

Sermon Series: THANKFUL #2 of 4  
@RoswellStreetBC – Marietta, Ga.  
November 14, 2021 – 10: 30 A.M.  
Annual Thanksgiving Lunch – Fellowship Center



**“Thankfulness Flows From Mindfulness”**

Joshua 4: 1 – 7, 24

## INTRODUCTION:

(Worship in the Fellowship Center – worshippers will be seated around tables :

- There will be ‘landscaping rocks’ (smooth) at each table with sharpies
- Place also Name Tags – encourage everyone at ‘Welcome Time’ to write your name & the reference favorite Bible verse – Once you write it down, share with your table why that verse is special to you.
- Place THANKSGIVING TREES with Sticky Notes visible for the Congregation to see – place sticky notes for any to ‘add’ to the display / during ‘Welcome Time’ have Chris to Highlight a few of the notes. )

**VIDEO** – Sermon Bumper for the Series –

**How do we LOVE THE LORD with all of our hearts?**

- By Sincerely Showing up in His Presence with Grateful hearts
- Where does this begin? – It begins with Being Mindful of all His many blessings.

- This why Jesus commanded us in the implementing the Lord's Supper – *"Do This in Remembrance of Me"*
- Why did Jesus command us to 'Remember Him?' – because we are so often to forget – experiencing times of *'spiritual amnesia'*

**Today's Sermon** – *"Thankfulness Begins with Mindfulness"*

**Open Your Bibles & hearts to the Book of Joshua chapter 4 and let's understand Why you have rocks on your Tables –**

- This morning I so prayerfully desire to fulfill my calling as your pastor that through the Ministry of the Word to *"Equip you for the works of ministry"* (Eph. 4: 12)
- To Equip, Entrust & Empower You to become *'Grateful saints'* –
- IMAGINE a World of Disciples of Jesus *who Love God with thankful hearts & express appreciation for one another...*
  - This may cause a lost world to be amazed that *these people "have been with Jesus!"*
  - This may result in deepened love in *marriage, family & work relationships.*

**Illus.** – Several years ago *our family went on a mission trip together to San Jaun, Guatemala to serve a week in a Malnutrition Center* – serving starving children. Our hearts were moved with great compassion for the needs of these children and families.

*Following our trip, we stopped by a Chick-fil-la and our daughters as teens expressed great appreciation – "Dad, Thanks for buying us these sandwiches!"* Great blessing filled my heart to hear their expressions of appreciation as their father & *if my heart is so blessed by their appreciation, how much more does our heavenly Father's heart feel blessed!*

**IMAG** – (have congregation to remained seated to see the screens)

**Joshua 4:1–7, 24**

*After the entire nation had finished crossing the Jordan, the Lord spoke to Joshua: <sup>2</sup>"Choose twelve men from the people, one man for each tribe, <sup>3</sup>and command them: Take twelve stones from this place in the middle of the Jordan*

*where the priests are standing, carry them with you, and set them down at the place where you spend the night.”*

*<sup>4</sup> So Joshua summoned the twelve men he had selected from the Israelites, one man for each tribe, <sup>5</sup> and said to them, “Go across to the ark of the Lord your God in the middle of the Jordan. Each of you lift a stone onto his shoulder, one for each of the Israelite tribes, <sup>6</sup> so that this will be a sign among you. In the future, when your children ask you, ‘What do these stones mean to you?’ <sup>7</sup> you should tell them, ‘The water of the Jordan was cut off in front of the ark of the Lord’s covenant. When it crossed the Jordan, the Jordan’s water was cut off.’ Therefore these stones will always be a memorial for the Israelites.”*

*<sup>24</sup> This is so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the Lord’s hand is strong, and so that you may always fear the Lord your God.”*

PRAYER -

BACKGROUND –

- This is a Significant Time in the Life of the Nation of Israel – God wanted them to be MINDFUL OF HIS MERCY...
- **Recall** the Lord’s faithful Covenant :
  - *To Adam*
  - *To Noah*
  - *To Abraham, Isaac, Jacob* – to the 12 sons of Jacob (Israel)
  - *To Moses* – leading the people out of 430 years of slavery in Egypt
    - Opening the Red Sea – as they crossed over on dry ground, while the Egyptian army was drowned in the sea
    - Providing Pillar, Manna, quail, water
    - But the People acted in unbelief, resulting in 40 years of wandering in the wilderness...
  - *To Joshua* – now Moses is dead & the promised land is before God’s People & God calls Joshua to lead the people across the Jordan river to conquer the land before them.
    - 1.5 million Israelites
    - The Jordan river was at flood stage – 3: 10 -“By this you will know....” <sup>193</sup> “This” refers to the miraculous sign of the water

---

<sup>193</sup> The verb “know” occurs again with a *paragogic nun* (see on v. 7), referring again to the miracle.

stoppage in v. 13, which is emphasized by the repeated verbs and the vivid imagery there. God's actions here were for a larger purpose than just Israel's crossing the Jordan. It was to demonstrate to Israel that the "living God" was among them.<sup>1</sup>

