

## Bible Study 10

Topic: **Giving Thanks to God for God's Bounty**

### Transitioning from the Sermon

#### A. The Main Points of the Sermon

1. Affirmatively acknowledge the source of our bounty
2. Wisely appropriate the provision of this bounty
3. Faithfully ascribe all honour to the Provider of this bounty

#### B. Conclusions of the Sermon

Thanksgiving is an act of acknowledgement and confession of the goodness of God. It is a public proclamation and testimony of what God has done and will do. When we give thanks to God, we are praising God in commendation of God's nature. In all this, we ascribe honour to God who is our Provider, our Source. So let us acknowledge the source of our bounty and stoutly affirm that it is God. Let us wisely appropriate this bounty and ensure that all members of our communities are supplied with what they need. Finally, let us ascribe the honour to God in fervent thanksgiving for all of God's bountiful goodness to us.

### Scripture Readings

Deuteronomy 28:12 (NKJV)

<sup>2</sup> The LORD will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow.

Psalms 145:16 & 19 (NKJV)

<sup>16</sup> You open Your hand  
And satisfy the desire of every living thing.

<sup>19</sup> He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him;  
He also will hear their cry and save them.

Proverbs 10:3 (NKJV)

The LORD will not allow the righteous soul to famish,  
But He casts away the desire of the wicked.

## Learning Objectives

The congregation will be able to:

1. Discuss God as provider of food
2. Describe the physical, mental and spiritual benefits of giving thanks to God
3. List foods that grow well in Jamaica
4. Describe measures that facilitate lasting behavior change

## Material Needed

1. Laptop
2. PowerPoint Presentation (provided)
3. Projector and Screen
4. Zoom account or other online platform such as Microsoft Teams if studies are conducted online

## Introduction

One of the fundamental understandings that we have as Christians regarding creation is that it is designed and intended for our flourishing. God provided for us, through the creation, all that we need for our sustenance and thriving. God has indeed provided bountifully for human beings; there is enough for all of us. According to the website FoodFirst,

For the past two decades, the rate of global food production has increased faster than the rate of global population growth. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (2009a, 2009b) the world produces more than 1 1/2 times enough food to feed everyone on the planet. That's already enough to feed 10 billion people, the world's 2050 projected population peak.<sup>1</sup>

Sadly, the present world situation shows unacceptable inequities which stem from poverty and inequality. Our world needs urgent re-ordering to create greater balance in the distribution of food. In this lesson, we will explore some ways by which we acknowledge and express gratitude to God for all the provisions which God has made. We will explore acknowledgement and gratitude in our spirituality, our stewardship and our solidarity.

## Understanding the texts

We often hear it said, that we must have “an attitude of gratitude.” This is a short but beautiful statement of a big issue. Gratitude is too often in short supply. The texts tell us this simple but profound truth, God provides for us. Our main text (Ex. 28:12) is one such testimonial of God's bountiful provision and gracious care. The people of God were now poised on the verge of receiving

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<sup>1</sup><https://foodfirst.org/publication/we-already-grow-enough-food-for-10-billion-people-and-still-cant-end-hunger/>

the possession which had been promised to them. Their leader, Moses, takes the opportunity to remind them of the wonderful demonstrations of care and protection from God and to admonish them to remember their covenantal relationship with God.

In this the last of his sermons, Moses highlighted how the Israelites were expected to live in their relationship with God and how, through God's promises, their lives and livelihood would be facilitated. Moses told the people of the blessing of obedience and faithfulness. He indicates that the life that they would live would be solely based on their connection or disconnection with God. If they remained connected with God, God would open to them God's good treasures and bless their land with bounty.

## Application

Here are three suggested responses to the bountiful provision of God.

1. Affirmatively **acknowledge** the source of our bounty.
  - a. We must be careful that we do not ignore this fact that God is our source, for when we do so, we invite arrogance and conceit which can lead to our undoing and downfall.
  - b. We must be careful not to erroneously ascribe the provision to another being, such as ourselves. We are the beneficiaries of God's provision. It is God who provides.

See Deut. 28:12, Psalm 145:16 & 19, Prov. 10:3

### What can we be thankful for?

Watch the video in this link and use it as a guide to discuss the points below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YeRYAevAljg>

2. Wisely **appropriate** the provision of our bounty
  - a. We must make wise use of the provisions of God that satisfies the needs of all members of the human family.
  - b. We must ensure that hunger is a thing of the past because the production of food worldwide is sufficient to feed the world's population.
  - c. We must make use of the provision of God in a healthy way. We must take and consume only what we need and allow the unhindered enjoyment of other who will appropriate their portions.

See Ex. 16:18, Acts 5:32-37.

In what ways can the suggestions in a to 'c.' above become healthy food practices reflected in a real world setting i.e., how can church practices such as food banks and soup kitchens be used to enable churches to facilitate the provision of health food to community members?

## What can we commit to?

3. Faithfully **ascribe** all honour to the Provider of this bounty
  - a. Thanksgiving is an important element of Christian ritual. The effervescent poetry of the Psalms, the poignant prose of the narratives, depicting of Gods dealings and the powerful and authoritative teaching of the gospels in the words of Jesus show us that thanksgiving is required by God and the duty of believers.
  - b. Thanksgiving to God is an act of faith in God and an affirmation of the confessions which we believe and make about God as Provider and Sustainer. Thanksgiving is an act of acknowledgement and confession of the goodness of God. It is a public commendation of God's character, attributes and activity. It is a public proclamation and testimony of what God has done. When we give thanks to God, we are praising God in commendation of God's nature.

See Psalm 11:4, Ps. 103, Ps. 136:1-3, Matt 26:27, Phil. 4:6

## Videos

Healthy diets from sustainable food systems. What does it mean to have a sustainable food system?  
Examples of healthy recipes for a three course Caribbean meal

## Activities

### Activity 1

- To what extent should menu composition, food preparation techniques and foods sold during church events conform to healthy eating messages?
- What steps do you recommend each church takes to establish a policy on which sets of foods are to be sold or consumed at church events?
- How can this Bible study influence a change in this area of policy?

### Activity 2

Final completion of goal setting worksheet. Consider all the health eating and physical activity tips that were given throughout this Bible study series. Important guides for goal setting:

1. Make sure your goal is really your goal, and not someone else's. Too often we try to please others instead of ourselves.
2. Make sure your goal is practical. You should set a goal that is slightly out of your reach, but not so far that there is no hope of reaching it. You should be at least 70% confident (sure that you can meet the goal) within your time frame.

3. Be specific. Make sure your goal can be measured. Spell out exactly what you will do, how long, and how often you will do it. For example: Over the next two weeks, I will walk 30 minutes over my lunch hour on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.
4. Break your goal into small steps. Limit your goals to one to two weeks; reset the goal as needed, for the following week or two. Success in meeting small goals helps to build confidence for continued success.
5. Write down your goal. Putting your goals down on paper makes them clear and real. This is much more powerful than unclear thoughts in the back of your mind. Put your goal in a place you will see daily. This helps to picture your success.
6. Identify problems. Write down a list of things that may stop you from reaching your goal. These problems may include your own negative thoughts. Use this list to make a plan to remove the problem or find a way to deal with it.
7. Keep your balance. Keep a good attitude with working on your goal. Don't get too upset if you miss a target. This can get in the way of helping you to make your changes.
8. Reward your success. Meeting even a small goal is worth celebration. Don't get overwhelmed with all you still have to do. Small steps are the key to lasting lifestyle change.
9. Remain flexible. From time to time, look at the goal you have set for yourself to see if the goal is still important and right for you. It is okay to change your goal to fit changes in your life situations.

Complete the attached Goal Setting Worksheet adapted from the Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association

## Conclusion

God has provided bountifully in creation and so there is enough to feed the world's human population. We must strive towards better distribution of food and ensure that the inequities which exist are eradicated. The persistence of these inequities is one basis for social decay. In light therefore of God's bounty we must acknowledge God as source, wisely appropriate God's bounty and ascribe honour to God for God's provisions.

## Closing Ritual

### Song

Give Thanks (sung or played)

### Prayer (Psalm 136:1-9, 23-26)

<sup>1</sup>O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,  
for his steadfast love endures forever.

<sup>2</sup>O give thanks to the God of gods,  
for his steadfast love endures forever.

<sup>3</sup> O give thanks to the Lord of lords,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;

<sup>4</sup> who alone does great wonders,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;

<sup>5</sup> who by understanding made the heavens,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;

<sup>6</sup> who spread out the earth on the waters,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;

<sup>7</sup> who made the great lights,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;

<sup>8</sup> the sun to rule over the day,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;

<sup>9</sup> the moon and stars to rule over the night,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;

<sup>23</sup> It is he who remembered us in our low estate,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;

<sup>24</sup> and rescued us from our foes,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;

<sup>25</sup> who gives food to all flesh,  
for his steadfast love endures forever.

<sup>26</sup> O give thanks to the God of heaven,  
for his steadfast love endures forever.

### Let us pray

*Dear Lord, we give **you** thanks:*

*For food, in a world where many experience in hunger,*

*For faith, in a world where many encounter injustice,*

*For community, in a world where many experience loneliness.*

*Lord, we ask your blessing upon us through Christ our Lord. Amen!*