

# **“Do We Recognize What God Did for Us?”**

**By Brother Andy Giebler**

**Sunday, November 22<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

We've got a lot to be thankful for, and listening to all the people share this morning, it makes me realize, even more, how much more I have to be thankful for. Hearing other people share, from all the things in their lives, what God's done for them, that just puts me in a whole different frame of mind, to show me, "Hey, there's more to be thankful for." I could share how much of this ministry I'm thankful for. You know, our leadership, and—I've got a message to preach, or I'd tell you how thankful I am for Parrish. I might be awhile, so... I'm thankful to God that God put us together, because it gets to the point where somebody will say something like this, and you just say, "No, I don't believe all that mess." God has put us together in a way that—let's just get this out of the way—maybe not the way we think it should be, sometimes, but we've got to look at the way things do get done, you would think we have a whole—you would think that we talk to each other 24-7, when, the reality is, both of us hold down 40+ hour-a-week jobs. I'm not tooting my own horn, here, because I know we all do it. But, the things that get accomplished, or, the things that—with minimal communication—that God works out is awesome. The things that I've heard shared this morning are really, you know, I listened to Rob, and you talked about His mercy endures forever. The places where God put you, the things that God did in your life, when, in your flesh, you look at that and say, "I wasn't qualified for that. I wasn't the man for that job." God qualifies; God gives you what you need to do what you need to do. That's what faith is.

There's no doubt; if God put something on your mind—and I'm going to touch on a few more, because there's a few of you that shared some things that God spoke to your heart. Never discount what God speaks to your heart. Sometimes we want to blow it off and say, "I can't do that." If God spoke it to your heart, okay, you might have to prove it out, but, listen to that voice. Nancy, you shared how, just that simple song, Amazing Grace, and the simpleness of somebody sharing, you weren't ready for that; that's why you didn't hear it. Sometimes we sit back and think, you know, "I can't do this; I'm not ready for this." Well, sometimes we don't have what we need because we're not ready for it. So, if God puts something on your heart that you know you're not ready for, once again, God put it there. He may see what you need later on. It's a matter of being faithful. The Scripture says, "Commit your works unto the Lord, and your thoughts shall be established." (Proverbs 16:3) God's going to bring to pass what He wants.

Ed, over here, you shared that you're thankful for problems. It's true, sometimes we have these problems just so God can reveal his glory. You know, "Who sinned, that this man needed a healing?" "Neither him, nor his parents, but that the name of God would be glorified." (John 9) I had to scribble these things down, quick, because there was a lot going on this morning, but I didn't want to let any of these things pass, here.

Maria shared about praying, "Let me just take his place," because that's the heart of a mother, the heart of a parent. God spoke to your heart, and said, "That's what I did for you." That's a lesson that we all can learn from. You know? Sometimes, it's the times when something crazy's going on that God is going to speak something to your heart, what you need. It may not have been exactly those words, but, she's in a place where her son doesn't want to get stitches. She doesn't want to watch him get stitches. So, that's the craziest thing, but, all of the sudden, that's when God chose to speak to her heart. You've got to be willing to listen.

And we're talking about being thankful. And these are all things we've got to be thankful for. If you ever get a chance, you get ahold of a concordance, and look up the word, 'Thankfulness.' In the instances when I've looked them up, in the Old Testament, it's not just a matter of—Sonia, can you hand me that bottle of water? Thank you. That's not the thankfulness it's talking about. I'm thankful when

somebody does something for me, but, if you look up the definition of that word, it's praise, to worship. A bottle of water could be a good thing, someone doing something nice for you, but we're looking at a thankfulness that's so far beyond anything that anyone in this room, anything that I could ever do to warrant your thankfulness. We're talking about salvation; we're talking about God making a way. That's thankfulness. That's where that comes from. It's worship. It even talks about a choir, in one of the definitions. It's not just saying thank you. It's a worship; it's a praise. You look at, in, where the priests did their sacrifices, and they were making sacrifices for the sins of the people, with thankfulness.

Sometimes we get caught up in, when we think of thankfulness, what should we be thankful for? We paint a picture, and we watch the passion of the Christ, and it's a picture of pain. And, we watch this image, this picture of a man being beaten, and beaten again, to where most people would have died. He had to labor, and bear His own instrument of death on His back, to a place where he was going to die. He hung up on a tree; the image, the nails, and everything, how He was hung there. And those are all things that we need to know. Things that are good for us, but those also drive something in our humanness, our emotions, but, the thing that I'm thankful for is the fact that, and I believe Daniel—a couple of you shared—because that's where God made a way. That's where God made a way for us.

