

SERMON: PSALM 145:15-16**THE GENEROUS GIVER / THE GRATEFUL "GETTER"**

*The eyes of all wait upon You; and You give them their food in due season.
You open Your hand, and satisfy the desire of every living thing.*

How are your eyes today? Maybe you can't see as well as you'd like, or as well as you once did; but can you see?—perhaps aided by glasses or contacts? Even if you can't see a wink, I am told that the other senses step-in to help. Sight, whether it's from your eyes or from your other senses, is a gift. This Thanksgiving morning, if for nothing else, let us give thanks to God for our eyesight and other senses. Great gifts! Really.

Our text talks about "eyes" this morning--*The eyes of all wait upon You*. The Hebrew word here for "eyes" actually means "two" eyes. Various Hebrew nouns have singular (1), plural (many), and dual (2) forms. This noun is in its dual form. The verse is saying "pairs of eyes" are looking to God—all people and all creatures. These eyes "wait upon" the Lord, which is more than just looking at or looking toward. They look longingly, with expectation and hope. That same word is used in the Book of Ruth. Naomi the mother-in-law, whose husband and two sons had died, spoke to her two widowed daughters-in-law, who wanted to honor their family ties to her and travel away with her. Naomi said No to them. *"If I should say I have hope, if I should have a husband tonight and should also bear sons, would you wait for them till they were grown? Would you restrain yourselves from having husbands?" (Ruth 1:12-13).* She said, "Would you patiently, longingly, expectantly wait for them to grow to manhood and then to marry you?" That is also the thought in this Psalm. Every man and creature's eyes look to You, Lord, longingly, patiently, expectantly.

Have you ever had someone look longingly at you for something? Perhaps it was the youngster watching you eat your M & M's, or the puppy with those big brown eyes watching and waiting for a little hand out. A person's eyes allow other people to recognize their frame of mind, thoughts, or emotions—such as a mother with her child. Happy or sad. Puzzled or bright with understanding "I got it! Angry or at peace. Jealous or content. On Thanksgiving also thank God that eyes—other people's eyes and yours--can communicate without saying a word. The eyes of all look patiently and expectantly to God to provide. And with God, one doesn't have to communicate with words or eyes, but simply with the thoughts of the heart. Thank Him for that too.

We look expectantly to God---for *food*. Like baby birds, *Feed me. Feed me!* Our food all comes from Him. In the Lord's Prayer Jesus teaches us to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread." It all comes from Him, doesn't it? The (old) KJV translates this phrase of our text, *Thou givest them their meat in due season*. Meat here is more than just "meat," but "food." For example, if an invitation says, "Bring only yourselves. All meat and drink provided," the invite means all the food will be provided, not just "meat."

God *gives* us our food. It doesn't come to us by some sort of trade or bargaining on our part. It is His gift. God does want us to work for daily bread; He despises the lazy man. But from whom does your ability to work come? From God! Who gives your labor success? God! Can you make the sunflowers grow, or the pasture grass grow, or the calves grow? No. God does. Who gives you the ability to be skillful and faithful at things that you do? The Lord. We say Thank you!

Consider how God "gave" Eve to Adam in the Garden of Eden. Adam himself said, "The woman that You gave me." Eve was made by God as a helper suitable—meet—just right for Adam, just what he needed. Eve was a gift that Adam could not have provided for himself. He treasured her when God brought her to him, "Bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh, she shall be called woman for she was taken out of man. A man will leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife, and the two shall be one flesh." What a gift! If you are a husband, thank God for your wife on Thanksgiving Day! Granted, your wife is not perfect; but are your expectations and judgments out of line with God's will for husbands toward wives? Love her as you love yourself. She is God's gift to you. Wives, thank God on Thanksgiving Day for your husband. Your husband is God's gift to you. Do not think him a misfit. Do not merely "tolerate" him. He is your God-given leader and head. Yield to his headship. Work with him, not against him. ---- After Adam sinned, he made it look like God had given him a bum gift. "The woman You gave me, she gave me the fruit." Don't blame anyone else or God for your mistakes and sins. Run to the Lord for forgiveness through His Son.

