

1. "Give Thanks to the LORD" (1 Chronicles 16:7-36)(6.28.20)

[1 Chronicles 16:7-36 \(ESV\)](#)

7 Then on that day David first appointed that thanksgiving be sung to the Lord by Asaph and his brothers.

8 Oh give thanks to the Lord; call upon his name;
make known his deeds among the peoples!

9 Sing to him, sing praises to him;
tell of all his wondrous works!

10 Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice!

11 Seek the Lord and his strength;
seek his presence continually!

12 Remember the wondrous works that he has done,
his miracles and the judgments he uttered,

13 O offspring of Israel his servant,
children of Jacob, his chosen ones!

14 He is the Lord our God;
his judgments are in all the earth.

15 Remember his covenant forever,
the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations,

16 the covenant that he made with Abraham,
his sworn promise to Isaac,

17 which he confirmed to Jacob as a statute,
to Israel as an everlasting covenant,

18 saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan,
as your portion for an inheritance."

19 When you were few in number,
of little account, and sojourners in it,

20 wandering from nation to nation,
from one kingdom to another people,

21 he allowed no one to oppress them;
he rebuked kings on their account,

22 saying, "Touch not my anointed ones,
do my prophets no harm!"

23 Sing to the Lord, all the earth!
Tell of his salvation from day to day.

24 Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous works among all the peoples!

25 For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised,
and he is to be feared above all gods.

26 For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols,
but the Lord made the heavens.

27 Splendor and majesty are before him;
strength and joy are in his place.

28 Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples,
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength!

29 Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;
bring an offering and come before him!
Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness;
30 tremble before him, all the earth;
yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved.
31 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice,
and let them say among the nations, "The Lord reigns!"
32 Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
let the field exult, and everything in it!
33 Then shall the trees of the forest sing for joy
before the Lord, for he comes to judge the earth.
34 Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
for his steadfast love endures forever!

35 Say also:
"Save us, O God of our salvation,
and gather and deliver us from among the nations,
that we may give thanks to your holy name
and glory in your praise.

36 Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,
from everlasting to everlasting!"
Then all the people said, "Amen!" and praised the Lord.
The word of God for the people of God.

Title: "Give Thanks to the LORD"
LET US PRAY.

INTRODUCTION:

Jack was no longer a young man and maybe his metabolism had changed. He was putting on weight and he didn't seem to have the energy that he used to have. He bought bigger clothes, but they too became too tight. When he found that his motivation and zest for life had begun to be diminished it was time to do something.

You know what, he thought, I need to find myself a gym and get myself together. Jack visited some gyms close to him because that just made sense. It needed to be convenient or he knew it would be harder to sustain. So, he visited Any Time Fitness over here in Smithville Square. The name alone told him it would be a good "fit."

When he walked into the gym, Jack was greeted by Myke in a friendly manner. Jack felt welcome and he liked the looks of the place. It was well lit and clean and made a good impression on him. The music that was playing was to his taste and he was beginning to get a good vibe about this new endeavor.

It turns out that Myke was not only the manager but the owner. He gave Jack a nice tour of the place and Jack was impressed. Myke was friendly and seemed pretty knowledgeable. He had a lot of experience and he told Jack about the special classes they offered. Jack didn't think he needed to get fanatical about it but politely said, "Oh, that might be nice." When Myke told him that they even offered special one on one training

to meet Jack's specific needs, it actually made him uncomfortable. Well, Jack had a good impression, so he asked about the different plans. Myke called them memberships and again Jack felt uncomfortable. The rates were reasonable at Any Time Fitness and Jack opted for the yearly membership because that wouldn't cost him too much and would lower his monthly financial commitment. So, he gave Myke his credit card info to make it as easy as possible.

Every Wednesday morning, Jack showed up at 9 o'clock and worked up a good sweat. He was the friendly sort so he soon learned the names of others whose workout schedules overlapped with his. He paid attention to the rules and protocols of good gym etiquette, cleaning the equipment and cooperating with others. Other members would give him pointers and encourage him. When he left the gym at 10 each Wednesday, Jack felt better about himself. His outlook was more positive.

After a couple of months, Myke made a point of checking in with Jack. "Hey Jack, I see that you never miss your Wednesday morning workouts; but, I don't see any record of you being here any other time." "Well Myke, I work out religiously every Wednesday. It seems like that should be enough."

