**Reasons for Being Thankful (Psalm 100)**

 We are thankful to God because of His identity and His deeds which flow out of it. Today, given that it is the Sunday preceding Thanksgiving, we greet you and give glory to God for all that He has given to us, be it life, salvation in Jesus, or our families, our stable lives or our church family. We would not have any of these, however, if God had a different nature, personality, or level of goodness. God deals with us humans in a special way, and our joy toward Him bubbles up in a way from our depths when we remember or see His blessings in our lives. Having said that, let us examine for a moment the 100th Psalm which both invites us to worship and reminds us the reasons to be thankful to God. We are thankful to God because of His identity and His deeds which flow out of it. (Let us speak, then, about giving thanks…)

 Let us be thankful because the Lord Yahweh is the True God, and He is forever good. Psalm 100 starts with an invitation to rejoice; it is a good thing for the people of God that they are entering God’s Temple. It is right for them to present themselves before God with singing and exuberance. It is Yahweh who is the True God, and not any other gods, and from that unique identity flows our existence, our status as living beings. God is the one who created us – and He is our only Shepherd – just as in those days, they thought of their false gods and their kings as shepherds. By reason of God’s self-revelation to us, we know that only God is the true Lord. Not only that, but He is also a compassionate, loving God; a faithful God. In other words, it is right to give thanks to Him, and it is even commanded in the Bible. Why? Because God is the ruler over this world and not man nor devil; also, because He is good and faithful toward His creation.

 A preacher going to a country church one Sunday morning, was overtaken by a deacon who remarked, "What a bitterly cold morning, sir. I am sorry the weather is so wintry." "Oh," replied the minister, "I was just thanking God for keeping His Word." The man stared at him. "What do you mean?" he asked. "W ell, over three thousand years ago God promised that cold and heat should not cease, so I am strengthened by this weather to emphasize the sureness of His promises."

 Today we are called to be thankful. God has been good to us, faithful, and always present. He has given the right answers to our prayers. When we needed to be disciplined, he did so. When doors needed to open, He opened them for us. When we needed a time of joy, He has granted those. When we needed a taste of the imperfection of this life, He allowed that too. God has accompanied us lovingly until this very day.

 Let’s not forget that all the other things and people that exist in our lives are His good gifts to us. If, on the other hand, you are having trouble thinking of things to thank Him for, begin with the miracles He has done in the Bible; begin with Jesus’ birth for you and His salvation for you. Giving thanks is like a medicine and a weapon for us. When we give thanks to the Lord, our focus and spirits return to being subject to God, and they humble themselves before Him, defending us from pride and healing us from excessive temporal attachments which drain our energy. Thankfulness is an important spiritual fruit in our lives.

 So, as we gather around the table this Thanksgiving, come and let us remember the blessings of our Lord God, beginning with Who He is, and then numbering his many deeds.

 Let us be thankful because the Lord Yahweh is the True God, and He is forever good. We are thankful to God because of His identity and His deeds which flow out of it. Happy Thanksgiving, and the Lord Bless You all. Amen.