BEING THANKFUL

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**DATE: 11/7/2018 Wed.**

**TEXT: I Corinthians 1:4-8**

**INTRODUCTION**

We are continuing our Study of Chapter 1 of the Book of **I Corinthians**

We will be looking at **vs. 4-8** tonight

Last time we left off asking *Whose Church are you a Member of?*

Paul wrote in **v. 2 – *“Unto the church of God which is at Corinth”***

We are all to be a Member of God’s Church by being Born again

As we pick up tonight in **chapter 1** we find the Apostle Paul also being Thankful for the Believers in Corinth

Paul Expresses his Thanks for these Believers

There were a lot of things in this Church that Disturbed Paul,

But there were also things that Delighted him as well

The Things that Paul was Thankful For ought to be the same things we are Thankful For

**Ill.** At the turn of this Century in Wales, a Revival broke out, one of the hymns that was sung at every service was …

*“Count Your Blessings”* We’re all familiar with this great hymn:

*When upon life's billows you are tempest tossed  
When you are discouraged, thinking all is lost  
Count your many blessings name them one by one  
And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done*

It’s Inspiring to count our many blessings (But at the same time)

It’s also Impossible to count All our blessings

The Psalmist said in **Psalm 68:19 – *“Blessed be the LORD, Who daily loads us with benefits”***

God is not a Brylcreem God, you know *“just a dab will do ya”*

He is a God that loads us down with blessing every day

All of which we need to be Thankful for

Let’s look at what it was that Paul was Thankful for in the Corinthian Church

And I’m hoping we will find those same things happening in our Church

(Stand and Read together **vs. 4-8**)

**~~~Prayer~~~**

First, let’s look at …

**I. GOD’S “GRACE – vs. 4-6**

Paul was Thankful for God’s Grace, Paul writes in **vs. 4, 5 –**

***“I thank my God always on your behalf, for the Grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ;” …***

***“That in every thing ye are Enriched by Him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge”***

Paul gives Thanks for the Grace of God that is Demonstrated in the lives of the Believer

In **Ephesians1:7**, Paul speaks of the ***“Riches of God’s Grace”***

It’s not just that we have been given Grace, but we are Enriched by God’s Grace

I think of an Article I once read about Bill Gates

When the article was written he was worth about $12.9 Billion (I don’t know what he’s worth today)

If we were to equate that into a 40 hour work week, we see that he makes:

-- Just a little over$923 million per week

-- Somewhere around $2.3 million per hour

-- $38,500. per minute

-- And about $535.00 every second

(**Humor:** When you read something like that, it makes you want to send the poor fellow a Love offering – right?)

No; (all kidding aside …) the riches of Bill Gates are nothing compared to the Riches of God’s Grace

*Someone has said, "Poverty is hereditary, we get it from our kids*

Yet … there is No Poverty in God’s Grace

We are Rich in God's Grace

**v. 5** tells us ***“that in everything ye are Enriched by Him”***

In ***everything***? Wow! What a Blessing

The word ***“enriched”*** is interesting

We get our word *plutocrat* from this word

Which speaks of *a controlling class of rich men*

Paul is telling us that we are Spiritual Billionaires

First, we are Reminded that …

**A. We are ‘Recipients’ – v. 4**

That is, we have Received God’s Grace

Paul tell us that this Grace is ***“given you by Jesus Christ”***

Grace is a Gift from God

It’s an Offering from the Lord

And when Grace is received, it is Received without merit or achievement

The word ***"grace"*** speaks of that which is *undeserved*

The many blessings we enjoy are Undeserved

We can’t buy God's Grace nor earn it

It cost us nothing

All we can do is Receive it

It’s a Gift from God

Furthermore …

Not only are we **‘Recipients’** of God’s Grace

But also…

**B. We are the ‘Revealers’ (**of God’s Grace) **– v. 6**

***“Even as the Testimony of Christ was confirmed in you:”*** (To give evidence of)

Notice the word ***“confirmed”*** here in **v. 6**

It speaks of that *which is secure or guaranteed*

Paul was saying that the Evidence of God's Saving Grace was without question in their lives