Then Myke asked him, if he had lost any weight. Jack said no not yet. Well, what kind of diet changes have you made? I haven't changed my diet Myke. I thought coming here every Wednesday morning would be enough. No, no, no Myke told him emphatically. This has to be a lifestyle change. Then he gave Jack a few suggestions for websites, a couple pamphlets on nutrition, and some book suggestions on physical fitness. When he got home that day, Jack put the stuff that Myke gave him on the coffee table in the living room near his recliner. While watching TV, during the commercials, he would look at the websites on his phone or browse the nutrition pamphlets. Often he decided that he would get one of those books, tomorrow. He never seemed to be able to find the time to go to Any Time Fitness for those "extra" workouts. And now, he was beginning to dread going to his Wednesday 9 AM workouts because he was afraid Myke might ask him questions about his progress.

Excuses, I mean reasons, for not going on Wednesdays seemed to crop up. Sometimes he was too tired. Sometimes, something else seemed more important. Even the weather would determine whether Jack was going to Any Time Fitness for his weekly workout. He didn't go at all the last month of his contract. So naturally, it made no sense to go back. When he crossed paths with Myke coming out of the barbershop a few weeks later, Jack had that uncomfortable feeling in his gut. Myke said that he was sorry that Jack had not continued at the gym. Jack's shoulders slouched and he looked at the sidewalk. I guess it just wasn't for me he told Myke. At that moment, the button on his pants popped.

BODY:

Verse 23: Sing to the Lord, all the earth!

Tell of his salvation from day to day.

What is this salvation about which the whole earth should be singing to the Lord? The Old Testament concept of salvation is one of deliverance, most pointedly in the Exodus story. It is a belief; it is a trust; in the God who hears the cry of His people and responds to their circumstances. This is the Lord Jehovah, who acts in the real world, in the history of humankind.

We tend to limit the scope of salvation as being saved from hell, which is unfortunate. We think about it as our ticket to heaven. To really and fully be able to respond with the joy and the gratitude and the worship and the praise that we hear in this song of thanksgiving, we need to fuse our understanding of salvation with that of the Jewish people of the Hebrew Testament.

You see my friends, we were saved; we are being saved; and, we have this hope of salvation for the future. We were saved by grace, through faith in the Lord Jesus. [1 Corinthians 1:18 \(ESV\)](#) For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. [2 Corinthians 2:15 \(ESV\)](#) For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. [Romans 5:9 \(ESV\)](#) Since, therefore, we have now been justified by Jesus' blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.

You see there three tenses of our salvation: past, present, and future. We realized that we were lost sinners condemned before God and in need of saving. We then submitted to Jesus as Lord and Master in our lives. Now, in the living out our daily lives, [Philippians 2:12-13 \(ESV\)](#) Paul tells us to work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. And, the hope of our glorification, when we will have our glorified body like the Lord Jesus, gives us the strength to sustain us.

So, as disciples of Jesus, we have already seen the work of God in our lives. This fortifies us and gives us confidence. We are told twice in this song of Thanksgiving to remember. We too need to remember the wondrous works God has done, his miracles and the judgments he has uttered. We are to remember that our God is a covenant God and he never fails in delivering on His promises. Today, we live in the covenant of grace, of God's goodness and forgiveness.

The Lord God has done all these things and is doing these things for you. What are you doing for the kingdom? Are you proclaiming, teaching, and modeling a life-giving gospel day to day? Is there gratitude in your heart? My prayer is that these truths will frame your daily outlook. My prayer is that these truths will infect your spirit. My prayer is that these truths will mold your mind, that they will inform all your thoughts.

But the rubber meets the road when your actions demonstrate the truth that the Lord reigns. When the evidence indicates that the Lord reigns in your life, other people will be drawn to Jesus. No gym advertises with an overweight spokesperson, reclining in a chair, with a cigarette in one

hand, and a donut in the other hand, waving to you to come on down to Any Time Fitness. Likewise, a down in the dumps Christian, who is bitter and talks negatively about other people, who is self-centered, is not a Christian who can say that the Lord reigns in their daily life.

Our scripture reading today started with “On that day.” What happened on that day that resulted in King David’s wonderful song of Thanksgiving? The Ark of the Covenant of God was brought into Jerusalem. It had not been in the Tabernacle for some time. King David had constructed another tent in Jerusalem to hold the Ark of Yahweh. This symbol of the presence of God belonged in the city of God’s choosing, Jerusalem, the city of peace.

What is the Ark of the Covenant? Well, here we have a model of what it looked like. It is a sacred object that represented the presence of God. The Lord gave very exacting specifications to Moses for its construction. It was kept in the holy of holies in the Tabernacle and eventually in the Temple. The cover of the Ark was called the Mercy Seat and Yahweh used it as a throne.

