

Doxology to our God

November 25, 2010

Let's see if you guys can answer these questions:

Q: Who is not hungry at Thanksgiving?

A: The turkey because he's already stuffed!

Q: Why can you not take a turkey to church?

A: Because they use such fowl language.

Q: What sound does a space turkey make?

A: Hubble, Hubble, Hubble.

Somehow 'Thanksgiving in America' has become nothing more than the official beginning of Christmas shopping season. It no longer has anything to do with giving thanks to the Lord who gave us so much including the very lives we have and many other blessings through Jesus Christ.

This morning we are going to thumb through several sections of the Bible to see what kinds of spiritual blessings we are privileged to have from the Lord and give thanks to Him.

A. DOXOLOGY

The word 'doxology' is a familiar word to Christians. Though we are familiar with it but we may not understand it fully. So let me give you a brief definition for doxology.

According to dictionary.com I often use, it is "a hymn or form of words containing an ascription of praise to God." It comes from two Greek words: 'doxa' which means 'glory or praise' and 'logos' which means 'a word or a saying.' In other words, it is 'a saying about God's glory, offering God thanks, praising Him.'

Doxologies appear throughout all the Scripture. Relax, we are not going to cover all of them this morning. Just a few examples. Let's start with Psalm 150:

Psalm 150:1-6 Praise the Lord! Praise God in His sanctuary; Praise Him in His mighty firmament! 2 Praise Him for His mighty acts; Praise Him according to His excellent greatness! 3 Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet; Praise Him with the lute and harp! 4 Praise Him with the timbrel and dance; Praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes! 5 Praise Him with loud cymbals; Praise Him with clashing cymbals! 6 Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord!

In every case, we must understand that each doxology comes in response to God's glorious work in our lives on our behalf. It is much like blowing the cork off when the pressure builds up. The pressure would be the pressure of joy, thankfulness, gratitude, and being overwhelmed by blessings from the Lord. The pressure finally blows the top off, and out comes the bursting of a doxology. It is often spontaneous because we realize that we are so grateful to Him.

Some may say, "While I am in my current situation, there is nothing to be joyful and thankful about to the Lord." That was the same attitude the Israelites had while they were wandering around in the wilderness for forty years. They'd rather focus on what they didn't have and couldn't do than the very presence of God Almighty they had as well as the protection and provision from Him. We should not be the same kind of people.

B. THE DOXOLOGY FOR SALVATION

One of many reasons why we give praises and adoration, and doxology to the Lord is in response to our salvation. Everything else is an icing on top of this.

When we got saved, we may not have understood the entire theological aspects of salvation – we still don't, but we can realize that our eternal address had been changed from 'hell' to 'heaven.' That would bring forth a doxology in any one of our hearts.

In my opinion, one of the best doxologies was expressed by Jesus' earthly mother Mary when she was responding to Elizabeth's comment regarding the Baby she was carrying.

Luke 1:46-48 And Mary said: "My soul magnifies the Lord, 47 And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. 48 For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.

Doxology should characterize every believer's life. Since I am using this word 'doxology,' you are thinking, "Whenever I praise the Lord, do I need to belch out the hymn 'Doxology'?" No, it means that we need to express our thankful hearts to the Lord for His goodness and kindness and love for us. Starting with a heartfelt "Thank you, Lord" would be nice.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth,

Let's think about our salvation. We know that the Lord Jesus took all of our sins upon Himself on the cross so that we may have eternal life in heaven. We become so familiar with this thought that we often forget to thank Him.

It is the very gift of salvation that God has given us, the undeserving sinners, in Christ that is the source of our praise throughout eternity.

Through our salvation, we are established in Him.

Romans 16:25-27 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began 26 but now has been made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures has been made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith-- 27 to God, alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.

Established in what? The Greek word is 'sterizo'. It means "to make stable, place firmly, set fast, fix" in Him. This is opposite of the world. The people in the world without Jesus do not have any stability in their hearts. They are confused, hopelessly chaotic, unstable, unsettled, insecure, and no defense against the devil. That is the world.

But for believers, we are established, fixed, standing firm, unshakable, and solid. How can it be? Easy. We are not anchored in the winds of worldly ideas that come and go, rather we are anchored on the Solid Rock, Jesus Christ and His truth.

C. THE DOXOLOGY FOR FORGIVENESS

Luke 7:37-39 And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster

flask of fragrant oil, 38 and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil. 39 Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "This man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner."

Luke 7:48-50 Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." 49 And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" 50 Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

There is no relief, no refreshment like being forgiven from one's sins. We don't know what kind of sins she had committed, but the bottom line is that the Lord Jesus forgave all of her sins.

When we came to Jesus through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we all carry our share of sins in our hearts whether we did them knowingly or unknowingly; whether we remember them or not. When we confessed our sins to Him and asked Him for His forgiveness, He forgave us and cleansed us.

Isaiah 1:18 "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the Lord, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool."

No more sinful stains in our hearts, no more overwhelming guilt, no more condemnation, but now forgiveness from our God.

Some of you might say, "Well, I haven't sinned like that woman in the Bible, so I don't have that kind of guilt." Maybe, but what if the Lord puts together all of your sins that you have committed externally as well as what you have thought in your heart and shows it like a movie on this screen, would you still think that you are better than her? Sin is sin. It stinks. We are grateful to the Lord for His mercy and grace to make us whole.

Apostle Paul tells us more about forgiveness from the Lord for the sins he had committed before he became a follower of Jesus.

1 Timothy 1:13 although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

While he was thinking about his own sins and the mercy and eternal life in Jesus he had received, he burst into a doxology in v17:

1 Timothy 1:17 Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

D. DOXOLOGY OF SECURITY

2 Timothy 4:17-18 But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that the message might be preached fully through me, and that all the Gentiles might hear. And I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. 18 And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen!

As we studied this great epistle of 2 Timothy by apostle Paul a few months ago, we know that this was the last letter he wrote to his spiritual son Timothy. Just before v17, Paul mentioned about the several people who left him and the one who caused many problems for him. But instead of focusing on the problem, he turned to the assurance of security through our God. He was not concerned about his death that

was breathing down on his neck. Because he knew that his death would be a sweet release from the painful daily routine in Mamertine Prison of Rome to heaven where there is Jesus with no more tears, no more nights, and no more pains.

We, too, have the same security and assurance in the Lord. It doesn't matter what kind of threats and havocs the devil, his demons and his human henchmen might cause in our lives. The Lord protects His own and looks after us.

Whether satan likes it or not, he knows his own limits. He has to get the Lord's permission to come after us. Even then, he is only allowed to do it within the confinement of God's order. Job chapter 1 and 2 are the good examples of it.

E. DOXOLOGY OF BLAMELESS

Jude 24-25 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, 25 To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, Be glory and majesty, Dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen.

People would ask me, "When we get to heaven, are we going to face the record of our sins? Is God going to judge us according to what we have done on earth like it says in Revelation 20?" I know which verses they are referring. Let's go there.

Revelation 20:11-12 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

This is about the Great White Throne Judgment. This is for the unbelievers who made their choices to ignore God's invitation while they were alive on earth. I think that the believers would stand behind the Lord's throne and watch this.

Remember? All of our sins were taken away because of Jesus' atoning sacrifice on the cross. And the Lord does not remember them, so don't remind Him. Because of Jesus, we are blameless. How about that?!?! It is no wonder why Jude closed his letter with a doxology.

F. APPLICATION

Do you want to do the will of God for your life? If I tell you, will you do it?

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing, 18 in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

In everything give thanks to the Lord, not just one day, but everyday.