So, before I get too deep into this, question: Do we recognize what God did for us? In that moment, Maria, you recognized that God spoke to you. You recognized something that God did for you. There's many things in life—we ask God for things, the question is, do we see it? Do we realize the way God made for us?

It's not Christmas yet, but I'm going to read a Scripture. You may think it's Christmas, but it's not. We haven't killed the turkey yet. We'll do that later, but it's still Thanksgiving.

**Matthew 2:1-3** *Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.*

So, here we've got these guys from the East, these wise men, at the palace. How did they know about this star? Prophecy. They knew it; they read it; they studied it; they looked and waited for that day. They were going after that. They wanted to see this promise; they wanted to see this Jesus; they wanted to see this child. All right, it says, Herod heard these things, and he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. Well, why would he be troubled? Because he knew about this, too. These guys came in, and said this to him, and, if he'd never heard that before, "You guys are nuts. Get out of here." No, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

**Matthew 2:4-5** *And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet,*

So they knew. What were they doing with it? They weren't looking for it. They were reminded of it when the wise men got there. They weren't looking for it, and they were in the same area. But, yet, they weren't looking for it. And that's the question. A lot of what we shred today was the testimonies, and I'm not done yet, but that's the question, "Am I looking for it?" In the testimonies, we heard the statement, God made a way for us. So, the simplicity of, these wise men came, they were looking for something. They had a reason to. But, Herod, all his wise men, his scribes, had the same knowledge. It was there; they went and found this King.

John, chapter one:

**John 1:1-4** *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men.*

I'll skip down to verse fourteen.

**John 1:14** *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*

So, here we have something. This is the most popular book, ever. We've all got one. We've got it on our phones, we've got it on our computers, we've got it on our tablets. Just as the Chief Priests, and all the prophets, and all those people that were around there, and had that, and weren't looking for Him. And, my thought is, how many of us have this (the Bible) and don't look for it? And I can put that on me. I could be in church; church doesn't save you. Church doesn't make me any more holy. Church doesn't draw you closer to God; it's the fact that you're here, getting fellowship with his people. Because you could sit here all day long and not get a thing out of it. And what I cue off of in this is, "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." But the Word. What is the Word? It's how God showed Himself to us. It was a manifestation. Jesus was only on this Earth, in the flesh, for a short amount of time. But, the Word, it's a manifestation. It's how He shows Himself. Now, today, we don't have a flesh and blood Jesus here.

**John 14:16-18** *And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.*

The Bible talks about receiving the Gift of the Holy Ghost, talking about the Spirit of God. We have this Word (holding up a Bible, and I'm not discounting it, but, what I'm saying is that this, by itself, only goes so far. Seeking that word, seeking that God; letting Him be revealed in your life. Because, you look about the New Testament, as the letters to the churches are written, what did they have? They didn't have the New Testament at the time; they *were* the New Testament. They were living it. They didn't have half this book to go read that we have, and they probably didn't have all the prophecies as complete as we have. But they were still who we read about. So, I guess what I—I'm thankful to hear the testimonies that were shared today, and I want to encourage that—I know that we're coming into the holiday season, and we've got to rejoice, be joyful, be festive. I know this isn't real joyful and festive, but, when you stop and look at it, it can be. It should be, because, worship, praise, thankfulness, that's, that's—when I say merry Christmas, or you say Merry Christmas, or you hear it, is it just the season of the holiday; are we caught up in the politics of it? "Oh, I've got to say, 'Merry Christmas,' because that's my politically correct..." You know? "Because I've got to stand up for this." You know. God doesn't need you to defend Him. But I need to stand up just the same. I need to be that example. I shouldn't say Merry Christmas just because, "I know they don't want to hear it, so I'm going to say it just the same." Somebody wrote me a Facebook post yesterday, and it said, "Oh, the name Jesus offends you, right? Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus." But, is that why we're doing it? It's funny, it's great, and I love it, you know, I feel that way. Sometimes, when I know somebody doesn't want to hear it, I'm going to say it just as much. But, in the season that we're coming into, we've got a lot to be thankful for. Just as we heard these testimonies today, we have a life to live in front of people. And we have blessings that, as we shared, if the books could contain them—talking about what Jesus did—that's the blessings that God gives us, you know? And that's what people need. If I'm saying my Merry Christmas, that's one thing, but, am I seeing

the—through my thankfulness—am I seeing the hurting of others? Am I seeing—because, especially this time of year—people are putting on a brave, happy face, because that’s what we do? That’s what we do at Christmas. That’s what we do at our family gatherings. That’s what we do, sometimes, when we get together with friends; we put on that face, because that’s what we’re supposed to do. And, I’m way out of my notes right now; I’m not even close. But, that’s what’s on my heart. This is that time of year that we should take advantage of. We should take advantage of showing how thankful we are, and not for a show. Not that our works would be made known, but that God would be glorified. They’re going to see it. But, if that Word that’s made manifest, in the flesh, and was taken up again, and said, “I will not leave you comfortless,” if that’s what dwells in us, that’s what people need to see this time of year.

I’m kind of the— you know, Sonia says, “It’s time to get out the Christmas lights,” my next things to say is, “Bah, humbug.” I don’t like decorating. That’s just me. But I do, and, once I get into it, I enjoy it. Again, it’s more than that. It’s doing what you out of your heart for God, so that people see the Light that’s in your life.

So, these things that we’re thankful for, do we always recognize it? Sometimes it’s a matter of asking something from God. And, I know we covered this over the last couple of months, and I, we’re not going to make it. Sometimes we don’t get what we want or what we need, because we’re not asking for it. And, sometimes, we’re comfortable, and don’t think we need anything else. Sometimes, we need to put ourselves before God, before God can show us what we need to see happen. Sometimes, on our own, we don’t know. In my mind, I can think of a lot of things I could ask God for. But, then I think, “Oh, you know what? I’m okay without that. I’m okay without this. I’m okay.” And then I don’t diligently seek after the things, because, sometimes we can be comfortable in life. Satan will allow us to have a comfortable enough life that we believe we don’t need to seek Him. At least we don’t think so. But, yet, we have to break out of that, because comfort is right where we like—it’s a zone we like to stay in. But that’s the point where—you listen to anyone that’s in the military, that’s in a dangerous situation, that’s the worst place to be is comfortable. That’s when the enemy comes in unaware, and he does things that you’re not ready for. Comfortable is not always the best place to be. Sometimes we have to pull ourselves out of our comfort zone. Sometimes we don’t ask for those things that we know we need, spiritually, because we know it’s going to take us out of our comfort zone. Sometimes we don’t ask God for it, because we know we might get it, and we might have to do something with it. So, be careful what you ask for. Sometimes we can ask things of God that God doesn’t necessarily want for us. But, yet, God just might give it to us.

So, how do we know if we’re asking for the right things?

**Matthew 6:33** *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

You know, we quote just the scriptures that say, ask, and you’re going to receive, knock, and the door will be opened, seek, and you’ll find, (Matthew 7:7), well, you’ve got to put in the context of Matthew 6:33: seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all of these things shall be added unto you. Or, lay up your treasures in Heaven (Matthew 6:20). When you’re seeking God, God gives you what you need. God shows you what you need. Sometimes it still takes little diligence; sometimes He’ll just lay it right on your doorstep. Sometimes you’ve still got to go get it. Jacob wrestled an angel, and it cost him, physically, and yet, Jacob sought God, and he wrestled to the point where, you know, the man he wrestled, the angel, said, “Let me go,” and he said, “Not unless you bless me.” And, if you read, he (the angel) reached around and touched him (Jacob) in the hollow of his thigh, and he had a different walk from then on. It cost him physically, too. But, yet, throughout history, they remembered that, and that was something special, because he halted on it. That’s something they remembered throughout their customs. But God gave him something he got that blessing.

So, that answers the question, “When do we stop?” You don’t stop until God either says, “No,” or he gives it to you. Paul asked three times, but God said, “My grace is sufficient for you.” (2 Corinthians 12:7-9) Gideon put out what we call the fleece test. And that’s a scary one. You put something before God that you know only God can make this happen to prove this is His will. That’s the one—are you ready for it? Because, at that point, you’ve put it to God, “God, make it in no uncertain terms that this is what You want for me.” That’s where I’ve got to say, “If I do that, that’s scary, because I need to be ready for that.” God may answer one way or the other. It may be something that I really want, and I don’t want to give up, or it may be something that I need to go do, and God’s going to hold me to it, when he answers. That’s a scary thing, sometimes, but it’s also a needful thing.

But God is faithful to give. In Matthew seven, where it says if you ask, you receive, it also compares us: Speaking to people, Jesus said, “You parents, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more so the Father?” (Matthew 7:9-11) How much more so will God give you what you ask for? Sometimes, our kids, you know, “Can I have it? Can I have it? Can I have it? Can I have it? Huh? I want it. Can I have it? Can I have it? Can I have it? Can I have it?” Yeah, it’s annoying, and it’s what they do. They keep bugging us until they either get what they want, or we, in no uncertain terms, tell them no. I think that’s Bible, about how we go to talk to God. We’re a little bit more intelligent—at least, we should be—than our children in our relationship with God, than they are with us, in our maturity. But, sometimes, in our spiritual immaturity, that’s the way we come to God, but, you know what? God rewards us. God rewards us, anyway. So, if we, being flesh-and-blood, corruptible, failed human beings, who have sinned, and still know how to give good gifts to our children. Yet, our Father, he hears us, and answers us.

