

ONE OF OUR FINEST WORD (PSALMS 100) 11/25/12
FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, ATCHISON, PASTOR LEE HENDON

IF YOU CAN ATTEND CHURCH WITHOUT FEAR OF HARASSMENT, ARREST, TORTURE OR DEATH... YOU ARE MORE BLESSED THAN **3 BILLION** PEOPLE IN THE WORLD.

IF YOU HAVE FOOD IN THE REFRIGERATOR, CLOTHES ON YOUR BACK, A ROOF OVER HEAD & A PLACE TO SLEEP... YOU ARE RICHER THAN **75%** OF THE WORLD.

IF YOU HAVE MONEY IN THE BANK, IN YOUR WALLET OR PURSE & SPARE CHANGE IN A DISH SOMEWHERE... YOU ARE MORE AFFLUENT THAN **92%** OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION.

IF YOU HOLD UP YOUR HEAD WITH A SMILE ON YOUR FACE & ARE TRULY THANKFUL... YOU ARE BLESSED BECAUSE THE VAST MAJORITY OF AMERICANS **CAN** BUT MOST DO **NOT**... GIVE THANKS.

HOW MUCH IS A WORD WORTH? BACK WHEN RUDYARD KIPLING WAS ENGLAND'S MOST POPULAR WRITER, WORD GOT OUT THAT HIS PUBLISHERS PAID HIM A DOLLAR PER WORD FOR HIS WORK. SOME CAMBRIDGE STUDENTS HEARD ABOUT IT & WIRED KIPLING ONE DOLLAR, ALONG WITH THIS REQUEST, "PLEASE SEND US ONE OF YOUR VERY FINEST WORDS." KIPLING REPLIED WITH A ONE WORD TELEGRAM: "**THANKS**."

IT IS TRUE, "THANKS" IS INDEED ONE OF OUR VERY FINEST WORDS - WORTH MUCH TO THE PERSON WHO SPEAKS IT & TO THE ONE WHO HEARS IT. PROVERBS 25:11 EXPRESSED IT SUCCINCTLY, "ONE WORD FITLY SPOKEN IS LIKE APPLES OF GOLD IN A SETTING OF SILVER." **THANKS** IS INDEED A FITLY SPOKEN WORD.

FOR SOME PEOPLE THE SEASON OF THANKSGIVING IS JUST ANOTHER OCCASION FOR FEAST & FOOTBALL, IF GOD HAD MEANT FOR US TO FAST ON THANKSGIVING, GOD WOULD HAVE NEVER CREATED 30 LB TURKEYS. I HAVE HEARD ABOUT THE PRACTICE OF RAISING YOUR OWN HOLIDAY BIRD BUT SOME PEOPLE ARE A BIT SQUEAMISH ABOUT IT. NOT ONE MAN I READ ABOUT THOUGH. HE STATED THAT ONE JANUARY THEY BOUGHT A TURKEY WHO BECAME LIKE A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY. THEY KEPT HIM IN THE HOUSE, HAND FED HIM, TOOK HIM FOR WALKS. WHEN THE TIME CAME, THERE WAS NO HESITATION ABOUT IT. THEY HAD HIM FOR THANKSGIVING DINNER. YEP, THE TURKEY PERCHED AT THE TABLE IN A CHAIR ON THE HUSBAND'S RIGHT, JUST LIKE A MEMBER

OF THE FAMILY.

ACCORDING TO THE WORLD'S STANDARDS EACH ONE OF US ARE WEALTHY - 'BOUT FILTHY RICH. NO NEED TO FEEL GUILTY ABOUT IT EITHER. THE THANKSGIVING SEASON IS A TIME FOR US TO GIVE EXPLICIT VOICE TO OUR GRATITUDE ATTITUDE. HOW VAST ARE OUR RICHES THAT BEG FOR THAT SIMPLE BUT VERY FINE WORD, "**THANKS**."

SAY **THANKS** FOR OUR COUNTRY. UNDOUBTEDLY WE ARE APPRECIATIVE FOR OUR COUNTRY THOUGH WE SELDOM PUT IT INTO WORDS. OUR AMERICAN INSTINCT FOR SELF-CRITICISM SOME-TIMES BLINDS US TO ALL THE MANY THINGS WE DO RIGHT IN THIS COUNTRY & WE NEGLECT EXPRESSION OF THANKS. TO WHOM DO WE SAY **THANKS** FOR OUR COUNTRY? TO PATRIOTS, LONG SINCE PASSED. TO PIONEERS WHO DISPLAYED MORE COURAGE, MORE ENDURANCE OF HARDSHIPS IN A WEEK THAN MOST OF US DO IN A LIFETIME. THERE IS A PLACE OFF THE HIGHWAY A FEW MILES WEST OF KANSAS CITY WHERE A MARKER POINTS OUT THE OLD WAGON TRACKS MADE BY THE PEOPLE WHO FIRST WENT WESTWARD HO. IMAGINE THEIR HOPE & DREAMS, THEIR FEARS & ADVERSITIES & SAY "**THANKS**" FOR THIS COUNTRY OF OURS. **THANKS** TO THE MODERN DAY PATRIOTS & SOLDIERS DEFENDING OUR COUNTRY TODAY - IN TENT CITIES OVERSEAS - DAILY IN HARMS WAY.

WE WOULD SAY **THANKS** AS WELL TO ALL THOSE PEOPLE WHO HAVE PLACES IN OUR LIVES THAT MAKE OUR LIVES RICHER & MORE MEANINGFUL. THANKS TO OUR FAMILIES, OUR PARENTS WITH THEIR SACRIFICES, OUR CHILDREN WITH THEIR PATIENCE, OUR SPOUSES WITH THEIR LOVE & FAITHFULNESS. THANKS TO FRIENDS WHOSE TRUST & WHOSE LAUGHTER SET A LIGHT IN LIFE THAT GIVES US BOTH WARMTH & DELIGHT.

