Seven Reasons to be Grateful

INTRODUCTION: Gratitude is a Christian grace in short supply in our times.

1. Why? Because we have become a people of Entitlement!

2. A third generation of Entitlement, to be exact:
   a) The spoiled Boomer and Busters: indulged by their parents who endured the Great Depression and Survived World War II – “My kids are never going to lack what I did as a child.” Result? The most obnoxiously spoiled generation in history!
   b) Generation X: disappointed, bitter, negative and angry because less was left over for them after the huge Baby Bummer/Buster gorged themselves on the American Pie. They are entitlement but unsatisfied. America’s most ticked-off generation. Never satisfied.
   c) Generation Y: The Millennials: Two words describe them: Narcissistic and Entitled. Their mantra: “We are special; we are entitled and everyone ought to love us; we certainly love ourselves. These are the children of indulgent Dads and helicopter Moms. And they LIKE being that way – strong girls and lost boys!

3. Here is the Nursery Rhyme these kids grew up singing:
   No one looks the way I do.
   I have noticed that it’s true.
   No one walks the way I walk.
   No one talks the way I talk.
   No one plays the way I play.
   No one says the things I say.
   I am special.
   I am me.

4. The Aspen Education Group has incisively analyzed the origins of this Entitlement Generation: Narcissistic and Entitled to Everything! Does Gen Y Have Too Much Self Esteem?

   In the 1980s world of child rearing, the catchword was “self-esteem.” Unconditional love and being valued “just because you’re you!” was the prevailing philosophy. In practice, it involved constantly praising children, not criticizing them under any circumstances, emphasizing feelings, and not recognizing one child’s achievements as superior to another’s. At the end of a season, every player “won” a trophy. Instead of just one “student of the month,” schools named dozens. Teachers inflated grades from kindergarten through college: “C” became the new “F.” No one ever had to repeat a grade because staying behind caused poor self-esteem.

   The result of these child-rearing practices has been a measurable increase in narcissism and a generation that has a deeply embedded sense of entitlement, according to authorities like Dr. Jean Twenge, author of Generation Me: Why Today’s Young Americans are More Confident, Assertive, Entitled and More Miserable Than Ever. Dr. Twenge of San Diego State University studied more than 16,400 students who took the Narcissistic Personality Inventory between 1982 and 2006. In
1982, only a third of the students scored above average on the test. Today that number is over 65%.

The new trend toward self-centeredness and self-love might be bad for society. Dr. Twenge warns that narcissists lack empathy, overreact to criticism, and favor themselves over others. They are incapable of cheering anyone else’s success. Ultimately, they led miserable lives because they cannot form and maintain healthy relationships.

5. This sick souled narcissist is more than merely a financial burden to over indulgent parents, or …
   a) A constant challenge to teachers and coaches, or …
   b) a dysfunctional employee without maturity, or …
   c) or a person without “emotional intelligence” toward others.
   d) They are spiritually sick – unable to Praise God, give Him thanks, seek forgiveness, persevere in obedience, endure in faith, delay eternal benefits until later or appreciate grace.

6. The Business World is already discovering this. The Aspen Education report said this:

   According to a report in the Wall Street Journal, corporations like Lands End and Bank of America are hiring “praise teams” to keep up with Gen Y’s demand for constant positive reinforcement. Other generations believed that as long as no one fired them, their work must be okay. Gen Y needs constant praise in the form of emails, awards, celebration balloons and other such tangible recognition of their work or they become anxious.

   The constant stream of praise has resulted in what psychologist Dr. Linda Sapadin calls “a runaway inflation of speech.” No girl is pretty: she’s drop dead gorgeous. That guy is a genius (not merely bright). Dr. Sapadin says the word “nice” is a put-down.

   Gen Y’s need for affirmations often accompanies an intense sense of entitlement. A therapist with the Aspen Education Group describes it as “I want it now! Now! I have to have it right now!” A Gen Y with a sense of entitlement will also refuse to take responsibility when he makes a mistake. For example, if he gets a speeding ticket, he expects his parents to pay for the ticket and increased insurance premiums and to keep on driving as if nothing happened.

