

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Galatians 5:22-23

Lesson 7

Goodness

Thanksgiving Harvest

Deuteronomy 8:1-18

Many people the world over recite the Lord's prayer once a week in church which has this line: "Give us this day our daily bread (Matthew 6:11). Then the rest of the week, they never give God thanks or praise for all of their blessings. Many of us believe our blessings are due to our hard work. The only time we are driven to our knees is when we hit lean times. This lesson is about how the Lord reminded Israel of their hunger and thirst in the wilderness and that it was He who sustained them. As they enter the Promised Land, He did not want them to forget it was their obedience and faith in Him that enabled them to be wealthy.

Introduction

God wants each of us to acknowledge and give Him thanks for the continual blessings He gives. The Feast of Tabernacles is a festival that we should teach thankfulness and please God by celebrating His goodness. Remind your class that another name for the Feast of Tabernacles is "Ingathering" (Exodus 23:16; 34:22). It was given this name because it was held after the ingathering of the harvest. At the Feast of Tabernacles, part of our celebration is about all those who have repented and been baptized and accepted Jesus Christ as their savior and soon coming King. There are Biblical commandments relative to this festival. Read Deuteronomy 16:13-17

- a) You are to be joyful and celebrate with your family (verse 14).

- b) God is generous to His people (verse 15).
- c) We are to appear before the Lord in a place that He chooses (verse 16).
- d) We are to give special thanks to God for all the blessings we have received (verse 17).

Progression of Events

The forty years in the wilderness were coming to an end and Moses is speaking to the people of Israel in these verses. He is admonishing them to remember the Lord your God.

- The first verse speaks of obedience. God wants us to give Him our heart, mind, body and soul. We show Him love when we commit ourselves completely to Him. We study His Word so His values and virtues are what form our mind to choose between right and wrong. With obedience comes the understanding that all our wealth comes from Him. Finally, we develop a deep desire to make service to Him our main purpose in life.
- "...that man shall not live by bread alone; but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord" (Deuteronomy 8:3). Jesus quoted this scripture when the devil tempted him to turn stones into bread (Matthew 4:4). Life is not about satisfying every desire. "Things" don't give happiness. For a time they satisfy and then one is left empty. Moses is saying and Jesus reinforced, that true happiness comes from a commitment

to God. The rewards that come from obedience to God are far greater than what the world has to offer.

- “Your garments did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years. You should know in your heart that as a man chastens his son so the Lord your God chastens you. Therefore you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him” (Deuteronomy 8:4-6). God provided clothing and food for them for forty years. They were completely dependent upon Him. They would fear to disobey God because He is holy and all-powerful.
- “For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, that flow out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey; a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing; a land whose stones are iron and out of whose hills you can dig copper” (Deuteronomy 8:7-9). Remember, they were coming out of the wilderness. What a contrast to what they have known for forty years.
- “When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land which He has given you” (verse 10). In the Promised Land the Israelites were to give thanks to God for all their prosperity. This verse is sometimes used to show how we should pray before a meal. When you give thanks for a meal, you are thanking God for his goodness to you and your family.

Climax

- Now comes the warning from Moses. “Beware that you do not forget the Lord your God by not keeping His commandments, His judgments and His statutes which I command you today, lest

when you have eaten and are full, and have built beautiful houses and dwell in them; and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold are multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied; when your heart is lifted up, and you forget the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage; who led you through that great and terrible wilderness, in which were fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty land where there was not water; who brought water for you out of the flinty rock; who fed you in the wilderness with manna, which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and He might test you to do you good in the end” (verses 10-16).

- “Then you say in your heart, ‘My power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth’ (verse 17). In times of plenty it is easy to forget God. You may be tempted to believe it is your hard work and cleverness that got you where you are. Do not let that happen.

Conclusion

“And you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day” (verse 18). Life is a gift from God. It is God who gives you life and the most valuable possession you can have is a relationship with Him. He wants to have a relationship with you and there is no price tag—He gives it freely.

Goodness

Goodness is not passive it is active. Goodness is the act of being kind. Goodness will help you do good to those who hate you (Luke 6:27). Striving to do good and make life better for another is an example of a “good” person.

Putting into practice good behavior is the result of knowing God. In Psalm 107 we can read about the goodness of God. His standard of goodness is what we must strive to develop in our own lives.

Memory Verse

“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever” (Psalm 23:6).

Questions

For class discussion ask your students any of the following:

1. Who wrote these verses?
2. Who were they spoken to?
3. What did God provide for 40 years?
4. How do we offer thanks to God?
5. How do we celebrate God's goodness at this time of year?
6. What are some other names for the Feast of Tabernacles?
7. List the Biblical commandments relative to this festival.
8. What does it mean to be good?
9. When you possess the virtue of goodness, can you love your enemy?
10. Is it a good warning for us today? Why or why not?
11. Who is the giver of all good gifts?

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Galatians 5:22-23

Lesson 7 Craft



Materials

- Different colors of yarn.
- Scissors, colors
- Copies of Thanksgiving pattern form on following page for each student.
- Clear adhesive-backed plastic or Contac paper
- Pinking shears

Directions

- Cut two pieces of clear adhesive-backed plastic or Contac paper the desired size of the place mat.
- You may wish to use a commercial place mat as a pattern.
- Place one piece of the plastic, sticky-side up, on top of the Thanksgiving pattern.
- Follow around the pattern with the yarn, sticking it in place.
- Outline each object first and then fill them in.
- When you are finished with the design, place the other piece of plastic on top and seal the edges of the place mat.
- If you have your students write a verse of thanksgiving from the Bible, have them insert it before adding the top piece of plastic.
- Trim edges with pinking shears.
- If your students are young, you may want them to color the pattern and not do yarn.



