

THANKSGIVING WORSHIP SERVICE - 2013

I. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 Romans 5:1-11

* One Thanksgiving when I was a kid, we didn't have a turkey. Somebody gave us a goose. Dad was in a foul mood that day--pun intended. Our great uncle Paul Buckland was our guest (*he about choked drinking some Pepsi.*) Mom kinda-sorta burned the goose--it was crispy on the outside and greasy on the inside... Dina's pretty sure Mom tried to save the day with a meatloaf. Mom was pretty upset--at Dad's attitude, the burned goose, that Uncle Paul nearly drowned himself, and so it was not a very happy Thanksgiving... (And yet--there was still football on the back & white TV set...)

* But on days like that do we still have things to be thankful for?

In 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (ESV) Paul writes this: **16** Rejoice always, **17** pray without ceasing, **18** give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (*Don't remember us doing a lot of that at our burnt goose Thanksgiving.*)

* Many have lost loved ones this year and Thanksgiving & Christmas will not be the same this year. Great memories will be shared, some traditions carried forth, but there may be some lumps in the throat and tears flowing down... But you will still have much to be Thankful for...

* Finances may be tight. Your job might not be secure. You may be facing health issues, relational woes, other difficult ordeals... Your radiant dreams may be clouded in gloom, anxiety, worry, and even dread... T.V ads may annoy you to death... But you will still have much to be Thankful for...

* Here at MCC we have a lot to be Thankful for this year. God certainly took us by surprise with this chapel. Then some more by gifts from far beyond our walls. (Check out this grand piano!) The new roof project starts tomorrow. Folks have stepped up to embrace duties and there's a lot of excitement in this place. And of course I'm deeply grateful to our Lord for all of this and all of you who have been vessels of these blessings... Yet I am much more Thankful about something else and the truth is, so are you!

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (ESV)

16 Rejoice always, **17** pray without ceasing, **18** give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Romans 5:1-11 (ESV)

1 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. **2** Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. **3** Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, **4** and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, **5** and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. **6** For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. **7** For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— **8** but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. **9** Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. **10** For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. **11** More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

* Would you rather have a goose free Thanksgiving, a white Christmas with tons of presents under the tree, or a declaration of *Not Guilty!* forevermore?!

* I told our folks this morning... When Janet was pregnant with Nicole, we went to Lamaze classes... (Do they still have those?) They taught breathing techniques for the woman and gentle, encouraging prompts for the guys or helper-coaches... They told the women to go to her "happy place" while they slowly breathed in and breathed out... They told the husbands they should hope they didn't get smacked... Wherever your "happy place" is, I pray the cross of Christ is planted firmly in the center of it, along with an empty tomb, an occupied throne, and the promise of forevermore flying from every flag and banner...

* No matter what kind of state you find yourselves in on Thanksgiving, and on Christmas, and entering the New Year, I pray you find yourselves positionally in Christ so that your hearts are steeped in overflowing gratitude to God. May this kind of Thanksgiving supersede the holidays and flow from us each and every day of our lives, even forevermore.

* Close with prayer...

Bonus Stuff

Who Does God Say I Am?

By Ken Boa

<http://www.kenboa.org/downloads/pdf/IdentityAffirmations2.pdf>

Here is a list of biblical affirmations about our identity in Jesus Christ that is derived from a few selected passages in the New Testament. This is just a portion of the many truths about who we have become through faith in God's Son, but it is a powerful inventory to review from time to time:

- **I am a child of God.**

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name. John 1:12

- **I am a branch of the true vine, and a conduit of Christ's life.**

I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. John 15:1, 5

- **I am a friend of Jesus.**

No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you. John 15:15

- **I have been justified and redeemed.**

being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. Romans 3:24

- **My old self was crucified with Christ, and I am no longer a slave to sin.**

knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, that we would no longer be slaves to sin. Romans 6:6

- **I will not be condemned by God.**

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Romans 8:1

- **I have been set free from the law of sin and death.**

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. Romans 8:2

- **As a child of God, I am a fellow heir with Christ.**

and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him. Romans 8:17

- **I have been accepted by Christ.**

Therefore, accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us to the glory of God. Romans 15:7

- **I have been called to be a saint.**

To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours. 1 Corinthians 1:2 (Ephesians 1:1; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:2)

- **In Christ Jesus, I have wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.**

But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who be came to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption. 1 Corinthians 1:30

- **My body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who dwells in me.**

Do you not know that you are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? 1 Corinthians 3:16 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? 1 Corinthians 6:19

- **I am joined to the Lord and am one spirit with Him.**

But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him. 1 Corinthians 6:17

• **God leads me in the triumph and knowledge of Christ.**

But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place. 2 Corinthians 2:14

• **The hardening of my mind has been removed in Christ.**

But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ. 2 Corinthians 3:14

• **I am a new creature in Christ.**

Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. 2 Corinthians 5:17

• **I have become the righteousness of God in Christ.**

He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. 2 Corinthians 5:21

• **I have been made one with all who are in Christ Jesus.**

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:28

• **I am no longer a slave, but a child and an heir.**

Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God. Galatians 4:7

• **I have been set free in Christ.**

It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery. Galatians 5:1

• **I have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.**

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. Ephesians 1:3

• **I am chosen, holy, and blameless before God.**

just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. Ephesians 1:4

• **I am redeemed and forgiven by the grace of Christ.**

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace. Ephesians 1:7

• **I have been predestined by God to obtain an inheritance.**

In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will. Ephesians 1:10-11

• **I have been sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.**

In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise. Ephesians 1:13

• **Because of God's mercy and love, I have been made alive with Christ.**

But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved). Ephesians 2:4-5

• **I am seated in the heavenly places with Christ.**

and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Ephesians 2:6

• **I am God's workmanship created to produce good works.**

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them. Ephesians 2:10

• **I have been brought near to God by the blood of Christ.**

But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. Ephesians 2:13

• **I am a member of Christ's body and a partaker of His promise.**

the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. Ephesians 3:6; 5:30

• **I have boldness and confident access to God through faith in Christ.**

in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him. Ephesians 3:12

• **My new self is righteous and holy.**

put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. Ephesians 4:24

• **I was formerly darkness, but now I am light in the Lord.**

you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light. Ephesians 5:8

• **I am a citizen of heaven.**

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Philippians 3:20

• **The peace of God guards my heart and mind.**

And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7

• **God supplies all my needs.**

And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19

• **I have been made complete in Christ.**

in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority. Colossians 2:10

• **I have been raised up with Christ.**

Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Colossians 3:1

• **My life is hidden with Christ in God.**

For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. Colossians 3:3

• **Christ is my life, and I will be revealed with Him in glory.**

When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. Colossians 3:4

• **I have been chosen of God, and I am holy and beloved.**

So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Colossians 3:12

• **God loves me and has chosen me.**

knowing, brethren beloved by God, His choice of you. 1 Thessalonians 1:4

The more we embrace these truths from Scripture about who we have become in Christ, the more stable, grateful, and fully assured we will be in this world.