

The title for today's message is: **Developing an attitude of gratitude**

I chose the first lesson Deut. Chapter 8 for my message text.

Grace, mercy and peace to you from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ! Amen.

Well, Thanksgiving Day is upon us! And thank God the Butterball hot line is still alive and well after 26 years of operation!

Yes, folks, it is the sixty-second anniversary of the Butterball brand and 38 years of the most famous turkey cooking hot line of them all.

Almost 6 million calls for help spanning 38 years. 1-800-288-8372. In case you want to write the number down.

Fifty two callers Trained at Butterball University, no kidding, they did so to talk you through what they refer to as "Turkey Trauma".

Just think 38 years of calls to the Butterball hotline, and we still need a lot of help. How do I know that?

Simply by the kinds of calls that come in, for example I have here a couple of articles on the subject.

One appeared in USA Today, titled "The Bird is the word," these are the most memorable calls to the Butterball hotline.

Listen and see if you agree that we need help, lots of help. One woman called in from Colorado. Her problem?

She had stored her turkey in a snow bank in her back yard. Sounds OK, but It had snowed more and now she couldn't find it!

She had no idea where her turkey was and she wanted them (Butterball hotline to help her find it!

Some guy called and he wanted to know why the turkey cooking in his kitchen oven was making so much smoke.

The instruction said to remove the wrapper first and then put the turkey on the rack. So that's what he did, he put the turkey on the rack without a pan.

Here's a couple more; A restaurant owner in CA wanted to know how to roast a turkey for a vegetarian menu!

A guy called wanting to know if the yellow netting and wrapper around the turkey should be removed before roasting!

Apparently we need a lot of help with our Thanksgiving Turkeys. But what we really need help with, is this thing called "Thanksgiving".

Now in the first lesson today, Deuteronomy 8:1-20, God warns the children of Israel, after they have moved into the promised land, a land flowing with milk and honey.

Not to forget the "Lord your God." while enjoying all the good things of life, He warns them because he knows the tendency of human beings not to be thankful.

A couple of generations pass, and the people are saying "look what my own strength has gotten me.

Its simple, we don't like to give credit to someone else for what we think we've achieved.

Now in the Gospel lesson Luke 17:11-19, we have the story of the ten lepers. Again a story pointing out a lack of gratitude.

Leprosy was the most feared disease of ancient times it was a literal death sentence, and there was no cure.

You couldn't live with healthy people, so you had to move out to the outskirts of the city, never to see your friends nor your family again.

Your toes and nose and fingers would literally rot and fall off. But what we have here, is Jesus healing ten people from this dread and incurable disease.

And how many of these people took time to thank Jesus for what He had done for them? One. One out of Ten. Seeing this Jesus asks the one:

"Where are the other nine? were not ten healed?" But no answer is given so we can only speculate.

Now the easiest explanation is, maybe in their excitement of being healed they just forget to thank Jesus. But the fact is, they didn't.

Now the other reason we seem to have problems with thanksgiving is the human tendency to focus on the negative.

You know what I'm talking about. One hundred things go right in our day, and one thing goes wrong. What do we focus on?

That's right, the one thing that went wrong. This is what Paul alludes to in Philippians 4:6-9

Here Paul admonished the Philippians to think on all the positive things of life. Because he clearly knows people have a tendency to do the opposite.

Did you know that the word "Thank" actually comes from an old German word meaning "To Think."

Which suggests that it's by thinking about and recognizing the blessings we enjoy that we can be thankful!

That in order to be thankful it is necessary to slow down, look around, and take note of what we're surrounded by.

So maybe that's what we need to do. Especially today. Look around, says Paul, there is so much to be thankful for!

We may not have everything but we do have an awful lot, that is by the world's standards. I came across a little poem entitled "Dirty Dishes".

It reads like this: "Thank God for dirty dishes, They have a story to tell, And by the stack I have, It seems we are living pretty well.

While people of other countries are starving, I haven't the heart to fuss, For by this stack of evidence, God's awfully good to us."

Above all, Paul reminds us, we have Jesus Christ, and his salvation, wrought through the cross and because of him, heaven is ours!

So really if you think about it, everything over and above that, is really just frosting on the cake.

Its good to be reminded on occasion, that most people who have lived in his world, the vast majority of the billions who have made their way through this world.

Have not enjoyed a fraction of what even the poorest among us enjoy today! I think a good dose of History is what most of us need.

Some time ago I saw a program on the TV about the plight of the people during the Dust Bowl in the Great Plains.

People lost just about everything including their lives, because they inhaled so much dirt and dust, they got dust induced Pneumonia.

Entire towns were starving right here in America at that time. There are many stories about people who would look outside and say:

“Look it’s snowing how blessed we are. Here we are snug and warm. Yet other people don’t even have a roof over their head.”

You see its all how you look at it. Do you see your glass as half empty or half full? Do you focus on what you don’t have or what you do have?

“When you’re worried and you can’t sleep, just count your blessings instead of sheep.”

We’d be a whole lot better off if we spent more time counting blessings. So think on these things, says Paul. Whatever is pure, honorable, lovely.

Think about all the things we so often overlook,. Pure water. Sunlight dancing on the floor of our living room. Fresh fallen snow.

A day milder and sunnier than expected. Moonlight on the water. A basket of ripe fruit, a steak done just the way we like it.

Dewdrops on the petals of a rose. So much to be thankful for. My friends what good is having all kinds of stuff if our hearts are cold and dead and bare?

Yes, gratitude makes the difference. It’s not something you’ll get by calling the Butterball hot line! The lady there can help you with other things!

Its so important to be thankful, thankful for blessings received. Thanks Be To God. Amen.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship