

CALVARY EPISCOPAL CHURCH
INDIAN ROCKS BEACH, FL
THANK YOU
THANKSGIVING ECUMENICAL SERVICE
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The most important prayer in the world is just two words long:

“Thank You.”¹

Visiting a big city, a Christian farmer entered a fancy restaurant for lunch. When his meal was served, he bowed his head and quietly gave thanks to God for the food.

There was a group of rowdy teenagers at a nearby table, and one of them taunted him in a loud voice: “Hey, farmer, does everyone do that where you live?”

The old farmer looked at the young man and calmly said:

“No, son, the pigs don’t.”

It says in the second letter of Paul to the Corinthians that the farmer who scatters abroad, who gives to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.²

He sows bountifully as he knows, God loves a cheerful giver.

¹ Meister Eckhart (1327 A.D.)

² 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

It was once said, “Joy is really the simplest form of gratitude.”

From the heart of this person, from the joy within, he speaks only one prayer, two words long, saying:

“Thank You.”

There is another story about a traveler who came upon a barn where the devil had stored seeds which he planned to sow in the hearts of people. There were bags of seeds variously marked, “Hatred,” “Fear,” “Doubt,” “Despair,” “Unforgiveness,” “Pride,” “Greed,” etc.

The devil appeared and struck up a conversation with the traveler. He gleefully told the traveler how easily the seeds he sowed sprouted in the hearts of men and women.

“Are there any hearts in which these seeds will not sprout?” the traveler asked.

A melancholy look appeared on the devil’s face.

“These seeds will not sprout in the heart of a thankful and joyful person,” he confessed.³

³ *Holy Humor*, p.181.

The most important prayer is two words long: “Thank You.”

I teach my young people in their Confirmation class, here at

Calvary that there are four types of prayer, following the acronym,

“ACTS.” This stands for:

Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication.

But it is Thanksgiving that is the most important.

You cannot adore God if you have not thanked God first.

Confession means nothing if you don’t thank God.

Why ask for God to supply you with something, then, when you receive, you forget to thank God?

It is like casting our pearls to the swine.

When Jesus was traveling through Samaria in Galilee, we read in the Gospel according to St. Luke about the ten lepers who came up to him, asking to be healed. He told them what to do.

They went and did it and they were healed.

But only one came back to thank Him. And he was a Samaritan.

We wonder what happens to the ones who don’t thank God.

Maybe they become the pigs.

Here is the tough message.

We live in a society where our ecumenical relations are more important than ever. People are “shopping” for spirituality.

They want to be made well, but they may not admit it.

They would rather sow their gifts sparingly, guarded and see the field with a skeptical eye.

But they know joy when they see it, and that is what they want.

Like those lepers who saw Jesus, who saw a man, holy and true to his word and able to give joy through healing, do they trust Him?

How long will the seeds of this generation, planted in the hearts of men and women possess a thankful and joyful heart?

Will they turn from “Hatred,” “Fear,” “Doubt,” “Despair,” “Unforgiveness,” “Pride,” and “Greed?”

As we gather together to ask the Lord’s blessing, may we be ready when he chastens us and hastens us, making His will known.

When we thank God, he forgets not His own.

Tonight, let our offering of joy and gratitude be given to Jesus for what he has done for us. When we lift up our hearts, praying

together, to God, let us join together, saying the most important prayer in the world, only two words long...

Which is,?

“Thank You.”