7. Bottom Line: Until a person becomes grateful for God’s gracious gifts and learns how to give God both praise and gratitude, they will never be truly redeemed or genuinely happy.
   a) The Narcissist man cannot give praise to another, even God, because he is jealous of another’s successes and envious of even God’s glory!
   b) The Entitled Girl is unable to express thanksgiving because she is ungrateful. Why would she thank others – even God – for what she feels like she deserves.

8. Fact: Thanksgiving (Gratitude) is essential to the Christian salvation, the Christian lifestyle and the Christian Community (Church)
   a) On the way to Jerusalem he was passing along between Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance and lifted up their voices, saying, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.” When he saw them he said to them, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went they were cleansed. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus’ feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus answered, “Were not ten
cleansed? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?” And he said to him, “Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well.” (Luke 17:11-19)

b) **Key:** Faith is displayed by **Gratitude!**

c) **Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe,** (Hebrews 12:28)

d) **i.e., the acceptable worship of gratitude.**

e) **Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.** (Col. 2:6-7)

f) **Key:** “**rooted in Christ, established in faith, abounding in thanksgiving.”**

g) The only acceptable way to worship God: to praise, bless and honor Him with **thanksgiving.**

(1) **Enter his gates with thanksgiving,**

and his courts with praise!

_Give thanks to him; bless his name! (Ps. 100:4)_

(2) **Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,**

_for his steadfast love endures forever!

_Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love, _

_for his wondrous works to the children of man!_ 

_And let them offer sacrifices of thanksgiving, _

_and tell of his deeds in songs of joy! (Ps. 107:1,21-22)_.

(3) **Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving,**

_and perform your vows to the Most High, (Ps. 50:14)_

(4) **I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving**

_and call on the name of the Lord. _

_I will pay my vows to the Lord _

_in the presence of all his people, _

_in the courts of the house of the Lord, _

_in your midst, O Jerusalem. _

_Praise the Lord! (Ps. 116:17-19)_

(5) **Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving:**

_make melody to our God on the lyre! (Ps. 147:7)_.

9. **Interesting Biblical Fact:** The most common and most often offered sacrifice in the OT Temple was **not** the sin offering, but rather the **Thank offering.**

a) One form of the **Peace Offering**

b) “**And this is the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings that one may offer to the Lord. If he offers it for a thanksgiving, then he shall offer with the thanksgiving sacrifice unleavened loaves mixed with oil, unleavened wafers smeared with oil, and loaves of fine flour well mixed with oil. With the sacrifice of his peace offerings for thanksgiving he shall bring his offering**
with loaves of leavened bread. And from it he shall offer one loaf from each offering, as a gift to the Lord. It shall belong to the priest who throws the blood of the peace offerings. And the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offerings for thanksgiving shall be eaten on the day of his offering. He shall not leave any of it until the morning. (Leviticus 7:11-15)

c) And when you sacrifice a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the Lord, you shall sacrifice it so that you may be accepted. It shall be eaten on the same day; you shall leave none of it until morning: I am the Lord. (Lev. 22:29-30)

d) Merrill F. Unger: Unger’s Bible Dictionary; pp. 948-949

In times of prosperity and success he would naturally feel thankful to God and embody his act by means of sacrifice; hence thank offering. In case anyone desired to secure a blessing which had not yet fallen to his lot, he would naturally endeavor by means of a vow to prevail upon God to bestow it; hence the votive offering. The motive impelling to the freewill offering seems to have centered in the desire to thank God for the enjoyment of his bounties and to be assured of their continuance.

10. My point in all this is obvious …

a) Gratitude (Thanksgiving) is a Divinely prescribed part of our Gospel Religion

(1) The highest form of worship and praise
(2) the only acceptable response to God’s grace
(3) a spiritual virtue adorning the Christian life
(4) a facet of true faith and a regenerate soul.

b) Entitlement and Narcissism are 100% pagan: Rooted in

(1) the Idolatry of self-worship
(2) the graceless life
(3) the soul focused on works and merit
(4) a person who loves self above all others

11. Merrill F. Unger does a marvelous job defining the Christian duty, virtue and grace of Thanksgiving (p. 1086)

a) Thanksgiving is the duty

b) Gratitude is the grace

c) So … “Thanksgiving is a duty of which gratitude is the grace”

d) i.e., a grateful heart full of grace pours forth praises to God in the words of thanksgiving.

e) Interesting Fact: the word for grace and for gratitude (thanksgiving), in the Greek language, is one in the same word: charis

f) charis (grace), charisma (gift), charis (gratitude/ thanksgiving)

g) Merrill F. Unger: On the “grace of gratitude” (p. 1086)
Thanksgiving is a duty of which gratitude is the grace. This obligation of godliness is acknowledged by the universal sentiment of mankind; but as a Christian grace it has some blessed peculiarities. It is gratitude, as for all the benefits of divine Providence, so especially for the general and personal gifts of redemption. The very term most in use shows this; it is charis, which is the grace of God in Christ, operating in the soul of the believer as a principle, and going back to him in gratitude: “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.” The ethnical gratitude of Christianity connects every good gift and every perfect gift with the gift of Christ. Moreover, it is a thanksgiving which in the Christian economy, and in it alone redounds to God for all things: in everything give thanks. This characteristic flows from the former. The rejoicing which we have in the Lord, and the everlasting consolation we possess in him, makes every possible variety of divine dispensation a token for good. The Christian privilege is to find reason for gratitude in all things: “for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”

12. I speak to you tonight, not as man who is naturally grateful. Quite the contrary –

   a) I was born, grew up, and lived for 40+ years as an ungrateful man, and therefore, an angry and unhappy man.

   b) Even the first 15-20 years as a Christian (and a decade into the pastorate) I was not a thankful man.

   c) But then I became convinced of four things, as I read and studied my Bible, and lived with Jane:

      (1) Thanksgiving is a duty: I owe God thanks.

      (2) Gratitude is a response to grace.

      (3) Pride alone kept me from expressing thanks – to both God, my wife and family, and others.

      (4) Happiness follows gratitude and not the reverse!

   d) As I began to force myself to be grateful and give thanks, I grew in my soul, my love for others, and in happiness.

   e) I can now say, quite honestly, I am (most of the time) a very grateful and a quite happy man.

13. Psalm 16 is the starting place for a soul who wants to learn how to be grateful and practice the spiritual discipline of Thanksgiving.

   a) Seven Reasons to be Grateful

   b) Question: What would you include in your list of the Seven Greatest Blessings God has given to you?

   c) In the midst of a busy life, a burdened kingship, and the pain and problems of many enemies, David stops to write what certainly is one of his sweetest Psalms.

   d) A Miktam of David ... Psalm 16

II. SEVEN BLESSING FOR WHICH TO THANK GOD

   A. First: David thanks God for Being His God (Ps. 16:1-2)
1. Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge.  
   I say to the Lord, “You are my Lord;  
   I have no good apart from you.” (Ps. 16:1-2)

2. David is genuinely happy over and grateful for this fact: There is only one true God in the universe and that God belonged to him. Jehovah was David’s God!
   a) I say to the Lord, “You are my Lord;  
      I have no good apart from you.” (Ps. 16:2)  
   b) When David lost sight of this truth he became envious, bitter, entitled and miserable  
   c) A bitter and upset soul who resented life …

   Truly God is good to Israel,  
   to those who are pure in heart.  
   But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled,  
   my steps had nearly slipped.  
   For I was envious of the arrogant  
   when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.  
   For they have no pangs until death;  
   their bodies are fat and sleek.  
   They are not in trouble as others are;  
   they are not stricken like the rest of mankind.  
   Therefore pride is their necklace;  
   violence covers them as a garment.  
   Their eyes swell out through fatness;  
   their hearts overflow with follies.  
   They scoff and speak with malice;  
   loftily they threaten oppression.  
   They set their mouths against the heavens,  
   and their tongue struts through the earth.  
   Therefore his people turn back to them,  
   and find no fault in them.  
   And they say, “How can God know?  
   Is there knowledge in the Most High?”  
   Behold, these are the wicked;  
   always at ease, they increase in riches.  
   All in vain have I kept my heart clean  
   and washed my hands in innocence.  
   For all the day long I have been stricken  
   and rebuked every morning.  
   If I had said, “I will speak thus,”  
   I would have betrayed the generation of your children. (Ps. 73:1-15)  

   d) But when he went to the Temple to offer up to God the duty of a thank offering, he changed his mind …

   But when I thought how to understand this,
it seemed to me a wearisome task,
until I went into the sanctuary of God;
then I discerned their end.
Truly you set them in slippery places;
you make them fall to ruin.
How they are destroyed in a moment,
swept away utterly by terrors!
Like a dream when one awakes,
Lord, when you rouse yourself, you despise them as phantoms.
When my soul was embittered,
when I was pricked in heart,
I was brutish and ignorant;
I was like a beast toward you. (Ps. 73:16-22)

e) Then he realized this truth: God belonged to him and was the source of all his life and all
his joy –

Nevertheless, I am continually with you;
you hold my right hand.
You guide me with your counsel,
and afterward you will receive me to glory.
Whom have I in heaven but you?
And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you.
My flesh and my heart may fail,
but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.
For behold, those who are far from you shall perish;
you put an end to everyone who is unfaithful to you.
But for me it is good to be near God;
I have made the Lord God my refuge,
that I may tell of all your works. (Ps. 73:23-28)

3. Ask yourself these two questions:

a) **What if God did not exist at all?** How brutal, bitter, and baneful life would be. All this
and then ... nothing!

b) **What if God existed but was not your God?** How sad your eternal destiny would be: A
Christless eternity!

4. Every day, for all eternity, each of us can say: *God exists. God is mine. I will be with God forever!*

B. **Second: David thanks God for the Church** (Ps. 16:3)

1. *As for the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones,
in whom is all my delight. (Ps. 16:3)*

2. Paraphrased: “The people of God in my land (i.e., the Church) are the excellent people on the earth. I
take total delight in this Church.”

3. **You and I lose much of our joy by our constant criticism and complaining about Christ Covenant
Church (or any local church in which we are members). This is the mark of a graceless and**
ungrateful soul: He (she) is always angry at the Preacher, upset with the elders, and critical of their church.

4. They are like a person who likes their neighbor but can’t stand his wife – They profess love of Jesus but they don’t like His Bride – the Church.

5. Ask yourself this question: **What would life be like if I lived in a place where the Church was not or if I were a member of an apostate Church?**

6. Being grateful to God often begins with being thankful for your church!

C. **Third: David thanks God for being born a Jew (Ps. 16:4)**

1. *The sorrows of those who run after another god shall multiply; their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out or take their names on my lips. (Ps. 16:4)*

2. Put another way: *He is grateful he was born into a Jewish home and family that taught him the true religion and was not born into a pagan family and an idolatrous religion!*

3. He realizes how profoundly sad pagans are: "*The sorrows of those who run after (acquire) another god shall multiply ..."*

4. Think of this: There are around 7 billion people in this world.
   
   a) Only 1 in 7 are born into Roman Catholicism, Greek Orthodoxy, Protestantism, or some other branch of Christianity.
   
   b) and even fewer are born into Gospel (Evangelical) homes.
   
   c) 6 out of 7 people are born Buddhist, Muslim, Hindu, Shintoist, Taoist, Confucius, Animist or secularists (atheists).
   
   d) Let me put it this way: You had a 14% chance to be born into a nominally Christian home, and an 86% chance to be born a pagan!

5. I thank God, almost daily, that I was born into a god-fearing, Roman Catholic home in Columbus, Ohio and not a Shiite family in Tehran, Iran, living under Sharia Law!

6. **I mean this:** Be grateful for your birth-place, family and childhood religion – even if not evangelical. It sure beats the 86% alternatives!

D. **Fourth: David thanks God for Divine Providence and Common Grace (Ps. 16:5-6)**

1. *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. (Ps. 16:5-6)*

2. God, in His Providential care and common grace, has determined for each of us
   
   a) **Our Lot:** “The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot.”
   
   b) **Our Blessing:** “The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places”
   
   c) **Our Inheritance:** “indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance.”

3. In this poetic way David says, “God has providentially set out the course of my life in order to bless
me greatly”

a) my lot – the station in life into which I was born.
b) the lines of my life: the course my life takes
c) our future into eternity: the beautiful inheritance in Christ.
d) The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs— heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. (Rom. 8:16-17)

4. I know hundreds of people who are fundamentally unhappy because they will not accept God’s Providence and Common Grace for who they are –

a) the son of an alcoholic, daughter of a “loose woman,” poor, “blue collar,” “common” people, orphaned, abused, illegitimate, adopted, etc. …
b) They really don’t believe in God’s Providence

(1) And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. (Rom. 8:28)
c) sad: always looking (pretending) to be something other than what they truly are – by God’s design – they miss the lines that fall to them in pleasant places … every, single day!

5. We need to be grateful for all God has decreed for our lives. In this is true happiness … and contentment!

6. Bishop George Horne: Commentary on the Psalms; p. 79

He is sure that Jehovah will maintain his lot, that he will both give and preserve to him this his patrimony; and therefore rejoices at the divine beauty and excellency of the heavenly Canaan. And hence the Christian learns wherein his duty and his happiness consist; namely, in making choice of God for “the portion of his inheritance and of his cup,” for his support and for his delight: in preferring the spirit to the flesh, the church to the world, and eternity to time.

7. Always be grateful from where you have come, for where you are now, for where you will be forever! In this way you'll be happy.

E. Fifth: David thanks God for His ever-present Guidance (Ps. 16:7-8)

1. 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. (Ps. 16:7-8)

2. i.e., His is grateful for Scripture, and Prayer, and the counsel of others, and the presence of the Holy Spirit in his life.

3. As a King David knew he needed God’s guidance more than anything else, and he passed that conviction onto his son, Solomon –

a) Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father, only he sacrificed and made offerings at the high places. And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place. Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar.
At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, “Ask what I shall give you.” And Solomon said, “You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant David my father, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you. And you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne this day. And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. And your servant is in the midst of your people whom you have chosen, a great people, too many to be numbered or counted for multitude. Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?” It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. And God said to him, “Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you. I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other king shall compare with you, all your days. And if you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days.” (1 Kings 3:3-14)

**b)** Solomon did not come up with that alone; His father (David) and mother (Bathsheba) taught him this truth …

> The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel:
> To know wisdom and instruction,
> to understand words of insight,
> to receive instruction in wise dealing,
> in righteousness, justice, and equity;
> to give prudence to the simple,
> knowledge and discretion to the youth—
> Let the wise hear and increase in learning,
> and the one who understands obtain guidance,
> to understand a proverb and a saying,
> the words of the wise and their riddles.
> The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge;
> fools despise wisdom and instruction.
> Hear, my son, your father's instruction,
> and forsake not your mother's teaching,
> for they are a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck. (Prov. 1:1-9)

4. Every day two great blessings are open before you: God’s Bible and the Throne to heaven.

  a) God speaks to you: The Bible

  b) God listens to you: Prayer

  c) Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known. (Jeremiah 33:3)
d) **The Blessing of God’s Guidance**

5. **Do not take for granted this fact:** God chooses to guide your life to His perfect ends, but does not do that for probably 95% of mankind!

6. *For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. 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. (Jer. 29:11-14)*

7. Question: How often are you in the Word and in Prayer?

F. **Sixth: David thanks God for His Sovereign Care (Ps. 16:9-10)**

1. *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. (Ps. 16:9-10)*

2. David is grateful to God for two facets of His Omnipotent Care –
   
   a) First: God will protect him in this life …

   *Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure. (Ps. 16:9)*

   b) Second: God will raise him up from the grave for eternal life …

   *For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption. (Ps. 16:10)*

3. Because the NT Apostles quoted this verse in reference to Jesus Christ and His resurrection, people consider this a *Messianic Psalm*.

   a) Peter, on Pentecost Sunday …

   *this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it. For David says concerning him,*

   “‘I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken; therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; my flesh also will dwell in hope. For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One see corruption. You have made known to me the paths of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.’ (Acts 2:23-28)*

   b) Paul, in Antioch in Pisidia …

   *And we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, this he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus, as also it is written in the second Psalm,*
“‘You are my Son, today I have begotten you.’
And as for the fact that he raised him from the dead, no more to return to corruption, he has spoken in this way,
“‘I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David.’
Therefore he says also in another psalm,
“‘You will not let your Holy One see corruption.’ (Acts 13:32-35)

c) Psalm 16 is **obviously** pointing to Jesus Christ’s resurrection.

d) The Holy Spirit says so, through Peter and Paul.

4. But David **did not** know that. He wrote Psalm 16 about **himself**.

a) This is **not** to take anything away from Psalm 16

b) **James M. Boice**: *Psalms; vol. 1; p. 134*

> Did David consciously prophesy the Lord’s resurrection? He may have, but it is not necessary to think so. To be sure, Peter termed him a prophet in Acts 2. But later in his first letter, Peter wrote that the prophets “searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow” (1 Peter 1:10-11). This means that David did not necessarily understand that he was writing of Jesus’ resurrection when he composed verse 10.

Yet if he was not writing of Christ, the verse is in some ways even more remarkable. In that case, David was writing of his own hope, expecting that God would not abandon him to the grave and would preserve him. He did not have the resurrection of Jesus before him as a sample of what he had in mind or proof of what God can and will do, as we who live on this side of the resurrection do.

> How did David get to this point? There is only one answer. It was by the logic of faith. He reasoned that if God cares for me in life, He will care for me in death, and raise me to eternal life.

c) **The logic of faith**: If God cares for me in life, He will care for me in death, and raise me to eternal life.

5. You and I have all the more reason to be grateful to God for the resurrection, for unlike David, we **have known about** the Risen Christ!

6. **Get this**: No matter how hard, how sad, how disappointing life can be (or is) for you and me, this fact remains: Jesus will come again and raise us from the dead! This is the ultimate ground of our hope and joy!

> **Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been**
grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than
gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and
honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 1:3-7)

7. This brings us to this “joy unspeakable” – our salvation in Christ.

G. **Seventh:** David thanks God for his own salvation (Ps. 16:11)

1. **You make known to me the path of life;**
   in your presence there is fullness of joy;
   at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

2. What a marvelously poetic and beautiful way to talk about salvation –

   a) **Remember:** Hebrew Parallelism (different ways to describe the same thing)

   b) Salvation is **the path of life** revealed to us in the Gospel …

   Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to
destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is
hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few. (Matt. 7:13-14)

   Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the
Father except through me. (John 14:6)

   c) Salvation is **fullness of joy** in God’s Presence in Heaven …

   Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you
believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining
the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls. (1 Peter 1:8-9)

   d) Salvation is **pleasures forevermore** from God’s right hand of favor …

   Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was
given me by the working of his power. To me, though I am the very least of all the
saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unspeakable riches of
Christ, (Eph. 3:7-8)

3. If God would never have given me (or you) anything else, I (you) have all the reason in the world, to
thank Him forever, for the gift of **salvation** – salvation by sheer grace!

   He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his
beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. (1 Col. 13-14)

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course
of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the
sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying
out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of
mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even
when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have
been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in
Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace
in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And
this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may
boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (Eph. 2:1-10)

4. The great hymn writers of the faith know this gratitude of salvation so well –
   a) **William Cowper:** Dear dying Lamb, your precious blood shall never lose its pow’r, till all the ransomed saints of God he saved to sin no more. When this poor, lisping, stamm’ring tongue lies silent in the grave, then in a nobler, sweeter song I’ll sing your power to save!
   b) **Philip P. Bliss:** I will sing of my Redeemer, and His wondrous love for me; On the cruel cross He suffered, from the curse He set me free. Sing, O sing of my Redeemer! With His blood He purchased me! On the cross He sealed my pardon, paid the debt, and made me free!
   c) **Fanny J. Crosby:** I think of my Blessed Redeemer; I think of Him all the day long; I sing for I cannot be silent, His love is the theme of my song. Redeemed through His infinite mercy, His child, and forever, I am!

5. The source of all our gratitude is this: **God has saved us forever through the blood of His Son, Jesus Christ!**

II. THREE GOOD REASONS TO PRAY PSALM 16

A. **First:** *We Pray Psalm 16 because to do so Blesses God*
   1. If we love God we want to please Him, and nothing pleases God more than when people thank Him for what He has done for us.
   2. The Highest form of Praise is **not** compliment; it is **thanksgiving**.
      
      *The one who offers thanksgiving as his sacrifice glorifies me; to one who orders his way rightly I will show the salvation of God!*" (Ps. 50:23)
   3. God is glorified with the **sacrifice of thanksgiving**!
      
      *The one who offers thanksgiving as his sacrifice glorifies me; to one who orders his way rightly I will show the salvation of God!*" (Ps. 50:23)

B. **Second:** *We Pray Psalm 16 for the Betterment of our souls*
   1. We swim, from Monday to Saturday, in the ocean of ingratitude, pulled by the tide of narcissism, and rolled by the waves of entitlement. We are adrift of a sea of unhappiness.
   2. Your soul and mine need the **weekly recalibration** of Christian worship – thanksgiving to God.
   3. These Psalms which call us to Public (Private) Worship, call us to **sanity** about life
      a) *Oh come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation! Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise! For the Lord is a great God,*
and a great King above all gods.  
(Ps. 95:1-3)

b) Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth!  
Serve the Lord with gladness!  
Come into his presence with singing!  
Know that the Lord, he is God!  
It is he who made us, and we are his;  
we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.  
Enter his gates with thanksgiving,  
and his courts with praise!  
Give thanks to him; bless his name!  
For the Lord is good;  
his steadfast love endures forever,  
and his faithfulness to all generations.  
(Ps. 100:1-5)

4. These are invitations to recalibrate your soul with GRATITUDE!

C. Third: We Pay Psalm 16 Because it Enhances our Church Community


2. In it she postulates and illustrates that all genuine community – Christian or other – must be built upon four pillars
   a) Gratitude as a Way of Life
   b) Making and Keeping Promises
   c) Living Truthfully
   d) Practicing Hospitality

3. She mentions that a lifestyle of gratitude – a purposeful commitment to thanksgiving, validates and enriches the Church in four ways
   a) First: Gratitude gives shape to the Christian life and theology (p. 17)

   If we really understand our lives as redeemed by costly grace, then our primary response can only be gratitude. It’s at the center of the Christian life; in fact, the theologian Karl Barth wrote that grace and gratitude “belong together like heaven and earth. Grace evokes gratitude like the voice an echo. Gratitude follows grace like thunder (follows) lightning.” If the essence of God is grace, then the essence of human beings as God’s people is our gratitude or thanks.

   b) Second: gratitude makes church community more affirming (p. 22)

   When our lives are shaped by gratitude, we’re more likely to notice the goodness and beauty in everyday things. We are content; we feel blessed and are eager to confer blessing. We are able to delight in the very existence of another human being. In a grateful community, individuals and their contributions are acknowledged and honored, and there is regular testimony to God’s faithfulness, through which the community experiences the joys of its members. Expressions of gratitude help make the community alive to the Word, the Spirit, and God’s work.
c) **Third**: Gratitude is the Heart of Christian Worship (pp. 23-24)

   In the book of Psalms, worshipers are frequently invited to enter God’s presence with praise and thanksgiving. Remembering God’s goodness and acts on behalf of the community was at the center of Hebrew worship. When, as a community, we remember Jesus’ gift to us in bringing salvation, we are also drawn into the heart of worship. Costly sacrifice and gratitude are profoundly intertwined at the Last Supper. As the church enacts the Eucharist or “Great Thanksgiving” regularly, our small expressions of gratitude are joined with Jesus’ gift of himself; together they form a life-giving liturgical expression of thanksgiving and hope. As the early Christians were learning what it meant to be a new and transformed community, Paul frequently urged them to give thanks or to be thankful.

d) **Fourth**: Gratitude is what the Church offers the World as a radical new way of life.

   (1) Despite the emphasis on gratitude in the biblical texts, Christian tradition, and other great traditions, today it is often countercultural to take the posture of a grateful recipient. Some of us operate with a well-developed sense of entitlement, quite certain that we deserve good things and are entitled to the best the “life” has to offer. Others of us, because we work hard, are convinced that we have earned the good that has come to us. Gratitude seems quite irrelevant.

   (2) Gratitude to Grace!

   (3) Finding time to be thankful to God and others often seems like a nice extra rather than a vital component of our lives. But it is when we break from our regular routines and quiet the noise and activity of everyday life that we are able to make space for gratitude, and in those moments we are often surprised by the renewal and strength we find. Despite the cultural challenges we face today, a posture of gratitude remains a beautiful witness to the transforming power of God’s grace.

4. So… allow me to ask you …

   a) *Are you a grateful person?*

   b) *Can you begin to pray Psalm 16 regularly?*

   c) *What is on your list of the seven things for which you are most grateful to God?*