

“C.H.A.T. ~ Sacrifice of Thanksgiving” 8.01.10

Today is the final message in our prayer series. Our leadership believes PRAYER is the most meaningful conversation of the day!

Our messages have been built around the simple acrostic C.H.A.T.

- 1st week = Confession: coming clean with God about our sins.
- 2nd week = Honor: taking time to notice God @ work.
- 3rd week = Ask: was all about asking God to meet our daily needs.

Today is all about the final letter of C.H.A. = T = ‘Thanksgiving:’

So how are you doing in your prayer life with God? Let me ask this (?) another way: how are you doing spending time with God = essence of prayer.

How would you describe your “most important conversation of the day?”

Normal practice - is it more like a series of e-mails/instant messages or do you just hang out together w/God?

Today is all about learning a fresh discipline about prayer - spending time w/God, which I attempt to practice on a consistent-weekly type basis:

The biblical precedent for this practice is found in Psalm 50: 23: “But giving thanks is a sacrifice that truly honors Me.”

‘Sacrifice of Thanksgiving,’ exactly what does this mean & where is this found?

(R) Leviticus 7: 12 – 15 or the (3rd) book in the Bible

I. (3) components to ‘Thank Offerings’

- A.** 1st = Animal sacrifice (an animal w/no defect, injury, or disease)
 1. The animal would be sacrificed-killed & its blood poured out + fat burned.
 2. The blood represented the life of the animal & the fat was considered the finest part to be given to God.
 3. The blood foreshadowed Jesus sacrificial death for us = His precious blood
 4. This thank offering pointed ahead to a time when God’s Son would come & offer His body & blood on the cross (opening the door of Heaven for us)
- B.** 2nd component = (Bread made w-out yeast or leaven)
 1. In the Bible, yeast & leaven always represents sin: therefore unleavened bread represented holiness or a state of being absolutely pure.
 2. The 2nd component of the ‘Thank Offering’ pointed ahead to the holiness & purity of our Lord Jesus who never sinned.
 3. (1) final note ~ the ‘unleavened bread’ was to be mixed with oil; oil is symbolic of the Holy Spirit.
 4. (3) persons of the Trinity are represented in this ‘Thank Offering.’
 - * God the Father to whom the offering is given + * Jesus the Son represented by the unleavened bread + * the Holy Spirit represented by the oil.
- C.** 3rd component = (Bread made with yeast or leaven)
 1. Remember Unleavened bread represented holiness & purity: So why introduce bread made with yeast & leaven?
 2. The bread made with yeast & leaven represented the person offering the sacrifice who is on their best day simply a sinner.

Every time a 'Thank Offering' was sacrificed - - the person offering the sacrifice was symbolically saying = God you've done so much for me; everything I have comes from your gracious hand; I thank YOU & give myself to you!

Not all sacrifices were abolished in the O.T. ~ Here's one we still practice today:
Hebrews 13: 15 - 16 or p. 929 in pew Bible

II. 'Sacrifice of Thanksgiving' = (So, how do you do this practically?)

A. Prayer Journal ~ (this is how I do it)

Psalm 50: 23 explains: "But giving thanks is a sacrifice that truly honors Me."

1. Plain-Simple-Easy = Saying thank you to God honors God.
2. Excerpts from MY PRAYER JOURNAL:
3. My challenge: Review the last (24 hrs) of my life & give thanks for all the different ways you've witnessed God working in your life. Awesome habit:

B. Practical categories (jump start you)

1. Thank God for physical blessings:
 - a. Your health ~ Your pants that fit too snugly (means blessed to eat)
 - b. Your car ~ Your daughters car that needed \$1031 of repairs (means you are blessed not to be on foot)
 - c. Your appliances ~ Your refrigerator that stopped while you were out of town (means you have electricity)
2. Thank God for relational blessings:
 - a. Your imperfect spouse ~ the one you occasionally disagree with who you miss deeply when they are gone overnight (means you are blessed with someone who cares enough to try)
 - b. Your children ~ that puberty & adolescence only last so long (means you are not by yourself ~ your family is not abnormal)
 - c. Your friends ~ that disappoint occasionally, let you down occasionally & are there every time you need a helping hand.
3. Thank God for spiritual blessings:
 - a. Grace + Mercy + 2nd Chances
 - b. God listens when we call out to Him ~ He never leaves or forsakes
 - c. God doesn't neglect me like I neglect Him
 - d. JESUS ~ death opened Heaven's door for you & me
 - e. "...peace that passes understanding"

III. Give thanks in hardship & crisis (is this even possible?)

A. (R) I Thessalonians 5: 18 or p. 907 in pew Bible

1. INSERT Erma Bombeck
2. re(R) I Thessalonians 5: 18
 - a. Age-old question = What is God's will for my life?
 - b. God says, I want you to be thankful, no matter what the circumstances.
3. Notice Bible does not say "for all circumstances" BUT INSTEAD the Bible says "to be thankful in all circumstances."
4. N.T. HOPE = Romans 8: 28

"...we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God & are called according to His purpose for them."

We can give thanks: NOT for our circumstances BUT in our circumstances!

- B.** Bible says, "Giving thanks is a sacrifice that honors (God)."
(INSERT) story of U.S. Marine Corps General Charles Krulak

Isaiah 7: 14, "...virgin will conceive a child, give birth to a son, & He will be call Immanuel (meaning, God with us)."

GOOD & BAD times ~ Jesus is always there beside us: ever present.