So, I’m really driving at this question: Do we recognize when God wants to bless us? Do we recognize when we ask God for something, and—Parrish shared that, an example of someone bought him some kind of herbal supplement—he was sick; he wasn’t feeling good—and he took it, and he forgot all about the sickness and he supplement, and the guy that gave it to him, because it just went away. It was just gone! Sometimes God delivers us, and we don’t remember it. Jesse talked about the lepers; one came back (Luke 17:12-19). Do we remember what God did for us, and thank Him, and worship Him, and praise Him? Not just a, “Thanks, God,” no. The true, as that word is talking about, in its language, worship, thank God for what He did for us. Because that one came back, he came back to thank and worship the Master, the Savior, the One who healed him from a death sentence, from something that kept him outside of the camp as an outcast. You know, for the duration of what was left of his life, because he had this leprosy, he was an outcast. He was delivered from that. As many of the testimonies that were shared today, and as we read and study, the blessing, the gift that was given for us, and I’m going back to that.

On that day that Jesus was crucified, when he said, “**It is finished**,” that Word that was made flesh, now we have open access to that. It says that the veil of the Temple was rent. The veil, that only the priest, the priest whose duty was to go behind that veil, to go before God, was rent. From the day that Jesus said, “**It is finished**.” For, as it said in First Peter, we are referred to as a royal priesthood, a peculiar people, that we should show forth the praises—a peculiar people, set aside for a certain purpose, a royal priesthood (1 Peter 2:9). Now we have access to something that only the priests did; only the priests could come before God. And that’s something that we have to take advantage of. As in that instance, the priesthood, to come before God, because sometimes our thanks is just as simple as that thank you for the bottle of water. There’s a time for that, but there’s a time to get before the throne. A time to get in that prayer closet. A time to get before God and say, “God, I praise and I worship You.” And there’s times just to stand aloud, I don’t care who’s around, “God, I thank You. God, I worship You. God, I praise You.” And that’s the beauty of having a worship service here this morning: We can do that, because we understand that. You can’t stand on the street corner and do that—well, you can, but they might arrest you for it. But we can do that, here. This is our time. Our time to worship God. This is our time in the altar. We call it a sanctuary for a reason. It’s our place where we have a praise and worship time, sure, it has to be in

decency and in order, but, if it's time for your breakthrough, that's your time to worship your God. Because, it's not that you can't do it on your own, but, sometimes having your brothers and sisters around you, having people of one mind, one heart, one accord I that time of worship, that's your time to thank God. Because we're with you, you know? If you see someone else getting a breakthrough, pray for them. If you see someone else struggling with something, pray for them. That's our time; our time of worship.

I didn't have a lot, because I knew that the Scriptures, and the things that we shared would be the message this morning, the things that were shared. And I want to encourage the people that were up here this morning to share their testimonies. Whatever people are behind this microphone, besides me or Parrish, or Jesse, or Chris, or whoever else is giving the message. We don't call them up here just for filler. Parrish took the time to talk to each one of these individuals who were sharing today. We know that these are people that have a testimony to share. And, sometimes—and this may be a little bit of housekeeping, but I don't want anyone to miss a blessing. Sometimes that's the time when I'll be, "I wish I could sit down and tune that out, but, oh, yeah, I've got to get back into the worship service." That's not the time to tune that out, because that's just as important as anything else that's being shared that day.

One final Scripture:

**Hebrews 2:1-3** *Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;*

My encouragement is that, just as the Wise Men came to find Jesus, they had the prophecy, we have the Word, as well. Talking about John chapter one: And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld Him. And that Word is in our hearts. We have it. So, as we go about our Thanksgiving and Christmastime, I encourage take now to read and study. Study the Christmas story. Read the Word. Read the whole thing, because, if you're going to rely on what you see on the TV commercials and the Hallmark cards, and the little scriptures you get here and there, and Holiday specials. They may tell a nice story, but they don't tell the whole thing; they don't tell it all. They don't tell that this Jesus was the One who was going to come and die on a cross, Who was going to die to be that sacrifice, the sacrifice that the priests offered in the Temple, for now. They could only cover sin so far. They had to keep burning that sacrifice over and over again. This is that One sacrifice that we have knowledge of. And, I'm sure that those Wise Men came to see this child, they knew the end of that prophecy. They knew what was going to happen to that child. And, as we read, we know what's happened. We know the prophecies; we know that our life is only as a vapor (James 4:14). Our life is only as a mist; it's here, and then it's gone. And then eternity. Eternity's going to be a whole lot longer than anything we can imagine in this life. So, that's why I put in that last Scripture: "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." Amen.