

Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One. Give thanks because He's given Jesus Christ, His Son. And now let the weak say, "I am strong," let the poor say, "I am rich because of what the Lord has done for us." Give thanks, give thanks, give thanks! Written by Henry Smith Jr. in 1978.

Henry composed the song during a time of unemployment, financial insecurity, and an uncertain future due to a degenerative visual impairment that would eventually lead to him becoming legally blind. It is a song very dear to his heart, inspired by his struggles in life. *Give Thanks* continues to be one of the most popular songs during the Thanksgiving season and it is used in churches worldwide. It is truly an international song of gratitude. Everyday should be a day of thanksgiving to our Lord. This year as we sit at the table with our Family & Friends on Thanksgiving, let us each remember where God has brought us from, and thank Him for all He has done. To God Be The Glory!

Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms. (Psalm 95:2)

We are always happy to have our visitors: Cody & Emily Johnson (Olathe, KS), Joshua & Madelyn Sloan (Joplin, MO), Chas-steen Bergeron (Pea Ridge), Don Graves and Jacob & Carlie Haskins (Rogers), Alivia Bockholt, Lael Ellison, Nathanael & Jessica Green, and Joyce Parks (Bella Vista).

Those on our prayer list: Our deepest heartfelt sympathies go to these families. Patsy Tarr in the loss of her husband, J.B. He was a good man loved by all and one of our former elders. Keep Patsy and the family in your prayers. Teresa Marcotte in the loss of her brother, Mike Harris. Kyle Dillard in the loss of his grandfather, Joe. Continue to remember and pray for Pat Musson, Mary Jane Hunter, Andrew Albers, Lynn Barnica, Susan Duffy, and Becky Donceel.

Items needed for Children's Home: Instant oatmeal, spinach, Pop Tarts, canned chicken and tuna, cleaning supplies. Food Pantry: Peanut butter, pancake mix, cereal, green beans, cream of mushroom soup, French fried onions, cranberry sauce, sweet potatoes, stuffing mix, gravy mixes, instant potatoes, pie filling.

Hem your blessings with thankfulness so they don't unravel. Love you.

Karen

Bella Vista Church of Christ

Highway 71 and County Road 40
989 NW McNelly Road
Bentonville, AR 72712

Return Service Requested

LORD'S DAY	
Early Worship	8:15 AM
Bible Class (Livestreamed)	9:30 AM
Worship (Livestreamed)	10:30 AM
WEDNESDAY	
Ladies' Class	9:45 AM
Bible Classes (Livestreamed)	7:00 PM

Phone: 479/273-2434

www.bellavistachurchofchrist.com

ELDERS

Tracy Bowman.....479-899-3089
Don Butcher.....636-548-0458
Dallas Dobbs.....479-640-49439
Perry Johnson.....913-707-8379
Ray Reiss.....903-908-0203

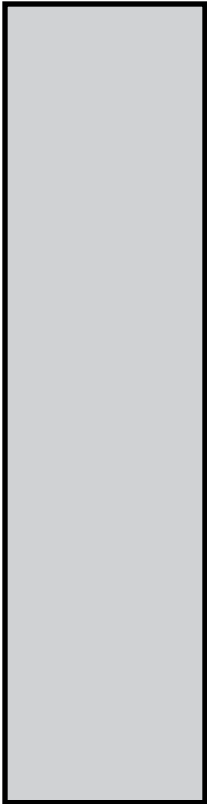
DEACONS

Mark Bagwell John Bowman Chris Johnson Bryan Busbee Joe Hott
Randall Hunt Terry Roberts Aaron Sloan Tyler White Mitchell Whittington

MINISTERS

Jeff Grisham.....479-531-9135
Parker Willis.....615-587-3208
Cory Spruiell.....501-941-4525
Javier & Helmer Rosero.....Bogota, Colombia

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Bella Vista

MEMBER

Enjoyment and Thanksgiving

Does enjoyment lead to thanksgiving or thanksgiving to enjoyment? Several years ago, one of my mentors said in passing that one of his biggest struggles was being grateful for what he had. That struck me and made me wonder how aware I've been about expressing thanks. I didn't make any resolutions related to being thankful or make any sort of concerted effort to improve – that's a sure-fire way for me to forget about something. I did, however, sort of naturally become more aware of how I reacted to situations.

Our habit is to obtain or achieve the things we enjoy, thinking (either consciously or subconsciously) that once we do, we can sit back, relax, enjoy, and be thankful. Take for example how we view retirement. You work your whole life, striving and sacrificing enjoyment so that you can enjoy your latter years. In your mind's eye, what is the overwhelming emotion you feel when you think of yourself retired and sitting on the front porch rocking chair? When I see popular depictions of scenes such as this, I think "that person looks satisfied and thankful!" But I wonder if maybe our notion of what comes first is backwards. What if enjoyment comes from being thankful?