God's Grace had been Demonstrated by them

**II Corinthians 5:17 – *“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new”***

There was no question about the matter

Many of the believers at Corinth had Received God's Grace

And it was now being Revealed in their life

This Grace was not only an Undeserved Blessing

But also, an Undeniable Evidence

It was Obvious that they were Saved

It’s just Obvious some people are Saved, while others you wonder about

The Grace of God is Demonstrated in our changed lives

An example of how God's Grace had been Demonstrated in the Corinthian believers is found in…

**I Corinthian 6:9-11 - *“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,” “Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God” “And such Were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God”***

Here Paul speaks of how God had saved them from all manner of wicked lifestyles

The change in their life was but one proof that God's Grace had been Received

It’s indeed "Amazing Grace"

As true Believers we are Receivers & Revealers of …

**GOD’S AMAZING “GRACE”**

We need to be Thankful for God’s Grace

Next, let’s look at …

**II. GOD’S “GIFTS” – v. 7 a**

***“So that ye come behind in no gift;”***

We are going to find that one of the Main Topics of the Book of **I Corinthians** is that of Spiritual Gifts

**Ephesians 4:8** tells us that the Lord ***“gives gifts unto men”***

As Believers, we have not only been given *Grace,* but *Gifts*

I believe there isn’t another Doctrine in the entire Bible that hasn’t been more misunderstood as the Doctrine of Spiritual Gifts

The Church at Corinth was a-lot like today

There was all kind of confusion about Gifts, and as well, there was a lot of heresy being taught about Gifts

Because there was so much confusion, Paul set aside a large portion of **I Corinthians** to discuss the matter

But in spite of the confusion, one great truth of the Bible is that God has given unto His children Spiritual Gifts

Let me make this Statement

*Everything God has created has been created fully equipped to function*

For Example …

-- Humans have eyes, arms, etc., to be able to function in life

-- Fish have gills and fins to be able to function in their environment

-- Bats have sensors and radar capabilities that enable them to operate

Everything God has created functions Wonderfully

Believers are no exception

Each Believer has been equipped to function as a Son and Servant of God

It’s important to understand that Spiritual Gifts are not Talents or Skills

Spiritual Gifts are God’s enabling, imparted the moment we are saved to equip us to do His Work and Will

**Ephesians 4:12 – *“For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:”***

They are not skills that are Developed

They are Gifts that are Imparted

(We will look later at Spiritual Gifts in more detail)

But let me say just a couple of things about them here

**A. These Gifts are Not ‘Positionally Deserved’**

The word ***“gift”*** here is the Greek word *“charisma”*

Which is often translated ***“grace”*** in our Bible

The word literally speaks of *a gratuitous endowment*

We could say Spiritual Gifts are *a grace-gift* from God

*They are not Individually Deserved but Sovereignty Distributed*

They are not Earned or Deserved

Paul said in **I Corinthians 12:11** that God divides up these gifts ***“to every man severally (individually) as He will”***

Spiritual gifts are given by God as He so chooses

No one can pick out a gift and decide they are going to earn that gift

God and God alone determines what gift or gifts a believer may have

They are Neither earned or chosen

Since they are a Gift, they must be viewed as a Trust!

The gift or gifts we have are entrusted to us

To **entrust** is *to give someone a responsibility you assume they will fulfill*

To Not Know your gift is a Tragedy

To Not Use your gift is a Travesty

Furthermore …

**B. These Gifts are Not ‘Preferentially Distributed’**

In **v. 7**, Paul speaks of his desire that the Corinthian believers not ***“come behind”*** in spiritual gifts

These words speak of something *defective*

Paul was not saying that believers should get busy seeking spiritual gifts … they do not have,

But that, God has done no less for you than He has for someone else

Every believer should realize that God has not deprived them of a spiritual gift

Every believer is a gifted saint

Each believer has a gift or gifts

Paul said in **Ephesians 4:7 –** ***“but unto every man is given grace (is gifted) according to the measure of Christ”***

Gifts are given to every man

Paul wants us to realize this great truth so that each believer will not live a Defective Christian life

**C. These Gifts are Not ‘Personally Designed’**

An important thing to realize about gifts is that each individual's gift is not primarily for someone’s own profit or prestige

