).

But the Son of God was satisfied: “He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied” (Is. 53:11). “And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the propitiation (i.e., satisfaction) for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world” (1 John 2:1, 2).

The New Testament could not be clearer: “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time His righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus” (Rom. 3:23-26).

“Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift” (2 Cor. 9:15).

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