

**Welcome to the
Common Ground Café!**



Sunday, November 19, 2023

**This Thanksgiving Will Be Different
A Study of Psalm 65**

www.hillcrest.church

Describe a time you loaned out an item to a friend and then wondered when you would ever get it back. How did it make you feel: Annoyed? Taken for granted?

Psalm 65 describes the gratitude we should return to God for all he's given us. The Sunday before Thanksgiving Day is a good time to evaluate our "GQ"—our gratitude quotient! Here are three reasons to be thankful:

First:

We thank God because he has touched our guilt with his forgiveness

Read Psalm 65:1-4.

Consider 4 aspects of salvation for which we should give thanks:

- **He Forgives.** Pastor Tom pointed out that the word we translate "you forgave" in verse 3 can also be translated "you made atonement for." Define "atonement." How is Jesus's death an "atonement"? How should that enrich your understanding of God's forgiveness?
- **He Chooses.** Is salvation something you choose, something you are chosen for, or both? Explain your answer.
- **He Brings Near.** If God said he "forgave" your past deeds but then kept you at a distance because of your past deeds, would you really feel forgiven?

- **He Gives Abundantly**—God meets our material needs, but verse 4 seems to be more about spiritual needs. So, review your life and list at least five spiritual riches he provides.

**Second:
We thank God because he has touched our crises
with his power**

Read Psalm 65:5-8.

What images did the poet use in verses 6 and 7 to describe God's power? How can this truth give us confidence that God has the ability to handle our problems?

What image does the poet use in the last part of verse 8 to describe the end of his nation's problem? (Bonus: What is the last line of the film *Gone with the Wind* and how might it relate to the image in verse 8?)

In "light" of verse 8, what can we say to people in heartbreak to help them wait patiently for the sunrise in the darkness of trouble?

**Third: We thank God because he has touched our daily needs
with his provision**

Read Psalm 65:9-13.

What phrase or line from these verses struck you as particularly beautiful?

To ancient farmers, these verses contain not just images of beauty but images of survival. How so? How do our experiences in the modern marketplace obscure this truth (and thus make us less conscious of our dependence on God)?

Share a story of how God met a need in your life.

Thanksgiving Day is Thursday: How's your "GQ"?

Psalm 65 leads us to thank God for his forgiveness, power, and generosity. Of course we're grateful for all three, but which one are you most grateful for at this particular moment in your life? Why?

REMEMBER: All Life Groups should conclude by NOON today. See you at the Church-wide Lunch!

Close with praise reports and prayer requests