



June 21, 2024

The 4 P's (A Purpose, a Plan, a Provider, and Paradise)
Pt. 3, A Provider

Ingratitude. Is there anything more offensive than an unthankful spirit? Parents work hard and sacrifice for their children's needs, and often, even for their wants. Employees sometimes go the extra-mile for an employer, personally sacrificing for the company's benefit. Members of our Armed Forces sacrifice their bodies, and even their lives, to provide national security and freedom. And many times, the response from those who benefit is a "ho hum", big-deal attitude-of-ingratitude. We can so easily take our life-provisions for granted and forget the sacrifices that others have made so that we can enjoy great blessings. And this is especially so in our country of great plenty! Ingratitude is a very offensive attitude.

Of course, our Creator is THE Great Provider. All things necessary for life emanate from Him. James puts it like this, *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning* (James 1:17). And our Creator cares not only for His human creation but for all of His creatures. Psalm 147:9 reads, *He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry.* In Psalm 104:21 we read, *The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God.* And in Matthew 6:26 Jesus explains, *Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them.*

But God's provisions for us move far beyond the physical. Most important of all, God has also provided for us spiritually! And, tragically, this is where the vast majority of humanity shows the least amount of gratitude! If we know anything about the Bible, it is this: God gave Himself to rescue us spiritually! Our sin separates us from God; we are estranged enemies. Isaiah 59:2 reads, *But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.*

Consequently, driven by His great love for humanity, the Second Person of our Trinity God voluntarily incarnated Himself, lived a perfect life, and then died a substitutionary death. He shed his Precious Blood for us (1 Peter 1:19)! But not only did He die for us physically, but he also suffered spiritually by becoming sin for us. The Scriptures declare that the sins of the whole world were placed upon Jesus during those three dark hours, when the Father turned His face from His own Son, and Jesus the Son suffered the

infinite judgment of The Father. What Jesus endured for us spiritually is beyond our comprehension and ability to endure, but it was FAR more than just the physical torture of the crucifixion.

So... if a person valiantly gave his own life to save your life, or your spouse's life, or your child's life... would you be grateful? Of course, you would! You would be very grateful! Your heart would overflow with gratitude. So, what would you think of a person who did NOT show gratitude for the ultimate sacrifice? I think I can answer for you. You would be aghast at that person's ingratitude, pride, and arrogance.

Well, let's transfer this over to God the Father. When a human being says to God,

"Hey God, I do appreciate what you've done for me, but I really don't want your strings in my life. I want to live the way I want, I want to believe the things I want to believe, and after all, I'm a pretty good guy/gal. I mean, I haven't robbed banks, I've not murdered, and I haven't abused children. So, I know you'll take that into account. Boy, I'm a lot better guy than my neighbor! That guy... he's a heathen! So, all this repentance stuff, and humbling myself before you, and crying out for your salvation... well, I don't think I need all that. After all, I know how to spell 'J E S U S'. I know who He is. And I live in a Christian nation. I'm a Christian."

That person is expressing the greatest ingratitude, the greatest arrogance, and the greatest pride imaginable. And to that attitude God replies,

He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people (Heb. 10:28-30).

Friends, God has provided us the greatest gift; He offers us absolute forgiveness... FROM THE CONSEQUENCES OF OUR OWN FREE-WILL REBELLION! He gave His own precious Son to make it possible. What deadly ingratitude we show when we rebuff the wooing of the Holy Spirit and say to God, "No thanks. I've got this."

If that is our choice then we need to back up and read Hebrews 10:26, 27,

For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

Don't be a spiritual ingrate. The cost is unrecoverable!

God bless and consider!