

PARK HEIGHTS CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Thus Saith the Lord

BE THANKFUL

By Jeff Sweeten

in grati tude : lack of proper appreciation or thanks for something (such as a kind or helpful act) : lack of gratitude¹

It is the product of total rebellion, where a person becomes obsessed with self (Romans 1:27) and will not acknowledge God (v. 28), being filled with all manner of unrighteousness (v. 29). And tucked into that list of moral ugliness in Paul's letter to the Romans is the unwillingness to be thankful (v. 21).

Thus, we begin the holiday seasons. Thanksgiving is here but has, unfortunately, become the official commencement of a mad marketing rush that turns the holidays into a feeding frenzy of materialism. Black Friday is a dark, embarrassing indictment against a generation of gluttony and entitlement (a name that seems to imply the justified condemnation of our culture's excesses). Thanksgiving is supposed to be a time set aside for considering how greatly we have been blessed but more often becomes a license for indulgence and drunkenness. As the "Christmas" holidays arrive, the cancer spreads, manifesting itself from looks of disappointment to the blatant disregard toward gift-givers and drunk driving fatalities. By the New Year, people are jumping off of buildings. This decline is evidence enough that a society has failed or forgotten to be thankful.

Such a digression should never have opportunity to develop in the Christian mind. In spite of a media that mocks every expression of religious conviction (Acts 17:32), a moral majority gagging on cowardice (James 4:17) and a judicial branch of government intent on imposing perversion on the God-fearing (and that by fiat, Acts 4:19), the Christian can still find much for which we can be thankful. We have overcome the world (1 John 5:4). We have an abundant life expectancy (John 10:10). Perhaps, the greatest cause for gratitude is our promised home (John 17:1ff).

Someone once quipped: contentment is not having what you want; it is wanting what you have. The Bible speaks to the issue with more accuracy: *"Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'"* (Hebrews 13:5, ESV). Contentment is not in the wanting, it is in the understanding: God will provide (Genesis 22:8); the natural response to this kind of knowledge is gratitude. Be thankful.

JOIN US ON SUNDAY AND WEDNESDAY!

SUNDAY: 9:30 a.m. Bible Study • 10:25 a.m. Morning Worship • 1:30 p.m. Bible Study

WEDNESDAY: 7:00 p.m. Bible Study • Contact the minister at 254-370-4130