

Sermon Outline:
Three Ways, By God's Grace, to Become More Thankful

Bottom Line: Focus on God's Character (especially *Love*), *God's Gifts*, and *Our Undeservedness*

Introduction

-series on the Psalms, with main focus on the overarching structure (more of a start-to-finish view of the forest than of the trees and branches), with an emphasis on how the Book of Psalms as a whole portray the ministry of the Messiah). So far, we have noted a Five Book Structure, Psalms 1-2 as Introduction, and 146-50 as Conclusion.

Today being Thanksgiving, we deviate slightly to look at, not a messianic psalm but a Hymn of Thanksgiving—Psalm 95.

Excursus on Thanksgiving:

-summary of presentation by Dr Jeremy McClung on Thanksgiving
(see handout, pages 7-8, noting three elements—God's Love, Gifts, Our Unworthiness, and three counter-elements: 1) cynicism, 2) consumerism fed by ingratitude/complacency; and 3) narcissism/sense of entitlement.)

Psalm 95

Background:

-common "Canticle" in our liturgy, called the "O Come" (Latin Venite)
-one of the 'Yahweh-is-King' Psalms (93, 95-99)
-role in Book IV

A Closer Look at Psalm 95A (vss. 1-7):

Stanza One (vss 1-5): Why Everyone Can Be Thankful: God's Character (Creator, Loving King)

Stanza Two (vss 6-7): Why Believers Have Reason to Be Extra Thankful: His Gift of a Covenant

Transition: v. 7c: one-line waker-upper!

A Closer Look at Psalm 95B (vss. 8-11)

Original Context: in Anticipation of Covenant at Mount Sinai (Exodus 17; cf. Num. 14, 20). The point is that God had promised blessing in response to obedience.

Contemporary Appropriation:

1. We can see the same three thanksgiving-depriving sins reflected here as highlighted earlier: a) cynicism/disbelief, b) consumerism/ingratitude, c) narcissism/entitlement
2. Although we are not under the Sinaitic Covenant, God's free gift of grace implies a grateful response of service in discipleship

Conclusion

Us—our self-understanding and attitude
Sin/undeservedness/unworthiness,/humility VS entitlement/pride

Notes:

Intro-kids memories of being thankful (ER!).
Hard to promote a sense