THANKS TO PEOPLE IN PUBLIC SERVICE - POLITICIANS, CITY COUNCIL MEN & WOMEN, GOVERNORS, SENATORS, REPRESENTA-TIVES, THE PRESIDENT - THOSE WHO ENDURE UNENDING CRITICISM & RECEIVE SO LITTLE THANKS. THANKS TO TEACHERS & ADMINIS-TRATORS IN OUR SCHOOLS. THANKS TO THEM FOR PUTTING UP WITH DIFFICULT CHILDREN & IMPATIENT PARENTS & EXHAUSTIVE PAPER WORK. THANKS TO THE FIREMEN/WOMEN & POLICE OFFI-CERS WHO ARE SO TIRELESS & DEDICATED IN THEIR SERVICE.

THANKS TO NURSES & DOCTORS & CUSTODIANS IN HOSPITALS. IN EVERY MOMENT OF NEED, DAY OR NIGHT, THEY ARE THERE. THANKS TO SAFETY OFFICERS WHO, IN GOOD WEATHER OR BAD, HELP LITTLE CHILDREN ACROSS DANGEROUS STREETS & SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS WHO TAKE OUR KIDS TO THEIR SCHOOLS. THANKS TO PUBLIC UTILITY PEOPLE WHO ARE CALLED OUT IN STORMS AT ALL HOURS, DAY & NIGHT, TO KEEP OUR POWER ON.

THANKS TO TRUCK DRIVERS & TRAIN OPERATORS WHO KEEP OUR STORES STOCKED W/ FOOD & GOODS. THANKS TO BUTCHERS & BAKERS & NEWSPAPER CARRIERS & GARBAGE COLLECTORS. ALL THESE PEOPLE, AS WELL AS SO MANY OTHERS - LIKE ELECTRICIANS & INSPECTORS - ATTORNEYS - PLUMBERS - BANKERS - CONSTRUCTION WORKERS - CASHIERS - POSTAL CARRIERS ALL WHO CONSTITUTE THE SPOKES OF THE WHEELS ON WHICH OUR LIVES TURN. WE NEED THEM & TO THEM WE SAY ONE OF OUR FINEST WORDS, THANKS!

YOU, SITTING IN THE PEWS & IN THE CHOIR LOFT - NAME IN YOUR HEARTS & SOFTLY ON YOUR LIPS WHAT YOU DO & KEEP DOING TO KEEP OUR LIVES TURNING. WE GIVE TO EACH OTHER OUR VERY FINEST WORD, **THANKS**.

AND **THANKS** FOR THE CHURCH. THANKS FOR THE BUILDING, THIS GORGEOUS PLACE OF QUIET BEAUTY GIVEN TO US BY PAST GENERATIONS. THANKS TO THOSE WHO DO THE WORK OF THE CHURCH - TO THOSE WHO ARE SHARING THE GOSPEL AS MISSIONARIES IN OUR STEAD & IN JESUS' NAME.

THANKS TO THOSE WHO KEEP THE WORK OF THE CHURCH GOING - WHO PREPARE COMMUNION, FELLOWSHIP & BEREAVEMENT MEALS, WHO LEAD THE SCOUTS, WHO SPONSOR YOUTH GROUPS & TEACH SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES. THANKS TO THE DEACONS/ESSES - GREETERS - ELDERS - TRUSTEES - MINISTERS. THANKS TO THE CHOIR & PRAISE TEAMS WHO LEAD US IN SONG FOR THE GLORY OF GOD. THANKS TO THOSE WHO ARE FAITHFUL TO THE CHURCH, WHO CAN BE COUNTED UPON TO BE HERE IN WORSHIP - TO THOSE WHO GIVE GENEROUSLY TO THE WORK OF THE LORD THRU THIS CHURCH, WHO GIVE GIFTS WORTHY OF WHAT THEY HAVE. THANKS FOR THE CHURCH & ALL WHO MAKE IT HAPPEN!

FINALLY, LET US GO ONE REMAINING STEP & SAY THANKS

MOST OF ALL TO GOD, FOR THE MANY BLESSINGS IN LIFE & FOR THE GIFT OF HIS SON JESUS. JESUS, WHO GIVES SO MUCH MEANING & PURPOSE TO OUR LIVES NOW & LIFE ETERNAL FOR OUR TOMORROWS. THANKS TO GOD THAT NOTHING CAN EVER HAPPEN TO US THAT WOULD TAKE US AWAY FROM GOD'S LOVING CARE. THANK YOU TO GOD FOR LOVING US FIRST & SEEKING US OUT - UNTIL WE TURN TO HIM - NEVER GIVES UP ON US - THANKS!

THIS IS THE GLORY OF THANKSGIVING. IT LETS GRATITUDE BUBBLE UP TO THE SURFACE & AS WE DRINK FROM IT SOMETHING OF THE RADIANCE OF LIFE IS RECAPTURED. **HOW MUCH WE HAVE!** THE SECRET OF THE THANKFUL LIFE IS TO PUT THAT RADIANCE, THAT BLESSEDNESS, INTO WORDS. ONE OF OUR FINEST WORDS IS "**THANKS!**" LET US TURN FROM OUR BUSYNESS TO GIVE-THANKS! THANKS-GIVING! AND FORGET NOT THE LITTLE CHILDREN, TEACH THEM THRU YR EXAMPLES THIS FINEST WORD OF OURS - **THANKS!**