

Sermon for November 26th, 2014

Thanksgiving Eve, Deut. 8:7-18

BLESSINGS TO YOU AND PEACE FROM GOD THE FATHER, OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

As we prepare for Thanksgiving tomorrow I would **venture** to say that there are **many** things on your minds this evening. Even if it is only what time do we have to be at so and so's house for dinner and **what** am I supposed to bring again?

For a few minutes, let's just relax into the evening as we **reflect** upon our first reading. I do not know about you but when I read some of our **prescribed** verses I stand in awe of the beauty that the bible holds. When I reflected upon the passage from Deuteronomy the **first thing** that came to mind was the Doxology—better known as *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow. (Praise him, all creatures here below, praise him above, ye heavenly host, praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.)* Then my thoughts shifted to one of our former members, **Barbara Marshall**, who has gone to her heavenly rest. She used to sing that song **all** the time when we would go to visit her.

Let's listen again to the lovely imagery in this text from Deuteronomy as Moses told the people of Israel what **God** had in store for them. As he **reminded** them about the tests that they had undergone in the wilderness as well as the difficulties that they had faced in the desert which had **proved** to the nation that

they could **only** have succeed by God’s guidance, grace, and mercy. It was **not** about them. It was **not** their pride **nor** their self-dependence that got them through. Moses said, *the Lord God is bringing you into a good land—with streams, pools, springs in the valleys and the hills, wheat and barley for food, vines, fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil, honey, a land where bread will not be scarce. There will be rocks of iron and you can dig copper from the hills. You will lack **nothing**.* God is **good**. God **loves** you. God **will** provide.

*When you have eaten your fill and you are satisfied, do not forget to praise the Lord your God for what He has given you. Moses warns—do not forget God **by failing** to keep His commands, His laws, and His decrees. Because if you **do** forget when **all** goes well for you and life is **good** then your heart will become **proud** and you will **forget** the Lord your God who brought you this far, out of Egypt, out of slavery, out of the thirsty waterless land of the desert with its snakes and scorpions. Do **not forget** that it was God who gave you water out of hard rock. Do **not forget** that it was God who gave you manna to eat when you were hungry.*

It is **not you** who has the power and the strength to produce what you have. *“But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so He confirms His covenant to you, which He swore to your forefathers.”* Moses made it clear that when the people kept God’s covenant to

the point that they received the reward of wealth, it was actually God's power that had given them their ability. For God's grace, mercy, and love is behind **everything** we are given.

That being said, tonight on this Thanksgiving Eve, I would like for us to **remember** the words of Moses and take a few minutes and speak out loud what you are **thankful** to God for. I will begin, *I am thankful for the love that surrounds me through the people here at Eden, through my family and friends, and my dogs.* Let's take a minute—just call out what you are thankful for. (Anyone—Pause) It is **good** for us to live daily in gratitude for the blessings and gifts that God gives us in our lives and **not** just at Thanksgiving.

My dear friends, we have a God who loves us so much and bestows so much upon us personally and as a church. I pray that you **all** have a wonderful, safe, and happy Thanksgiving. May your day be **filled** with family, friends, and good food. May your **Spirit** be filled with joy as you enjoy the day. *Praise God from whom all blessings flow. AMEN.*