

**Refuge City Church — September 18, 2022**  
**“With my whole heart” [Psalm 9]**

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- Dr. Joshua Brown, a professor of psychological and brain sciences at Indiana University and his colleague, Dr. Joel Wong, an associate professor of counseling psychology set out to answer one question. *How can they help clients derive the greatest possible benefit from treatment in the shortest amount of time?* They came to the conclusion that some patients could supplement traditional therapy sessions with gratitude exercises. Over the last decade, several studies have found that those who routinely count their blessings are overall happier and experience less depression.
- **QUOTE:** “Gratitude, if not the highest, is the purest form of love, for when you are full of gratitude there is no room for anything else.” [Unknown]

**Verses 1-2**

“I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart; I will recount all of your wonderful deeds. I will be glad and exult in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.”

- **“Whole heart”:** complete; consistent; unwavering; avoiding stiffness [hard-hearted]; wherever & whenever
  - **QUOTE:** “Gratitude for one mercy refreshes the memory as to thousands of others. One silver link in the chain draws up a long series of tender remembrances. Here is eternal work for us, for there can be no end to the showing forth of all His deeds of love.” [Charles Spurgeon]
  - When you think of one particular Christmas morning as a child, you’ll tend to reflect on the others as well.
  - When you celebrate an anniversary or a birthday, you tend to remember other memories as well.
- **QUESTION:** What *should* it take to cause us to give thanks, be glad, exult, and praise God with a complete, unwavering whole heart?
  - **Mark 12:30-31**, “And you shall love the Lord your God with *all* your heart and with *all* your soul and with *all* your mind and with *all* your strength.’ The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”
  - We can do the ‘right’ things [religiously]. We can follow the ‘rules’. But does that translate to gratitude and love for God?
- King Amaziah [2 Kings 14/2 Chronicles 25; ruled over Israel from 796-767 B.C.]
  - **2 Chronicles 25:2**, “And he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, yet *not* with a whole heart.”
  - He maintained some obedience to the Mosaic Law, but something was keeping him from being ‘sold out’ [giving away everything that does not align with the Lord]
    - The rest of his story points to *pride* in his authority as king, and his victories in battle that led to a hard fall into *idolatry*.
    - He did not continue to recognize God’s authority, provision, or seem to remember the goodness of God that led to his ascension as king.

## - The Rich Young Ruler

- **Luke 18:18-23**, “And a ruler asked him, ‘Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?’... You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.’” And he said, ‘All these I have kept from my youth.’ When Jesus heard this, he said to him, ‘One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.’ But when he heard these things, he became very sad [Matthew 19:22, “...he went away sorrowful], for he was extremely rich.”
- **QUOTE**: “Imperfection of heart consists in incomplete surrender.” [G. Campbell Morgan]
- **Proverbs 3:5**, “Trust in the Lord with *all* your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.”
- **Proverbs 4:23**, “Keep your heart with *all* vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.”

## Verses 3-10

“When my enemies turn back, they stumble and perish before your presence. For you have maintained my just cause; you have sat on the throne, giving righteous judgment. You have rebuked the nations; you have made the wicked perish; you have blotted out their name forever and ever. The enemy came to an end in everlasting ruins; their cities you rooted out; the very memory of them has perished. But the Lord sits enthroned forever; he has established his throne for justice, and he judges the world with righteousness; he judges the peoples with uprightness...”

- Here David gives his reasons to rejoice in that particular season of life.
  - He recognizes that God is the one who secured the victory over his enemies.
  - God is just and righteous; ruling in sovereignty from His throne.
- **Verses 9-10**: “The Lord is a stronghold [refuge; fortress] for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. And those who know your name put their trust in you, for you, O Lord, have not forsaken those who *seek* you.”
- **QUESTION**: What could you put on your list for this season? [good or bad]
  - When times are tough, do we have the expectation that the protection & provision will automatically come to us? Or do we have to ask for it/seek it out?
  - **Jeremiah 29:12-14**, “Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you, declares the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, declares the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.”
  - **Psalms 34:17-18**, “When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears and delivers them out of all their troubles. The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.”

## Verses 11-20

“Sing praises to the Lord, who sits enthroned in Zion! Tell among the peoples his deeds! For he who avenges blood is mindful of them; he does not forget the cry of the afflicted. Be gracious to me, O Lord! See my affliction from those who hate me, O you who lift me up from the gates of death, that I may recount all your praises, that in the gates of the daughter of Zion I may rejoice in your salvation. The nations have sunk in the pit that they made; in the net that they hid, their own foot has been caught. The Lord has made himself known; he has executed judgment; the wicked are snared in the work of their own hands.”

- Notice the verbiage used: sing, tell, gracious, rejoice.
- Does that sound like one who's downtrodden and oppressed?
  - Notice the sound of confidence!
  - It's seeing the joy and praise of God's provision and salvation *before* it comes. ["see my affliction...that I may recount and rejoice in your salvation."]
  - It's *anticipatory expectation* of what God has promised He will do [belief; trust; faith]

## Conclusion

- As a church, for the past 3 years:
  - God is the one who planted this church.
  - He is the one who has provided for us in every way [financially, locations, ministry opportunities, etc.]
  - God has executed justice for us and others [food, clothing, shelter, service, salvation, hope]
  - God saw us through a pandemic, and all that came with that.
- Let us not forget, He has been our Refuge!
  - **Psalm 52:7**, "See the man who would not make God his refuge, but trusted in the abundance of his riches and sought refuge in his own destruction!"
    - The person who does not trust in God, trusts in himself, his possessions, or in others who will constantly fall short of expectations.
  - **Psalm 46:1**, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."
  - **Psalm 71:1-3**, "In you, O Lord, do I take refuge; let me never be put to shame! In your righteousness deliver me and rescue me; incline your ear to me, and save me! Be to me a rock of refuge, to which I may continually come; you have given the command to save me, for you are my rock and my fortress."
- Let that be our prayer every day! And so give thanks to the Lord for *all* that He is, *all* that He does, and *all* that He will do, with *all* of our heart. Amen!