The first question in in the Westminster Catechism (a catechism is a teaching tool used to introduce doctrines in some religious traditions) is "What is the chief and highest end of man?" You might be tempted to answer something like live morally, go to heaven, or follow the Bible. But the answer Westminster gives is, "Man's chief and highest end is to glorify God and fully to enjoy him forever." Enjoy God?! What could that mean? I've never thought about what it means to enjoy God! Let's think about this. Maybe after an evening dinner with friends you've said, "I just really enjoy being around them." You are, in that moment, thankful for their company. Our 20s/30s group went on a perfectly run-of-the-mill camping trip at the beginning of October and we enjoyed it immensely. I think it was because



Seeking Peace

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. (John 14:27)

These words spoken by Jesus to those who had followed him for a period of about three years come just hours away from the cross. In a very short time, Jesus would be arrested, tried, beaten, mocked, humiliated, and condemned to die on a Roman cross. As we continue reading through the accounts of the crucifixion, we notice the peace that Jesus seems to possess through the whole ordeal. We watch as he walks out to meet the mob sent to arrest him. We hear him tell Peter to put away the sword and remind him that this is the purpose for which he came. We listen to his conversations with Pilate, confident of his identity and certain that the Father would set things right. We notice the peace that Jesus has.

This peace is what Jesus offered his followers in these words from John 14. This small band that had walked with Jesus was about to face life without him physically present with them. I have no doubt that Jesus knew the difficulties they would face, not only in the days that followed, but also in continuing to carry out the mission on which they would be sent. They would face difficult situations, determined opposition, uncertainty, and difficult decisions. Following Jesus did not exempt them from trouble. In fact, it would often lead to trouble and conflict with the world around them. Jesus knew they needed the peace he offered.

Following Jesus does not exempt us from trouble. It does not make us immune to the troubles, pains, sorrows, and difficulties of this life. We face opposition and often find ourselves at odds with the world around us. We deal with difficult decisions, tensions, and conflict. It can all seem overwhelming and what we want is peace.

The world around us tries to convince us that it has the answers to our need for peace. It continually places these offers in front of us in various ways. It suggests that if we will just buy the right car, or the right house in the right neighborhood then we will have what we need and all will be well. It leads us to think that if we just find the right partner, pick the right hobby, find the right people who agree with us on everything, then peace and happiness will naturally follow. It tells us that maybe the conflict we are experiencing is the resistance to our own nature, and if we would just do whatever makes us happy then we would be at peace.

many of us realized how thankful we were to have a Christian community. At first glance it may not seem like God and man enjoying one another's company is talked about in the Bible, but consider the major acts of God throughout history. Adam and Eve's initial relationship with God looked enjoyable. After The Fall God acts in ways throughout the rest of the biblical narrative to reconcile people to himself. In the exodus, the holiness code, the tabernacle, temple, Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, and the church God's goal is to keep company with his people. Indeed, Revelation ends by telling us that this will finally be achieved and will last eternally.

The Christian faith is often viewed as restrictive, ruled-based, and transactional – if you do x,y, and z, then God will keep up his end of the deal. But how enjoyable is that? Any good business person will tell you that the best deals are made when both parties benefit. Our relationship with God isn't exactly the same, but there is a metaphor here. We can't add anything to God or give him any material goods to benefit him, except that he wants a relationship with us and our humble submission to him creates an atmosphere where we can enjoy one another's company.

Our following Christ is both a condition and result of our thankfulness to him for constantly pursuing us throughout history. When we are thankful for God's work in history and our own lives the demands of this journey seem a little smaller and our relationship with him becomes much more enjoyable. Next time you encounter a situation you don't enjoy, ask yourself how thankful you are for it and see what kind of difference that makes.

The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot. The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance. I bless the LORD who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me. I have set the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure. For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption. You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.
Psalms (16:5–11)

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." (Revelation 21:3–4)

-CORY SPRUIELL

Just last week millions of people lined up in various places across this country to vote for political candidates, each of whom claims to offer peace, a better life for people. The problem with any of these offers is that they will ultimately fail. The world promises peace, but is not able to make good on that promise. The world cannot provide what it doesn't have. Peace is not found in the externals, but is a heart condition.

The promise Jesus makes to give peace is not like the promises of the world. He can provide what he promises. It is Jesus who has the ability to change the heart. We were created for relationship. We were created for closeness with God and when we are separated from him, peace is missing. It's not that God has moved; it is our sin, our rebellion that has moved us away from him and our quest for peace is a cry for reconciliation. Jesus makes that possible. Because of what God has done in Jesus we can be reconciled to God. We can be confident of our identity as his children, and have peace of mind that God will make everything right.

I wonder how often the words of Jesus from John 14:27 were remembered and recited by the early Christians as they faced all kinds of opposition and trouble. I wonder if when they were arrested, threatened, or watched as others were beaten or even executed, they reminded themselves and each other of the peace that Jesus provided.

I wonder if it might help us as we encounter difficulties, sorrows, pains, and tensions. Could it serve as a way to still the anxiousness, worry, and fear that we experience? Could we remember these words of Jesus and be reminded of our identity and the One who holds us in his hands?

-JEFF GRISHAM

SUNDAY SERVANTS: 11/20/22

First Service

Welcome, Prayer & Scripture Randall Hunt Song Leader Sammy McCain
Greeters Terry Roberts, Joe Hott Communion Scripture & Prayer Mark Tucker
Closing Prayer Aaron Sloan
Nursery Workers Hillary Porter, Angie Christiano

Second Service

Welcome, Prayer & Scripture Cory Roberts Song Leader Lee McCain
Greeters Howard Hurst, Don Cope Communion Scripture & Prayer Chad Dobbs
Closing Prayer Tracy Bowman
Nursery Workers Karla Winslow, Hollie Strickhausen Van Driver Mark/Wilma Bagwell, Katelyn Jewett

November Worship Coordinators

Worship Coordinator Mike York Streaming Coordinator James Beaty
Audio Coordinator Jim Caylor Video Coordinator Marquis Elliott