"Thankful — Part 1"

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BIG SANDY, Texas—At our Bible study on Wednesday night, I began a new series about being thankful. The title of the presentation was "Thankful — Part 1."

Often when I prepare a series, I have the majority of the material finished — with maybe only a few items to tweak. For this series, I have more work to do. But I decided to discuss this subject as readers in the U.S. celebrate the national holiday of Thanksgiving on Thursday, November 26.

Thankful for God's vision

Part 1 in this series talked about being "Thankful for God's Vision." In the study, we discussed God's vision in three areas.

- God's Creation
- God's Calling
- God's Children

God's creation

In Genesis 1, Bible students are introduced to some of God's details about His creation.

- Genesis 1:3-5—God called the light "Day" and the darkness "Night."
- Genesis 1:6-8—God divided the waters from the waters, and called the firmament "Heaven."
- Genesis 1:9-13—God called the dry land "Earth" and the waters "Seas."
- Genesis 1:14-19—God made two great lights — the greater light to rule

the day and the lesser light to rule the night.

- Genesis 1:20-23—God created living creatures.

- Genesis 1:24-31—"God created man in His own image. In the image of God, He created him [mankind]. Male and female, He created them." He gave mankind dominion over the animals.

- Genesis 2:1-3—God rested on the seventh day and sanctified it.

- Psalm 8:3-4—Why did the Lord give special blessings to mankind?

- Psalm 8:5-8—Since the Lord made mankind a little lower than the angels (but higher than the animal kingdom), He gave mankind dominion over the animals.

God's calling

What Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 2:19 is generally ignored by religious people. (That's right. You read those words correctly.)

Many people (if not most people) ignore the two truths that Paul wrote. I am sure that we can blame the devil for influencing people to think too highly of themselves. But will we humble ourselves and accept these words?

- "The Lord knows those who are His."

- "Let everyone who names the name of Christ, depart from iniquity."

Self-righteous people think that they should be the people to identify those who are His and those who are not His. Beware of arrogance.

- Hebrews 5:12-14—It is certainly true that the Bible teaches that Christians should evaluate behavior — recognizing the difference between bad behavior and good behavior. But it is not the place of a Christian to dogmatically claim who is and who is not God's.

- Matthew 7:21-23—Christ plainly said that not everyone who claims to have a relationship with Him actually has a current relationship with Him

- John 6:44—Christ said: "No one comes to Me unless the Father (who sent Me) draws Him."

- 1 Corinthians 15:20-23—Christ was the firstfruit and there is an order for other firstfruits (who are chosen to serve).

- 1 Timothy 2:3-6—There is an appointed time for God to be united with each person — and the Mediator who makes that happen is Christ.

Being God’s children

Do you regularly marvel at the truth that you are considered God’s child?

- Romans 8:14—These are the sons of God.

- Romans 8:15—“Abba, Father”

- Romans 8:16-17—Children of God — heirs of God — joint heirs with Christ.

- Hebrews 12:5-11—As sons, we receive the chastening of the Lord.

- 1 John 2:18-22—The Antichrist (and the many antichrists) deny the Father and the Son.

- 1 John 3:1-3—We are called the children of God.