ThanksGiving: Grateful Hearts – Generous Lives – Glory to God

Aware: Grateful to Give as God has Provided

Deuteronomy 8:1-20

Peanut butter & Jelly, Batman & Robin, Macaroni & Cheese, Romeo & Juliet, Grace & Truth, Sowing & Reaping. How about Gratitude & Generosity?

"You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God." **2 Corinthians 9:11**

Main Idea: Grateful Hearts & Generous Lives are Always Aware of God's Goodness

"The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the Lord swore to give to your fathers. And you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord. Your clothing did not wear out on you and your foot did not swell these forty years. Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, the Lord your God disciplines you. So you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God by walking in his ways and by fearing him. For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing out in the valleys and hills, a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey, a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper. And you shall eat and be full, and you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land he has given you. 'Take care lest you forget the Lord your God by not keeping his commandments and his rules and his statutes, which I command you today, lest, when you have eaten and are full and have built good houses and live in them, and when your herds and flocks multiply and your silver and gold is multiplied and all that you have is multiplied, then your heart be lifted up, and you forget the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, who led you through the great and terrifying wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water, who brought you water out of the flinty rock, who fed you in the wilderness with manna that your fathers did not know, that he might humble you and test you, to do you good in the end. Beware lest you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.' You shall remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day. And if you forget the Lord your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I solemnly warn you today that you shall surely perish. Like the nations that the Lord makes to perish before you, so shall you perish, because you would not obey the voice of the Lord your God.'" **Deuteronomy 8:1-20**

I. Accept God's Present Instructions – Deuteronomy 8:1

People who remain aware of God's goodness are those who accept his instructions in humble obedience and enjoy the benefits that follow.

*"The whole commandment that I command you **today** you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the Lord swore to give to your fathers."* **Deuteronomy 8:1**

"Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law of Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go." **Joshua 1:7**

"I am sure the happiest life is the one carefully conducted on the principles of God's commands. There are certain blessings God will not give us while we are disobedient to him…If we please God, God will please us; but if we walk contrary to him, he will walk contrary to us." **Charles Haddon Spurgeon**

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II. Acknowledge God's Past Provisions – Deuteronomy 8:2-10

Moses now moves to reminding the people of God some of the things he did for them in the past, calling them to acknowledge them as evidence of his goodness.

"And you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you… fed you with manna… Your clothing did not wear out on you and your foot did not swell… as a man disciplines his son, the Lord your God disciplines you… And you shall eat and be full, and you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land he has given you." **Excerpts from Deuteronomy 8:2-10**

A pinch runner knows that they can take no credit for being on base as they did not hit the triple, but they are able to do what they do because of someone else.

"What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?" **1 Corinthians 4:7**

New Yorkers live so close to extravagant wealth, so it's easy to start to focus on what other people have that we don't, rather than focusing on all that God has provided for us. Simple things like clean water, nutritious food, medical care, multiple changes of clothing, and a safe place to call home puts us beyond what previous generations would expect and billions around the world would dream! And, while we certainly work hard for what we have, surely you recognize it's purely pride that ignores all God has done. He's the hitter, we're the pinch runner. Amen?

"Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change." **James 1:16-17**

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III. Anticipate God's Future Promises – Deuteronomy 8:11-20

Prosperity would tempt the children of God in very specific ways, and God has promised that he will not forget neither their ingratitude and selfishness NOR their gratitude and generosity. Our God keeps his promises, whether we like them or not!

"Lest when you have eaten and are full and have built good houses and live in them, and when your herds and flocks multiply and your silver and gold is multiplied and all that you have is multiplied, then your heart be lifted up, and you forget the Lord your God…Beware lest you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.' You shall remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth…" **Deuteronomy 8:12-14a, 17-18a**

"Two things I ask of you; deny them not to me before I die: Remove far from me falsehood and lying; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is needful for me, lest I be full and deny you and say, 'Who is the LORD?' or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God." **Proverbs 30:7-9**

Are you AWARE of the classroom God has you sitting in? More importantly, will you accept the lesson, reject idolatry by responding with Gratitude/Generosity?

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God's covenant promise to his people meant that the promised land was a guarantee, not dependent on their obedience. But, how long they enjoyed it and how much they enjoyed it was wholly dependent upon their awareness and actions. Similarly, as followers of Jesus we hold a covenant promise that ensures God's favor that we cannot earn by good behavior or obedience. The gospel makes it free to us!

"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for our sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich."
2 Corinthians 8:9

It's not our grateful hearts or generous lives that earn God's favor. It's HIS extravagant generosity toward us in Jesus Christ that inspires our response! And if we consistently struggle with gratitude and generosity, we need to look more deeply into the riches of His grace until both overflow from our lives. Today, I call you to Jesus Christ—to receive His salvation, experience His transforming grace, and live with a grateful heart and generous life, all for the glory of God!

Sources and Further Reading Opportunities

- **CSB Study Bible –** Trevin Wax, Ed. (2017)
- **Wiersbe Expository Outlines on the OT –** Warren Wiersbe (1993)
- **New American Commentary: Deuteronomy –** E. H. Merrill (1994)
- **Spurgeon Study Bible –** C.H. Spurgeon (2017)
- **Tony Evans Study Bible –** Tony Evans (2019)