

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Church of God Big Sandy

ChurchofGodBigSandy.com

Nov. 27, 2021 • 1:00 p.m. • Sunset 5:14

Bible studies

Interactive study—1:00 p.m. Dave Havir
Presentation study—2:00 Dave Havir
(Also transmitted live)

Order of service—3:00 p.m.

Song leader Ron Avey
Pianist Bea Gusner
Scripture reading Luke 17:11–19
Sermon Neil McIver

Quick takes

1. Thank you—The congregation thanks Shirley West for representing our congregation when she gave a short presentation at the Big Sandy Community Thanksgiving church service last Sunday evening.
2. Upcoming speakers—We are pleased to announce the following guest speakers—Terry Post on Dec. 4, Richard Crow on Dec. 11, Scott Hoefker on Dec. 18 and Blake Silverstein on Jan. 8.
3. Wednesday-night Bible study on Dec. 1—There is a Wednesday-night Bible study scheduled for Dec. 1.
4. Edifying the Body—This week’s article is “Time to Count Blessings Instead of Grievances” by Thomas Sowell.
5. Among Friends—This week’s article is “Thanking God and Thanking People” by Dave Havir.
6. Eye on the World—This week’s “Eye on the World” is 13 pages. Since this week’s “Eye on the World” was compiled on Monday, it is much shorter. (Last week’s edition had six articles and 310 headlines, while this week has seven articles and zero headlines.)
7. No prayer information—Since this bulletin was prepared on Monday, it does not contain the typical list of prayer updates and new prayer requests.

"Time to Count Blessings Instead of Grievances"

By Thomas Sowell

STANFORD, Calif.—There was a time when Thanksgiving meant an occasion for counting our blessings. But, now that we have so many blessings that previous generations could hardly have dreamed about, we take them all for granted and are much more likely to count our grievances and the ways in which others have been unfair to us.

Everybody is for "fairness"—because we all use the same word to mean very different things. Most of us think you have been treated fairly when you have been treated the same as everyone else—subjected to the same rules and judged by the same standards. But some think that you have been treated fairly only if you have had the same chances as everyone else.

These are very different and completely incompatible notions.

People on opposite sides of political and legal issues often talk right past each other because they are using the same words to mean totally different and mutually contradictory things. When statistics are flung around on the "disparities"—often called "inequities"—between different groups, the implication is that such statistical differences could not exist without unfair treatment.

Even in situations where there is a total absence of evidence for this unfair treatment, that scarcely causes a pause. If there is no evidence, then there must be "covert" discrimination, a "glass ceiling" or some other elusive and sinister influence that you cannot substantiate. This kind of circular reasoning says, in effect, "Heads I win and tails you lose."

Politically, there are few ideas more potent than the notion that all your problems are caused by other people and their unfairness to you. That notion was the royal road to unbridled power for Hitler, Lenin, Mao and Pol Pot—which is to say millions of human beings paid with their lives for believing it.

The unfairness that these demagogues talked about was not a myth. Nothing is easier than finding examples of unfair treatment among human beings.

The fatal misstep is in assuming that such unfairness can be presumed whenever re-

sults are unequal. For the truly clever, unfairness is simply defined as anything producing unequal results or unequal prospects.

To those with this mind-set, if individuals' "life chances" are unequal, then that is unfair. This might be an interesting argument if you were filing a class-action lawsuit against God, but it is idiocy when trying to hold any given human being responsible for a whole galaxy of complex interactions beyond the control of anyone made of flesh and blood.

When we confuse the vagaries of fate with the sins of man and look for "leaders" to redress this unfairness, we are setting ourselves up to become dupes of those who know how to arouse emotions and promise the impossible. That lesson is written in blood across the history of the 20th century.

■ Any serious study of geography alone would show the utter unrealism of expecting people whose histories and cultures evolved in very different physical settings to have the same skills and experiences.

■ How could the peoples living in the Himalayas have developed the same seafaring skills as people living in the Greek islands? How could the Eskimos have learned to grow pineapples?

These are just some of the more-obvious geographic sources of unequal results—and geography is just one of many influences on our ability to create wealth or do the thousands of other things which influence our "life chances." First-born children average higher IQs than later children. Technology makes some people's jobs obsolete and opens up great opportunities for others.

