

THANKFUL FOR AND THANKFUL TO

(Deuteronomy 8:7-18)

Intro: Today we conclude our month-long stewardship emphasis.
-With our Thanks for Giving lunch.

In recent weeks I have talked about:

- Giving From and Giving To.
- Freedom From and Freedom For.
- Looking Back and Looking Forward.

Today I'd like to talk about:

- Thankful For and Thankful To.

In your bulletin you have an insert with two columns.

- 10 Things For Which You Are Most Thankful.
- 10 Things You Would Most Like To Have.
 - #Take a few moments to fill those out.
 - *No right or wrong answers.
 - *You don't need to share.
 - *This is for your personal reflection.

Which would have the most impact on your life?

- Losing the things for which you are most thankful.
- Gaining those things you would most like to have.

I. We Don't Like To Choose.

A. We Like To Have It All.

1. Rather than either/or.
 - a. We prefer both/and.
 - b. Keep what we have.
 - Add to it.
2. There is a danger.
 - a. Like the Israelites faced.
 - Deuteronomy 8:7-18.
 - b. Israelites.
 - Camped at the foot of Mount Sinai.
 - Having just received the Ten Commandments.
 - #From God.
 - #Through Moses.

-Deuteronomy 5.

#Second place where the Ten Commandments are recorded.

*Exodus 20 is the first.

#In Greek.

*Deutero.

+Means second.

*Nomos.

+Means law.

c. The Israelites are given a preview of coming attractions.

-What life will be like in the Promised Land.

#Good land.

*Flowing streams.

*Wheat and barley.

*Grapes and figs and pomegranates.

*Olive trees and honey.

*Iron and copper.

*All the food they could want.

#Blessed with:

*Fine houses.

*Herds and flocks.

*Silver and gold.

d. But there is a danger.

-They might start to believe.

#They have accumulated all of these things.

*Through their own:

+Power.

+Might.

*Through their own:

+Ingenuity.

+Hard work.

-They might very well.

#Know what they are thankful for.

#Forget whom they are thankful to.

B. So Which Would Have A Greater Impact On Your Life?

1. If you had to make a choice.

a. Losing those things for which you are most thankful.

b. Gaining those things you would most like to have.

2. For me (for most?) the first option would be most difficult.

a. Things I don't have.

-I've already learned to live without.

b. But downsizing is never easy.

-Deciding:

#What to keep.

#What to get rid of.

3. For my dad.
 - a. Most difficult transition.
 - Deciding to sell his house.
 - #3-bedroom house.
 - #Full basement.
 - #Over-size garage.
 - Move into a one-bedroom apartment.
 - #There was so much.
 - *To go through.
 - *To get rid of.
 - Moving.
 - #From a town which had been home for 44 years.
 - *Where:
 - +He knew most everyone.
 - +Most everyone knew him.
 - #To a new place 160 miles away.
 - *Where he knew my sister.
 - b. More difficult than moving.
 - From his apartment into an assisted living unit.
 - #At least in terms of dealing with his belongings.
 - *There wasn't that much stuff left to dispose of.
 - But not so easy losing:
 - #Health.
 - #Independence.
 - #Life.
4. It is never easy letting go of our blessings.
 - a. Material things.
 - b. Life itself.

II. What Would Life Be Like For You Tomorrow If The Only Things You Had Were The Ones For Which You Thanked God Today?

- A. Would You Have?
 1. Family.
 - a. Friends.
 2. House.
 - a. Heating.
 - b. Cooling.
 - c. Refrigerator.
 - d. Washer and dryer.
 - e. Toilet.
 - f. Shower.
 - g. Bed.

3. Clothes.
 - a. For all seasons.
 - b. Clean sheets.
4. Food.
 - a. Fruits.
 - b. Vegetables.
 - c. Chocolate.
5. Car.
6. Job.
7. Public utilities.
8. Health.
9. Life.
10. Church.
 - a. Building.
 - b. Fellow believers.
 - c. Music.
 - d. Secretary.
 - e. Pastor.
11. God.
12. Savior.

B. Fortunately, God Doesn't Work That Way.

1. God gives us so many blessings.
 - a. Not because we have been thankful.
 - b. But so that we can be thankful.
 - God is the actor.
 - We are the reactors.
2. Gospel lesson for today (Matthew 25:14-30).
 - a. Master gave talents to his slaves.
 - Not because they had been faithful stewards.
 - But so that they could be faithful stewards.
 - b. Talent was a lot of money.
 - 15-20 years' worth of income.
 - #For a common laborer.
 - 5 talents.
 - #75-100 years' worth of income.
 - 2 talents.
 - #30-40 years' worth of income.
 - 1 talent.
 - #15-20 years' worth of income.

- c. Given to slaves.
 - By the master.
 - #Act of:
 - *Grace.
 - *Generosity.
 - *Trust.
- 3. That's how God is with us.
 - a. God gives to us.
 - Not because we have always been:
 - #Thankful.
 - #Faithful.
 - #Good stewards.
 - But so that we can be:
 - #Thankful.
 - #Faithful.
 - #Good stewards.
 - *God is the actor.
 - *We are the reactors.
 - b. God gives us:
 - Shoes and clothing.
 - Food and drink.
 - House and farm.
 - #You might substitute car.
 - Spouse and children.
 - Fields, livestock, and all property.
 - #You might substitute.
 - *Computer.
 - *Internet
 - *Cell phones.
 - *Flat screen TVs.
 - All necessities for this body and life.
 - #Luther's *Small Catechism*.
 - c. God gives us:
 - Water and Word.
 - Bread and wine.
 - d. God gives us:
 - Jesus.
 - Savior.
 - #Not because we have been:
 - *Thankful.
 - *Loving.
 - *Faithful.
 - *Forgiving.

#But so that we can be:

- *Thankful.
- *Loving.
- *Faithful.
- *Forgiving.

Concl: On this day.

- When we conclude our stewardship focus.
 - #With our Thanks for Giving lunch.
- When I want to say "thank you" to you.
 - #For giving your:
 - *Time.
 - *Talent.
 - +Even though the Stewardship Committee told me:
 - =Just to talk about money.
 - *Treasure.
 - #Something we maybe don't do enough of.
- It is we, together, who have opportunity to say:
 - #To our Lord and Master.
 - *Thanks for Giving.