They are for the profit of others

Paul writes in **I Corinthians 12:7 – *“But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal”***

The word ***“profit”*** speaks of *edification*

The word ***“withal”*** speaks of *the common good of all*

*Gifts are given to each of us that we all may be edified*

Gifts are not Toys to play with, but Tools to build with

What many believers don’t realize is that if you have not discovered your gifts and are not using yours,

You are depriving others of spiritual blessings and growth

Every believer is important to the body of Christ as a whole

We need each other

We need the edification that comes from others using their spiritual gifts

Now we ought to Thank God for our gifts

And All the gifts He has given to the Body, by which we are Blessed

**GOD’S “GRACE”**

**GOD’S “GIFTS”**

Lastly, let’s look at …

**III. GOD’S “GLORY” – vs. 7 b, 8**

We read in **vs. 7b-8 – *“… waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ”***

Paul speaks of the future life that awaits every believer

What a blessing to know that this life is not all there is

One day Jesus will come again!

Now that ought to stir our hearts – Amen!

The word ***“coming”*** speaks of *the removal of a covering*

It describes *Revealing something that has been Concealed*

*The glory of the life to come will one day be uncovered and revealed to all believers*

First, we are to be …

**A. ‘Looking’ for His Return**

The word ***“waiting”*** in **v. 7** means *to welcome or receive*

It speaks of *Looking for something*

We are to look and long for, the Lord's return

Which is Our Blessed Hope

**Titus 2:12,13 – *“Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;” “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;”***

This passage identifies the ***“blessed hope”*** as the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ, our great God and Saviour   
  
The word ***“blessed”*** often means *happy or beneficial*

Our hope is ***“blessed”*** in that Jesus’ return will be an amazing, joyful experience for the believer in Christ

We will be blessed beyond measure when we see Jesus

The trials of this life will be over, and we will see according to **Romans 8:18 …**

***“… that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us”***

The word ***“hope”*** does not communicate uncertainty, as in *“I hope that something might occur”*

But rather, it is the glad assurance that something will take place

Jesus is our hope, and no one can take that hope away

**Romans 5:5 – *“And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us”***

The ***“blessed hope,”*** then, is the joyful assurance that God will extend His benefits to us and that Jesus Christ will return

We are to be waiting for this event right now

And as we are **‘Looking’**, we need to be …

**B. ‘Living’ for His Return – v. 8**

Let’s look at 2 Words here as we close

***“Who shall also confirm you”***

He shall establish us in the hope of the Gospel

He shall make us *firm* amidst all our trials,

Despite … all the efforts to shake our Faith

Despite … all the efforts to remove us from that firm foundation on which we now rest

***“Unto the end”,*** that end is the Coming of the Lord

The word ***“blameless”*** here means *to call in*

It is a combination of two words

One has reference to *a charge or accusation*

But there is a prefix that is added that makes it mean *unchargeable* or *above accusation*

That’s how we should live in light of the Lord's return

That is how we should want to be found when Jesus comes again – ***“Blameless”***

No one being able to point a finger at us and accuse us of wrong doing

We should look Both for His Return and live each day as if He could come today

**Ill.** The return of Richard the Lionhearted (a great King in England) is one of the great story's in English history. While he was away, his brother John sought to capture the throne. The people suffered greatly and longed for the return of Richard. One day Richard the Lionhearted landed on the shores of England and marched straight toward the throne. The castles of John toppled like bowling pins. None dared stand in his way.

As he neared London, the bells rang his arrival and the people shouted "THE LION IS BACK! LONG LIVE THE KING!"

One of these days the Lion of the tribe of Judah will return – The Lion will be Back

Oh, what a glorious day that will be!

Who would ever think of not Being Thankful for this!

**CONCLUSION**

As we finish this thought tonight in **vs. 4-8** we find the Apostle Paul being Thankful for the Believers in Corinth

Paul Expresses his Thanks for these Believers

There were many things about the Church that Disturbed Paul, … But there were many things that Delighted him as well

The Things that Paul was Thankful For ought to be the same things we are Thankful For as well

And those things are …

**GOD’S “GRACE”**

**GOD’S “GIFTS”**

**GOD’S “GLORY”**