

WHEN GOD'S LOVE AND MERCIES YIELD GRATITUDE

I. Lamentations 3:22-24 Psalm 118:19-24 Colossians 3:12-17

* Poet Rudyard Kipling's \$100 one word challenge by a pesky reporter: "Thanks!"

A. Before we gather around some food and fellowship this morning, I want to share some Scriptures that I hope will set the tone for our time together today but also propel us through Autumn, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. There's a proverb somewhere that says that Scripture & Prayer always makes the food taste better.

B. Lamentations 3:22-24 (ESV) says: **22** *The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; 23 they are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness. 24* "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in Him." (Remember it's always morning somewhere in the world and God's mercies and faithfulness are not restricted by time zones or geography. If it's midnight and you're in need of mercy, you needn't wait till daybreak! And we get to experience them daily! Our Lord's steadfast love, His unceasing mercies, and His great faithfulness cannot help but create gratitude in our hearts--especially when we realize they're totally undeserved.)

C. Psalm 118:19-24 (ESV) ministers as well: **19** *Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the LORD. (If you go looking for these rusty iron gates in old Jerusalem you'll be sorely disappointed. But if you realize the Gates of Righteousness are indeed the Righteous One, you'll stroll about them forevermore in New Jerusalem!)* **20** *This is the gate of the LORD; the righteous shall enter through it. 21* I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation. **22** *The Stone that the builders rejected has become the Cornerstone. (Whatever this might have meant initially, it found it's ultimate, complete, and glorious fulfillment in Jesus Christ who is the Rock of Ages!)* **23** *This is the LORD's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. (Don't trip over this Stone, build your whole life upon it!)* **24** *This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. (The Day of our salvation is a Day we get to celebrate each and every day--even today! The rejected Stone i.e. The Rock of Ages, makes our Day!)*

D. Colossians 3:12-17 (ESV) suggests the wardrobe change that God's steadfast love, unceasing mercies, and great faithfulness, as manifested through the Rock of our Salvation, should have upon us: **12** *Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, 13* bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. (Forgiveness-what a concept!) **14** *And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. 15* *And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. (Let some people know today just how thankful you are for them!)* **16** *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, (Get back to living inside your Bibles! Pitch your tents there!)* *singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. (The best psalms and hymns and spiritual songs are chock full of God's Word!)* **17** *And whatever you do, in word or deed, (work; play; eat; fellowship) do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.*

* Close with Prayer...

Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff

Lamentations 3:22-24 (ESV)

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Psalm 118:19-24 (ESV)

19 Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the LORD. **20** This is the gate of the LORD; the righteous shall enter through it. **21** I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation. **22** The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. **23** This is the LORD's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. **24** This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Colossians 3:12-17 (ESV)

12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, **13** bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. **14** And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. **15** And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. **16** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing

psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. **17** And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

[Film Clips & Article Links](#)

The Marvelous Rising of a Rejected Stone - John Piper (Sermon in Audio & Print)

<https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/the-marvelous-rising-of-a-rejected-stone>

[Bonus Stuff](#)

[Psalm 50:23 \(AMP\)](#)

23 He who offers a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving honors Me; And to him who orders his way rightly [who follows the way that I show him], I shall show the salvation of God.

[Matthew 21:33-45 \(ESV\)](#)

33 "Hear another parable. There was a master of a house who planted a vineyard and put a fence around it and dug a winepress in it and built a tower and leased it to tenants, and went into another country. **34** When the season for fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants to get his fruit. **35** And the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. **36** Again he sent other servants, more than the first. And they did the same to them. **37** Finally he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' **38** But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.' **39** And they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. **40** When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" **41** They said to Him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons." **42** Jesus said to them, "*Have you never read in the Scriptures: "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes'?"* **43** Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits. **44** And the one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him." **45** When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they perceived that He was speaking about them.

[Mark 12:1-11 \(ESV\)](#)

1 And He began to speak to them in parables. "A man planted a vineyard and put a fence around it and dug a pit for the winepress and built a tower, and leased it to tenants and went into another country. **2** When the season came, he sent a servant to the tenants to get from them some of the fruit of the vineyard. **3** And they took him and beat him and sent him away empty-handed. **4** Again he sent to them another servant, and they struck him on the head and treated him shamefully. **5** And he sent another, and him they killed. And so with many others: some they beat, and some they killed. **6** He had still one other, a beloved son. Finally he sent him to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' **7** But those tenants said to one another, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' **8** And they took him and killed him and threw him out of the vineyard. **9** What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others. **10** Have you not read this Scripture: "*The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; **11** this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes'?"* **12** And they were seeking to arrest Him but feared the people, for they perceived that He had told the parable against them. So they left Him and went away.