God gives His gifts *in due season*—that is, in the measure and at the time that He knows is right and best. Trust Him. Thank Him for His blessings each morning and this Thanksgiving morning. God gave Israel manna in the wilderness each day for 40 years! (the Sabbath had special provisions). Jesus fed 5000. Jesus fed 4000! God sent ravens to feed Elijah at the brook! God saw to it that the bin of floor and jar of oil in the widow of Zarephath's home never ran out until the famine ended. Gifts indeed! *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning (James 1:17).* Your Father provides *in due season*—at the right time.

The Lord *opens* His hand to you. He is not tight fisted. Not just a few kernels of wheat fall to you or a few crumbs of bread. He opens His hand—a whole handful of wheat and bread falls out to you. God's hand is pretty large too! See how God feeds the birds of the air, who do not labor or spin? Will he not much more feed you, O you of little faith? See how God causes the rain to fall on the wicked and on the good, and the sun to shine on the just and on the unjust? Look to Him patiently, expectantly, and in trust—as child trusting its loving father. He lovingly opens His hand in bounty to you!

Just like God opens His hand to you and showers you with every good thing, He expects you to be willing to open your hand to those in need around you. In Deuteronomy, Moses said to the people *“If there is among you a poor man of your brethren, within any of the gates in your land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart nor shut your hand from your poor brother, but you shall open your hand wide to him and willingly lend him sufficient for his need, whatever he needs. Beware lest there be a wicked thought in your heart, saying, ‘The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand’ [every seven years all debts were canceled], and your eye be evil against your poor brother and you give him nothing, and he cry out to the LORD against you, and it become sin among you! You shall surely give to him, and your heart should not be grieved when you give to him, because for this thing the LORD your God will bless you in all your works and in all to which you put your hand. For the poor will never cease from the land; therefore I command you, saying, ‘You shall open your hand wide to your brother, to your poor and your needy, in your land.’ (Deuteronomy 15:7-11).* On Thanksgiving Day be re-programmed with willingness to help others. Thank God and thank those who have helped you, even government agencies that assist and aid, when you were in need. All God's gift to you.

The Lord *satisfies the desire of every living thing.* (He does not satisfy ungodly desires.) After Thanksgiving dinner today, will you be satisfied? The German language has a word “satt.” *Ich bin satt*—I am full, satisfied, content. And just as you are content after Thanksgiving dinner, so also be satisfied and content in life with what the Lord gives you! Do not whine, grumble, complain, and find fault. On Thanksgiving Day ask the Lord to forgive all your sins of un-thankfulness. Ask Him to forgive all your sins, period, in Jesus' name. His forgiveness is the most wondrous gift of all. Go to Him, “Father, I am a sorry mess--what I do and don't do. What I say and don't say. What I think and don't think. I sin in weakness, I sin deliberately. Father forgive me all, because of Jesus--He took my penalty on the cross. Father, as you have promised, wash me clean for Jesus' sake.” And He does! What a Thanksgiving gift!

The words of our text this morning are referring specifically to God providing physical needs, but we can also include spiritual needs:

*The eyes of all wait upon You---Father, we “long for” food for the body, and for forgiveness for the soul
You give them their food in due season---You kindly give us what we need--food and forgiveness--each day
You open Your hand---You abundantly bless us in love; help us in love to provide food and forgiveness to others
You satisfy the desire of every living thing---Your blessings make us satisfied, at peace, and content!—here and forever.*

“Thank you, Lord, that You are our Father, that Your Son is our Savior, and that Your Spirit is our Counselor.”

Dear friends, are your eyes open on Thanksgiving Day? Do you see your needs and how the Lord has met your needs for this life and for heaven? With this very passage in your heart, have a blessed Thanksgiving in the Lord!

So be it! Amen!

Pastor Kanzenbach---