King David adds another dimension when he describes the Ark as a footstool: [1 Chronicles 28:2 \(ESV\)](#) Then King David rose to his feet and said: “Hear me, my brothers and my people. I had it in my heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord and for the footstool of our God, and I made preparations for building.

I chose today’s scripture because of our ongoing theme of seeking the Lord, which we will get to in a minute. I did not consciously connect it with the Ark or with our first worship service in our sanctuary in three months. But, after this Drive-in worship service, I will be carrying this model of the Ark of the Covenant into our sanctuary, into our worship space.

In a recent sermon, I already acknowledged that the church is the body of Christ, not the building; but at the same time, the Lord has set aside and designated sacred places for His presence. So, it is with rejoicing and thanksgiving that some of us will be re-entering our church sanctuary today.

When the LORD instructed Moses on the Ark of the Covenant, he also gave very specific instructions of its proper handling. No human hand was to touch it because it was so holy, so sacred. If this prohibition was violated, that person would die. That is why there are poles inserted through rings on the side, so that it could be carried without human hands touching it.

A previous attempt to bring the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem, resulted in disaster. It was placed on a cart to be transported into the city. At some point in a rough portion of the road, the cart was severely rocked and it looked like the Ark was going to fall off the cart. A man named Uzzah reached up with his hand to steady the Ark and prevent it falling off the cart. While it seems like his motivations were proper, his actions violated the specific decree of the LORD.

That story has always troubled me. How about you? Here are some maybes for you: ...we apply human logic and reasoning to override God's commandments; ...because we rationalize exceptions to human law, we do the same with the Lord's law; ...we minimize the importance of the holiness and the sacredness of the things of God. There is no doubt we put our human hands all over the Word of God. We have a tendency to characterize the pursuit of holiness as legalism, that way we fill justified in ignoring the call to holiness.

MAYBE, in downplaying the importance of our sacred worship spaces, we are downplaying the importance of God's presence in our lives. Instead of his presence being sacred and revered, we have put our feet up on the footstool of God Almighty.

This model of The Ark of the Covenant of God is a little worse for wear. One of my grandchildren made it for an assignment at The Pilgrim Academy. I showed it to you a few years ago when it was new. Since then, it has been stored in a back corner of their basement.

I propose to you that too many of us have metaphorically done the same thing with the presence of God in our lives. We have put the Lord in some remote, out of the way place, where He won't inconvenience us. Instead of living daily in the Lord, we have made God the proverbial genie in the lamp, waiting for the day we play Aladdin asking for our three wishes.

The reason I chose today's scripture is verse 11:
Seek the Lord and his strength;
seek his presence continually!

It is possible that this call to seek the LORD's strength is what moved me to use the gym illustration. There are many in our congregation that need a special strength in our current day. Some of you have been hospitalized. Some of received news of a fatal condition of a family member. Others are overworked and some are out of work. There are all sorts of stresses and strains. Some have felt isolated, vulnerable, or depressed. Some are worried about the future. There is something within us that protests against civil unrest AND the underlying issues causing that same civil unrest.

CONCLUSION:

So how do we seek the LORD and his strength and his presence continually? I proclaim to you that if we live out this song of thanksgiving that David gives us, we will find ourselves living daily in God's presence. The Lord will be palpable, a reality in our experience and awareness.

We must have an attitude of gratitude. Giving thanks to the Lord continually will cement in your mind the Lord's promise to never leave us or forsake us.

When we remember what God has done, for us, and for others, we are fortified. Sharing with others His wondrous works will bless them and you.

We take joy in hearing the birds sing even though we cannot understand what they are singing about. They are part of all creation that is glad. The whole earth rejoices. Even if others don't understand our song, we too should sing, sing, sing, praises to our Lord.

We were created to worship. If you don't enjoy worshipping your Creator, you are going to hate heaven. Yes, that is a ridiculous statement – so rejoice in your God. In our great hymn, Amazing Grace we sing:

When we've been there ten thousand years,

Bright shining as the sun,

We've no less days to sing God's praise

Than when we first begun.

Our God is glorious. Our God is holy, holy, holy. Our God never fails his faithful covenants. Our God does marvelous works. Our God is to be greatly feared and greatly praised. Our God's splendor and majesty are without compare. Give thanks to the Lord for he is good; His steadfast love endures forever.

Then ALL the people said, Amen.

And, they praised the Lord.

Amen and amen. Let us pray.