- Most of the year, the Jordan River was about 100 feet wide and only three to ten feet deep. However, when the Israelites crossed, it was at flood stage, overflowing its banks. Nothing but the mighty hand of God could have parted it and made it safe for his people to cross. And no enemy can overcome God's mighty power.
- The Lord instructed Joshua for the Priests to carry the Ark of the Covenant to the River & the River would mordaciously dry up and the people could cross.
- **Following the Miraculous crossing of the River, God instructs Joshua TO REMEMBER this Mighty Acts by SETTING UP STONES OF REMEMBRANCE.**

#### **Q. – WHY is it to BE MINDFUL of God's Past Acts of Mercy?**

***Reflecting often on how God has led you in the past provides insight and faith for your future.***

- Imagine building a collection of key remembrances from your life that you might write on a Stone of Remembrance, or in some other way provide focused attention on some of your life's high points.
- As you reflect on your life celebrations, what things would you write down on **YOUR STONE OF REMEMBRANCE?**
- Sharing these remembrances can stir our hearts with gratitude, prompting a more grateful attitude and added care for others.

**So Let's Take one of the Stones that are on Your Table & use it as a SIGNIFICANT REMINDER of How God has let you in the past to provide insight for the future with thankful hearts:**

---

<sup>1</sup> Howard, D. M., Jr. (1998). Joshua (Vol. 5, p. 125). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

**NOTE – Vs. 7** – *“these stones will always be a MEMORIAL for the Israelites”* - **Memorial**. Something which keeps remembrance vivid. The ideas represented by the words “remember,” “remembrance,”<sup>2</sup>

# 1. - Let’s Remember the Significance of **THE LORD’S CHURCH** with Thankful Hearts.

**Truth:** For every believer, the local gathering of disciples as a church plays a significant part of spiritual growth & development

**IMAG** - **Ephesians 3:21** – *“to God be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”*

**Psalm 115: 1** – *“Not to us, Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory because of your faithful love, because of your truth.”*

**Let’s Give God glory in the church by Remembering with grateful hearts His Significant Blessings –**

**There are Many Blessings you can give God grateful praise for His Church**

- *Call to mind one of the greatest blessings for this faith family...*
- You may call to mind –

**IMAG** – (If possible, display image of white landscape stone in background (blurred) with the following)

---

<sup>2</sup> Elwell, W. A., & Beitzel, B. J. (1988). [Memorial](#). In *Baker encyclopedia of the Bible* (Vol. 2, p. 1434). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

**Pause & write on your Stone of Remembrance:**

**“Church is special because.... “**

- *I am accepted... experience community...*
- *I came to believe in Jesus... was baptized....*
- *I met friends...*
- *I was married... dedicated children...*
- *I am growing spiritually...*
- *I experience God’s Presence with others...*
- *I am being disciplined as a follower...*

- On the Stone of Remembrance, Write down one Blessing You are most grateful for Your Church family – /
- Something Significant You recall of God’s goodness in the Church family –
- Important – to remember for *we are motivated not of duty or obligation but gratitude...to worship & serve in the church.*

**AUDIO** – background music – 1 minute countdown

**Challenge** – Show to the Persons at your Table & discuss over lunch today.

**Challenge** – display this STONE prominently on your Thanksgiving table / mantle and discuss with family this holiday.

**Transition: Let’s Keep Building Grateful Memories on our Stones of Remembrance:**

- *Let’s Remember the Significance of Lord’s Church with Grateful Hearts.*
- And let’s also...

## **2.- Let’s Remember the Significance of the LORD’S WORKS with Thankful Hearts.**

**IMAG** - Psalm 77:11 *“I will remember the works of the Lord”*

- The ‘*works of the Lord*’ are works God has done personally – on behalf of David.
- Psalm 77:2 – *“I sought the Lord in my day of trouble.*

*My hands were continually lifted up  
all night long; I refused to be comforted.”*

**LET'S REMEMBER THE WORKS OF THE LORD ; REFLECT ON WHAT HE HAS DONE  
FOR YOU personally -**

**How does it make you feel to consider what God has done for you?**

**Is your heart moved with that He:**

- *Has gone first to meet your need?*
- *Noticed your need?*
- *Took action because of His love for you?*
- *Was so moved with compassion that He died for you?*
- *Wants so deeply to relate to you?*

***He moved first!***

**AUDIO** – for 1 minute as congregation writes on stones

***Let's Recall One of the Many Things that the Lord has done personally for you:***

**IMAG** - Display

Pause and write down on your Stone of Remembrance –

**“God especially came through for me when....”**

- *Meeting a need spiritually, relationally, financially, physically, vocationally...*
- *Maybe write a date, or image, or Bible verse ...*

**I remember when God especially came through for me when \_\_\_\_\_**

*God, You are great because You take initiative to give to us. You are great because You didn't wait until I noticed You; You gave first. I am amazed because You gave up Your Son so that I could relate with You. Holy Spirit, continue to deepen my intimate walk with Jesus.*

**Transition:** Let's Keep Building Grateful Memories on our Stones of Remembrance:

- Let's Remember the Significance of LORD'S CHURCH with Grateful Hearts.
- Let's Remember the Significance of the LORD'S WORK with Grateful Hearts.
- And let's also...

