**Thanksgiving**

Opening illustration: Abraham Lincoln gave a very famous speech when he created Thanksgiving as a national holiday in the United States. Let me read it.

Who here is struggling with thankfulness right now? I am.

2020 has not been the best year

Covid-19 Pandemic. Getting stuck in our homes.

The worst recession since the Great Depression

Continuing racial justice conflict

The most divisive presidential campaign in US history—and one that is not ending particularly well.

Jose Espinoza lost his wife to Covid. Luther Crittendon lost his sister and more.

2020 has been a tough year. In the future, we will not look back and say, “What a great year!”

But we should….. look what has happened.

Our campus has doubled. Just last Thanksgiving I remember that we finally got more than just 3-4 students to a church function.

We baptized Noelle Iglesias, Will Morris, Louie Santiago Sr., Angelica Philips, Rachel Ridley, Mary Sheffield, Sarah Chavirria, Lisette Shuler, Vincent Lara, Kailey Perez, Angelo Johnson. All are faithful to God.

Jose Espinoza, the Farleys, Toneisha Reynolds, Tony Pierce, Jeanette Carrizales have become members.

We have gone from 56 to 70 members.

All of that, in spite of division in our community, the worst pandemic on over 100 years and the worst recession in the last 80 years!

We have a lot to be thankful for.

Even if none of those things happened, we would have a lot to be thankful for!

Your salvation, your grandkids, your health (if you have it) this church,…

So, have you been thankful?

Or are you ungrateful? 2 Tim 3:2 A sin list Lovers of self, Lovers of money, abusive, unholy, unforgiving, slanderous, brutal… ungrateful.

I do not want to be ungrateful (but I am tempted to be)

Numbers 11:4-6 Q: How did it get so bad, despite the fact that God was tremendously blessing them?

They stopped appreciating what God had done for them.

Application: We need to be grateful for both the “big” things and also for the “small” things.

Q: What are some small things we tend to not be grateful for?

A wise friend once said that most of the things we in the US complain about we should actually be grateful for.

Stuck in your homes more than usual: A chance to get caught up on a hobby or to rest.

A contentious election: Because we get to vote!

Car broke down: Yes, but you own a car!!!

Paying income taxes: Yes, but you have to make a fair amount of money to even pay income taxes!

Got to clean my house: Yes, but you have a house.

My children are rebellious: Yes, but you have children.

Jose lost his wife: Yes, but she was an amazing wife to you Jose, who you will treasure always.

My job does not pay enough: Yes, but you have a job!

1 Chronicles 29:10-20

Here David is able to be thankful because he recognizes that everything he has comes from God. v. 14 “everything comes from you.” We are foreigners and strangers before you, but you chose to favor us.

Leviticus sacrificial system--Three types of fellowship offerings:

Thank-offering (Lev 7:11-15) given in response to a specific blessing he has already given you.

Vow-offering (Lev 11:16) given in anticipation of a future blessing.

Thanking God for something you anticipate him giving to you.

Free-will offering (Lev 22:23) just fired up about God and giving an offering. Thanking God for being God.

Do we need to remember to celebrate the little things? Do we tend to forget the little blessings.

The NT equivalent:

1 Thess 5:16 Rejoice always (free-will, already happened) Pray constantly (vow-offering, future blessings) give thanks in all circumstances (thank-offering—just thankful)

Here is my thanksgiving prayer for you-all:

Phil 1:3-6

Let’s take 5 minutes to think about some things we are thankful for, and then share them with whoever we are with or with someone else, maybe by facetime…