

November 20, 2016

Thanksgiving - The Sound Of Victory
Pastor Charles Mendenhall

This time of the year we recognize that we have many things to be thankful for, our blessings from the Lord have been great, and as we continue with our walk in Him, we need to become more aware of what He has provided for us. We read about David on purpose giving thanks to the Lord seven times a day, this is a good thing for all of us to consider as we go about our day. Making a special effort, having an attitude of praise and thanksgiving and letting our confession of faith be positive.

"Father, I thank you that I can do what this bible says I can do, I can do anything because God enables me, He strengthens me and I have what this bible says I have, all grace and sufficiency is mine through Jesus Christ, all my needs are met because of Jesus. and I am who this bible says I am, I am the righteousness of God, I am the healed, I am prosperous I am the cheerful, I have joy today, because joy is on the inside of me. I am more than a conqueror."

The Psalmist tells us that God is our source of joy to the believer; it is our relationship to the Lord. Deut 28:47 "Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things;" KJV

Deuteronomy chapter 28 lists all the blessings and curses that the Lord has shown the children of Israel and basically things will not go the way that God had planned unless there is a grateful heart. Our attitude must be to serve the Lord with a heart of joyfulness and gladness in order to have all things. Gods plan for us as we grow and serve Him will be that our needs will be met in abundance. God has blessed us abundantly and we must continue to have the attitude of thanksgiving in our lives.

"Father, we thank you today for the abundance of all things, you have really been good to us, you have blessed us more than we deserve, but it is because of Jesus and we become worthy in and through Jesus, thank you Lord, we really appreciate what you have done for us and what you will continue to do, thank you Lord Jesus."

Jesus has been preparing his disciples in chapter 14 through chapter 17 of the book of John for his departure. In the following scriptures He is reminding them of things that He has already spoken about, that they would be facing tribulations and trials, but He has already overcome the world. It is much like that today, we find ourselves facing the pressures of everyday living, dealing with the stress of the times, trying to prepare for the upcoming holidays, but because of being in Christ Jesus, having good cheer, we can have that peace that He is speaking about. He has overcome the world, deprived it of its power to harm us and conquered it for us.

John 16:33 "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." KJV

John 16:33 "I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have [perfect] peace and confidence. In the world you have tribulation *and* trials *and* distress *and* frustration; but be of good cheer [take courage; be confident, certain, undaunted]! For I have overcome the world. [I have deprived it of power to harm you and have conquered it for you." AMP

We cannot allow the everyday challenges and problems of living to get into us, however they can't bother us as long as we stay in Jesus, having good cheer. Learning how to be of good cheer

is a learned principal in a believers life. The enemy will attempt to enter into our lives, but if the adversary the devil comes our way, our stand must be to resist him.

1 Peter 5:8 "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:" KJV

The book of Jonah shows how the power of praise in the midst of adversity brings a grateful heart. Jonah had been told by the Lord that he was to go preach to the city of Nineveh, he doesn't want to go and preach there because he knows the character of God too well, and Jonah has a pride problem, the message that he is to take is that God will destroy the city unless they repent and Jonah knows that if he goes to preach, they will repent, God won't destroy the city and that will make him look bad like a false prophet, so he runs from the presence of the Lord, the word of the Lord always brings God's presence, and in the midst of his disobedience, the ship that he boards encounters a storm and even though the sailors were not followers, they know that something is wrong and someone on board is the cause of the storm. Jonah finally tells them that it is him and that if they would throw him overboard the storm will cease, they throw him over and the storm ceased, the bible says that God had prepared a large fish to swallow him, it was a way for Jonah to make a right decision and do what the Lord had told him to do. He was given a second chance, which the Lord gives to all who will make a right choice. Jonah could have made a right decision without the adversity, being obedient to what God had told him. Did he learn in the adversity? He chose to rebel against God. He was in the belly of the fish and he began to remember the Lord, he began to pray, he understood about the grace of God. His circumstances were subject to change, he was not going to stay in fear and disobedience.

Jonah 2:7-10 "When my soul fainted within me I remembered the Lord: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple. 8 They that observe *lying vanities forsake their own mercy. 9 But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord. 10 And the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land." KJV

*lying vanities are something that are transitory, are false, unsatisfactory

Knowing what lying vanities were, he began to sacrifice with the voice of thanksgiving, paying what he had vowed, knowing that God had heard and would rescue him. God had prepared the fish to save him, in order for him to have a second chance. Jonah was then obedient to go on to Nineveh.

We are in the same place with God in regards to having second chances, He is for us, wants the very best for us regardless of what people around us may be saying, we must continue on, praising God and thanking Him for what He has done and will continue to do.

Joy comes to all of us knowing that God is for us when we ask and receive. If we develop an attitude of complaining we will remain where we are, instead develop an attitude of being grateful and joyful. Do we enjoy being in adversity? It is our choice to make the change. Praise will raise us above

Neh 8:17 "And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths: for since the days of Jeshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness." KJV

John 16:24 "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." KJV

The following scriptures list several things that kept the children of Israel out of the Promised Land. Their continual complaining was not acceptable to the Lord. They forgot to praise God for

the abundance of all things. During this season that we are in, try to do like David and find things to praise the Lord for and have a thankful heart.