[Luke 20:9-17 \(ESV\)](#)

9 And He began to tell the people this parable: "A man planted a vineyard and let it out to tenants and went into another country for a long while. **10** When the time came, he sent a servant to the tenants, so that they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed. **11** And he sent another servant. But they also beat and treated him shamefully, and sent him away empty-handed. **12** And he sent yet a third. This one also they wounded and cast out. **13** Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son; perhaps they will respect him.' **14** But when the tenants saw him, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir. Let us kill him, so that the inheritance may be ours.' **15** And they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? **16** He will come and destroy those tenants and give the vineyard to others." When they heard this, they said, "Surely not!" **17** But He looked directly at them and said, "What then is this that is written: "*The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone'?"* **18** *Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces, and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him.*"

[Acts 4:8-12 \(ESV\)](#)

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders, **9** if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed, **10** let it be known to

all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead--by Him this man is standing before you well. **11** This Jesus is *the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone.* **12** And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

Ephesians 2:11-22 (ESV)

11 Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands--**12** remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. **13** But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. **14** For He Himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility **15** by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that He might create in Himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, **16** and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. **17** And He came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. **18** For through Him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. **19** So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, **20** built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone, **21** in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. **22** In Him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

1 Peter 2:1-10 (ESV)

1 So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. **2** Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation--**3** if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. **4** As you come to Him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, **5** you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. **6** For it stands in Scripture: "*Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.*" **7** So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, "*The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,*" **8** and "*A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.*" They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. **9** But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. **10** Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Quote by Augustine

"So anyone who thinks that he has understood the Divine Scriptures or any part of them, but cannot by his understanding build up this double love of God and neighbor, has not yet succeeded in understanding them."

A Story About Gratitude

John R. Ramsey

In A Second Helping of Chicken Soup for the Soul, Rev. John R. Ramsey tells how in one church a certain person provided him with a rose boutonniere for the lapel of his suit every Sunday. At first he really appreciated it, but then it sort of became routine. Then one Sunday it became very special.

As he was leaving the Sunday service, a young boy walked up to him and said, "Sir, what are you going to do with your flower?" At first the preacher didn't know what the boy was talking about. When it sank in, he pointed to the rose on his lapel and asked the boy, "Do you mean this?"

The boy said, "Yes, sir. If you're just going to throw it away, I would like it."

The preacher smiled and told him he could have the flower and then casually asked what he was going to do with it. The boy, who was probably no more than 10 years old, looked up at the preacher and said, "Sir, I'm going to give it to my granny. My mother and father divorced last year. I was living with my mother, but she married again and wanted me to live with my father. I lived with him for a while, but he said I couldn't stay; so he sent me to live with my grandmother. She is so good to me. She cooks for me and takes care of me. She has been so good to me that I wanted to give her that pretty flower for loving me."

When the little boy finished, the preacher could hardly speak. His eyes filled with tears and he knew he had been touched by God. He reached up and unpinned the rose. With the flower in his hand, he looked at the boy and said,

"Son, that is the nicest thing that I've ever heard, but you can't have this flower because it's not enough. If you'll look in front of the pulpit, you'll see a big bouquet of flowers. Different families buy them for the church each week. Please take those flowers to your granny because she deserves the very best."

Then the boy made one last statement, which Rev. Ramsey said he always will treasure. The boy said, "What a wonderful day! I asked for one flower but got a beautiful bouquet."

That's the thankful spirit. That's the gratitude attitude. It's that attitude that should guide our giving and our lives. Like that boy's granny, God has blessed us so much. God has been so good to us that giving shouldn't even be a question. It should just flow from us naturally.

- From *A Second Helping of Chicken Soup for the Soul*, adapted by Billy D. Strayhorn, "The Gratitude Attitude."

Rudyard Kipling's \$100 Dollar Word Challenge

James Merritt, in his sermon titled, "*The Attitude of Gratitude*," tells the following story:

Rudyard Kipling was a great British poet whose writings have blessed many of us, including a generation gone by. Rudyard Kipling was a very famous writer even before he died, and made a great deal of money at his trade. A newspaper reporter came up to him once and said, "Mr. Kipling, I just read that somebody calculated that the money you make from your writings amounts to over \$100 a word." Mr. Kipling raised his eyebrows and said, "Really, I certainly wasn't aware of that." The reporter cynically reached into his pocket and pulled out a \$100 bill and gave it to Kipling and said, "Here's a \$100 bill Mr. Kipling. Now you give me one of your \$100 words." Rudyard Kipling looked at that \$100 bill for a moment, took it and folded it up and put it in his pocket and said, "Thanks."

The Stone that the Builders Rejected Became the Cornerstone?

Ray Pritchard

"The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone" (Psalm 118:22).

The image comes from the ancient quarries where highly-trained stonemasons carefully chose the stones used in construction. No stone was more important than the cornerstone because the integrity of the whole structure depended on the cornerstone containing exactly the right lines. If the cornerstone was not exactly right, the entire building would be out of line. For that reason, builders inspected many stones, rejecting each one until they found the one they wanted. Rejected stones might be used in other parts of the building, but they would never become the cornerstone or the capstone (the first and last stones put in place)

When Peter preached to the Jewish leaders in Acts 4:8–12, he quoted Psalm 118:22 to show that Jesus is the rejected stone whom God made to be the cornerstone of salvation. They (the Jewish leaders) rejected him, but God not only accepted him but put him in the position of highest honor.

Peter pressed the point home with this powerful conclusion: "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under [heaven](#) given to men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). These words are utterly exclusive. There is no other hope, no other way, and no other name than the name of Jesus. If we would be saved, we must come God's way or we won't come at all.

Do not be like the builders who rejected God's Stone of salvation! Do not reject Jesus [Christ](#). Do not stumble over this rejected stone. The very stone the builders rejected has become the head of the corner. May God open your eyes to see Jesus as he really is—the Cornerstone of eternal salvation.

- To read this article online, go to: <https://www.christianity.com/jesus/is-jesus-god/old-testament-prophecies/the-stone-that-the-builders-rejected-became-the-cornerstone.html>