### 3. – Let's Remember the Significance of GOD'S GIFTING with Thankful Hearts.

God gives good gifts.

**IMAG** - 1 Thessalonians 5:18 (CSB)

*"give thanks in everything; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."*

**Illus.** - **Think back to all the Christmas and birthday celebrations of your past.**

- What gifts stand out as your favorite?
- Just as your family and friends have given you special gifts over the years, God has given you amazing gifts and talents.
- He desires for you to unwrap them... just as your family & friends who gave you special presents in the past.

#### **a) GOD HAS FREELY GIVEN YOU UNIQUE TALENTS.**

- CONSIDER - **Your unique mixture of gifts and talents is just one of the ways in which God has demonstrated His ingenuity, creativity, and generosity.**
- Every aspect of your unique identity is a gift from God, & has the potential to help others *see God, experience His love, and respond to Him.*
- look for ways that might happen!

*God has given you certain **abilities, talents, and passions** that are related to your physical or mental abilities, such as **athletic skill, artistic ability, academic excellence, or creative problem-solving.***

**IMAG** -

**Think for a moment about some of the physical and/or mental gifts God has given you.**

*(For example: You easily understand mechanical concepts, have some success in athletics, learn Spanish vocabulary quickly, etc.)*

- **I'm grateful that God has given me the ability to \_\_\_\_\_.**
- **I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when I think about how my ability to \_\_\_\_\_ could help others see God.**

### **b) GOD HAS FREELY GIVEN YOU SPIRITUAL GIFTS.**

- God also bestows upon us gifts that are spiritual in nature.
- Through the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives, God gives us certain spiritual gifts that reflect His character and His presence in our lives.

**IMAG -**

Review these TEXTS, asking for discernment:

Romans 12:6–8; 1 Corinthians 12:2–31.

Has God given you one of these spiritual gifts?

- *Teaching, Exhortation, Giving, Leadership,*
- *Mercy, Compassion, Prophecy*
- *Administration, Discernment, Faith*
- *Helping others, Knowledge and wisdom*
- *Other*

**Remember**, it's not so important that you are immediately and absolutely sure of the spiritual gifts but that you seek to discover and nurture the gifts as God reveals them to you.

**IMAG/ Audio** – Display –

Pause & Write on Your Stone of Remembrance :

**“I'm grateful that God has given me the ability/ gifting to \_\_\_\_\_.”**

# CONCLUSION:

**Just as STONES OF REMEMBRANCE were Significant Reminders for the People of God to remember in Joshua's Day, So they will be a Significant Reminder in our Day –**

- Remembering the *LORD'S CHURCH, LORD'S WORKS, LORD'S GIFTING*
- May this inspire THANKFULNESS in our hearts... compel our hearts with Jesus' love.. to become grateful disciples empowered by the Holy Spirit!

## Challenge for Families –

**Begin a JOURNAL OF GRATEFULNESS—An Ongoing Family Project**

*"Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits"* (Psalm 103:2).

### The Search for Blessings

Regularly involve family members in a blessing search as each member names a recent blessing and assumes responsibility for sharing appreciation. Where to "look":

- Loved ones, who you've recently been reminded of in a special way
- Character qualities in family or friends which are encouraging.
- Often overlooked blessings of life, health, provision, creation
- Specific answers to prayer
- Spiritual realities like the Scriptures, salvation, Holy Spirit, etc.

### The Benefits of Gratefulness

Multiplied blessings are ours as we pause to *"...forget not all His benefits" toward us* (Psalm 103:2). Among the numerous benefits of grateful hearts are the following:

- Gratefulness guards us from a critical, negative attitude.
- Gratefulness guards us from a judgmental spirit.
- Gratefulness, when expressed to others, can motivate them to continue in "good deeds."
- Gratefulness, when acknowledged to God, is an important element of worship.

**CHALLENGE** – to “do the Book” – express appreciation. – go to someone around you and verbally express thanks.

“ \_\_\_\_\_, *Thank you for.....* “

Loving the Lord deeply with a thankful heart, prompts you to love deeply your near ones with expressions of thanksgiving.

“Freely You have received, freely give”

Gratitude prompts expressions of appreciation.

. Appreciation can be shared:

- Verbally with simple “thanks.”
- In writing, with a note of appreciation.
- Publicly as testimony is given of our genuine gratitude.

**INVITATION** –

**Romans 2: 4** – *“it is the kindness of God that leads you to repentance”*

God’s Kindness is manifest to you – ‘while’ you are a sinner – Romans 5: 8

- You are a sinner – Romans 3: 23
- You deserve death and hell – Romans 6: 23 a
- You cannot save yourself – Ephesians 2: 9

God’s Kind Calling to you is for your to COME TO JESUS – Acts 3: 19

- Turn from your sin
- Trust wholly in Jesus.

Our Ministry Team will be available for Prayer - / Support/

**INVITATION / RESPONSE SONG...**