1 Cor 10:1-11 "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; 2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; 3 And did all eat the same spiritual meat; 4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. 5 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. 6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. 7 Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. 8 Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. 9 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. 10 Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. 11 Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" KJV

This scripture is an example of some people who were healed of leprosy, Jesus told them to go show themselves to the priests, being obedient and acting on faith they began to go, they saw that they were healed, but one of them returned to Jesus and gave thanksgiving for his healing, however, the other nine did not. The one who came back to thank Jesus was not even a believer, but had heard about Jesus and his faith had made him whole. Jesus ask about the other nine who had not returned to give thanks. Obedience always has its rewards. One out of ten was grateful for what Jesus had done and didn't care what others thought about it.

Luke 17:11-19 "And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. 12 And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: 13 And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. 14 And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. 15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, 16 And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. 17 And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? 18 There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. 19 And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole." KJV

People who are whole and complete are thankful, it is just good manners to say thank you, but many people do not respond in this way. It does take humility to say thank you.

What does being thankful do for us? *Examples of thanksgiving are:

*1) eyes off of the problem, keeping focus on Jesus. David said that he would bless the Lord at all times, he was saying this during a troubling time in his life. This should always be the same response that we have in our lives, giving thanksgiving to the Lord, our problems will appear to be small knowing that the Lord is helping us.

Psa 34:1-3 "I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth. 2 My soul shall make her boast in the Lord: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. 3 O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together." KJV

This was a period of time for those returning from Babylon to get the temple rebuild, but there were many obstacles standing in their way. They refused to look at the circumstances around them, but continued to finish what was started with thanksgiving and praise to the Lord.

Zech 4:7 "For who are you, O great mountain [of human obstacles]? Before Zerubbabel [who with Joshua had led the return of the exiles from Babylon and was undertaking the rebuilding of the temple, before him] you shall become a plain [a mere molehill]! And he shall bring forth the finishing gable stone [of the new temple] with loud shoutings of the people, crying, Grace, grace to it!" AMP

Grace is the power of God working in you, enabling you to what you couldn't do on your own. It doesn't make any difference what the devil may say, it is going to go God's way.

Talk big about God, little about the devil. Cowards never start, weaklings fall by the wayside. Men and women who are trusting God keep running with the vision. Keep your focus on God and what Jesus has done for you.

God's plan and purpose for your life has never changed because you encountered adversity and messed up.

Rom 11:29 "For God's gifts and His call are irrevocable. [He never withdraws them when once they are given, and He does not change His mind about those to whom He gives His grace or to whom He sends His call.]" AMP

Jer 29:11 "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." KJV

Psa 34:1-3 "I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth. 2 My soul shall make her boast in the Lord: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. 3 O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together." KJV

*2) Praise and Worship releases the power of God. Jonah was in the belly of the fish, as he began to praise and worship, God put him out on dry ground. As we begin to thank him for all things, the praise and worship will begin to release God's power in the situation that we may be facing. Take a hold of our emotions, don't let them be troubled, peace will take over, God wants us rising up against those things that are troubling to us.

Phil 4:6-8 "Be *careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. 8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." KJV

*care means to be distracted or pulled in a different direction, to worry or be frustrated

John 14:1 "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." KJV

Thanks and praise work together. Faith and prayer by itself don't go anywhere, but if we believe, we give thanksgiving, believing and seeing with a favorable outcome make it easier to give praise.

*3) Praise and worship releases the ability of God. The lepers came and they were healed.

Matt 8:2-3 "And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. 3 And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed." KJV

*4) Praise and worship puts us in the position to hear the voice of God. Many times we are not hearing because of things going on around us.

Matt 15:21-28 "Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. 22 And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. 23 But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. 24 But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. 25 Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. 26 But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. 27 And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. 28 Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very

hour." KJV

How would you feel if you came to church and ask for help, but those around wanted to send you away? Most would have hurt feelings, would not be convinced that Jesus was the answer, but this lady was persistent in asking for help for her daughter. She began to worship Jesus being determined to get help. Jesus had mentioned that He had not been sent to her people she was not a Jew, she continued to press in, mentioning even the dogs around the table where able to clean up the crumbs that fell from their masters tables. Jesus seeing her faith, answered her, saying her daughter was made whole. She had begun to worship Jesus asking for His help, she did not start complaining and murmuring. There is something about praise and worship that will move situations into the miraculous. Becoming obedient in worship and getting the ear of God. We can't change Gods laws and principles, we have to become obedient to them and then we will reap the benefits.

Acts 16:24-26 "Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. 25 And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. 26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed." KJV

Paul and Silas had been arrested for speaking of Jesus and for delivering a woman of a demonic spirit, they had been thrown into prison, held in stocks, at the midnight hour they prayed and sang praise unto God, everyone heard them, the foundations of the prison were shaken and the situation that they were in changed. They were free.

Pro 15:23 "A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!" KJV

Murmuring and complaining doesn't bring joy, but when we change our words and begin to speak faith filled words, situations will change. Break through is on the way, don't stop by murmuring and complaining, things don't always happen suddenly, but over a period of time. Begin praying and praising and giving thanksgiving for everything that the Lord has given to you. The answers we are looking for are there. Bless the Lord at all times, regardless of the situations, God doesn't change and His word doesn't change. Tap into what the Lord has for you, His blessings are available to each of us.