The unfairness of other people is just one more item on this very long list.

How many are interested in the unfairness that has made us so much more fortunate than people in previous centuries?

If the average American of today could be transported back over the centuries and become a nobleman in the Middle Ages, that would produce a reduced standard of living and a shorter life span. Maybe that is a reason to count our blessings instead of our grievances.

“Thanking God and Thanking People”

This article is from the “Among Friends” section of the Church of God Big Sandy’s website, churchofgodbig sandy.com. It was posted for the weekend of Nov. 27, 2021.

By Dave Havir

BIG SANDY, Texas—One of the greatest sins in this life is the sin of ingratitude. Our loving Father wants His children to express thankfulness to Him and to each other.

There are many scriptures that mention the importance of giving thanks to God. Let’s notice a few verses about this important quality.

Thanking God in Old Testament

Deuteronomy 8:10-14—“When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you. Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments, His judgments, and His statutes which I command you today, lest—when you have eaten and are full, and have built beautiful houses and dwell in them; and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold are multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied; when your heart is lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.”

Ezra 3:11—“And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the LORD: “For He is good, for His mercy endures forever toward Israel.” Then all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.”

Psalms 100:1-5—“Make a joyful shout to the LORD, all you lands! Serve the LORD with gladness; come before His presence with singing. Know that the LORD, He is God; it is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name. For the LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations.”

Psalms 105:1-4—“Oh, give thanks to the

LORD! Call upon His name; make known His deeds among the peoples! Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; talk of all His wondrous works! Glory in His holy name; let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the LORD! Seek the LORD and His strength; seek His face evermore!”

Psalms 106:1-5—“Praise the LORD! Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever. Who can utter the mighty acts of the LORD? Who can declare all His praise? Blessed are those who keep justice, and he who does righteousness at all times! Remember me, O LORD, with the favor You have toward Your people; oh, visit me with Your salvation, that I may see the benefit of Your chosen ones, that I may rejoice in the gladness of Your nation, that I may glory with Your inheritance.”

Psalms 136:1-9—“Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever. Oh, give thanks to the God of gods! For His mercy endures forever. Oh, give thanks to the Lord of lords! For His mercy endures forever: To Him who alone does great wonders, for His mercy endures forever; to Him who by wisdom made the heavens, for His mercy endures forever; to Him who laid out the earth above the waters, for His mercy endures forever; to Him who made great lights, for His mercy endures forever—the sun to rule by day, for His mercy endures forever; the moon and stars to rule by night, for His mercy endures forever.”

Thanking God in New Testament

Luke 17:11-19—“Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. And they lifted up their voices and said, ‘Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!’ So when He saw them, He said to them, ‘Go, show yourselves to the priests.’ And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed.

And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. So Jesus answered and said, ‘Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?’ And He said to him, ‘Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well.’”

Philippians 4:6—“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.”

Hebrews 13:15—“Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.”

Appreciating family

It is important in this life that we make a habit of the action of showing appreciation to people in our lives.

Genesis 2:21-24—“And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. And Adam said: ‘This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.’ Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12—“Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, for he has no one to help him up. Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; but how can one be warm alone? Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.”

Ephesians 5:33—“Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.”

Ephesians 6:1-3—“Children, obey your parents in the LORD, for this is right. ‘Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise: that it may be well

with you and you may live long on the earth.’”

Ephesians 6:4—“And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”

Appreciating friends

I realize that we do not all have the same circumstances in our lives. We do not have the same quality of relationships in our lives. (If you are struggling with the loss of support from family, notice how you may have support from friends.)

1 Samuel 18:1-3—“Now when he had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. Saul took him that day, and would not let him go home to his father’s house anymore. Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.”

Proverbs 18:24—“A man who has friends must himself be friendly, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.”

Romans 16:1-2—“I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church in Cenchrea, that you may receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatever business she has need of you; for indeed she has been a helper of many and of myself also.”

Romans 16:3-4—“Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.”

Philippians 2:19-22—“But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state. For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus. But you know his proven character, that as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel.”

2 Timothy 1:16-18—“The Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; but when he arrived in Rome, he sought me out very zealously and found me. The Lord grant to him that he may find mercy from the Lord in that Day—and you know very well how many ways he ministered to me at Ephesus.”