

## *Thanksgiving... the Journey Home*

Peru — Great Opportunities for revival unto reformation. Harvest, Government “Human Rights of the Unborn,” Sustainable power project, Education, Industry, Economy,

Sean F. Dec 1 Shady Maple

### **I. Thanksgiving — A Season of Encounter —> Absorbing the Chaos Carrying the Presence**

Stepping on the stairway from my office yesterday morning, I was enveloped in the affectionate presence of God. Like being hugged by a cloud. Very personal, very specific. Full of memories of his mercy, full of hope in his faithfulness to complete what he has begun. For a moment, I was stricken.

*A. On a Journey to Our True Home*

1 **Pet 1:1** “To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion”

We are pilgrims, sojourners on a journey, resident aliens, scattered throughout the brokenness of this world system. **Chosen** according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be multiplied!

3 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

**[slide 1]**

*B. We are Children of God...*

1 **Jn 3:2** Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. **[s 2]**

*C. Grace Releases the Inheritance*

**Eph 2:8** For by **grace** you have been **saved** through **faith**. And this is not your own doing; it is the **gift of God**, **9** not a result of works, so that no one may boast. **[s. 3]**

Faith in what? The finished work, all the Promises of God that find their “Yes” in Jesus.

Salvation is life from the dead, rescue from dysfunction, deliverance from fear and demonic oppression, a living hope that speaks within changing the narrative from doom and destruction to the promises of God.

It changes our paternity, it changes our citizenship, it changes our destination, it transforms us, it teaches us to say no to this

*D. Thanks Connects of Grace and Faith*

**GRACE and THANKS — Connected... Thanks opens the door for Grace.**

**Thanks for the Grace... Gracias por la gracia**

This is a season of **GRACE** — God’s ability at work within us. It energizes us to enter into transformation and restoration of our own soul. We are rescued, healed, delivered by GRACE.

In NT Greek — Grace (*charis*) is derived from Joy (*chara*).

**Grace** invites us into a participation in the life of God who is goodness and truth and beauty. This is happy-blessedness, which means holiness, which means wholeness, which means to be definitively, exhaustively, without remainder or qualification, home.

**2 Cor 1:20** ... **All the promises** of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is **through him** that we utter our **Amen** to God for his glory.

**NIV** For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ. And so through him the “Amen” is spoken by us to the glory of God.

**Tit 2:11** For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, **[s 4 & 5]**

12 training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, 13 waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

His **grace** is flowing **over you** and flowing through your being. It is the essence of being IN Christ. It is the perpetual reality of the Temple of the Holy Spirit.

**Grace (thanksgiving)** is the **already-not yet** participation in the fullness of God.

The HEBREW word for **Thanks** involves ACKNOWLEDGING GOD'S NATURE, it has imagery of something we throw or cast toward God. (All our crowning achievements, acknowledging every mercy, and every victory, and every Promise) We confess what we know of His Nature.

GRATITUDE is the key that brings us into Heaven's protection and dominion.

Ps 100:4 Enter his gates with **thanksgiving**, and his courts with praise! **Give thanks** to him; bless his name! [s 6]

Greek phrase "thanks be to God" is *χαρις* or literally *grace to God*. It's a participation in the generosity and overflowing goodness of God. We throw, cast, give back to Him what He gives to us. We enter into the dance of Goodness.

2 Cor 2:14 But **thanks be** to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere.

2 Cor 4:15 For it is all for your sake, so that as **grace** extends to more and more people it may **increase thanksgiving**, to the glory of God.

**Knowing Him... Eternal Life ... trusting His provision... Abundant Life**

**John 17:3** And this is eternal life, that they **know** you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. [s 7]

Eternal life is not this life continuing without end. Eternal life is the **fulfillment anticipated** by all that is good, true, and beautiful in this life.

**2Pet 1:3** His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness ... **4** ... He has given us **his** very great and precious **promises**, so that **through them** you may **participate** in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. [s 8 & 9]

You are already participating in eternal life as you walk in grace, as you live in love, as you remain in Jesus. It's in you, and it is on you like a fiery magnetic field.

**This is how I fight my battles...** It may look like I'm surrounded... but I am surrounded by Him.

## II. Remembering and Anticipating. Thanksgiving —> Christmas —> New Year

### A. *Like Abraham, you are Blessed to be a Blessing*

**Eph. 1:3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has **blessed us** in Christ with **every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places**,

### B. *Blessing is Prerequisite for Influence*

**Ps 67.1** May God be gracious to us and **bles**s us  
and make his **face** to **shine** upon us, *Selah*  
**2** that **your way** may be **known** on earth,  
your **saving power** among **all nations**.

## III. Challenges to THANKFULNESS and HOPE

**Jn 16:33** I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

## **A. Toxic Narratives, Environments, Addictions, Rage**

*Abide in Thanks — Live in Grace —*

*It's your Identity — Ambassador, Royal Priest*

*You are Salt — cleanse, purify*

*You are Light — sanitize, energize, release life*

## **B. Despair and Presumption**

*Despair is pride in our own disappointment...This is all there is.*

*Presumption is pride in our own sufficiency— We are not perfect, but good enough. I'm OK, you're OK*

**Hope is a gift from God. A virtue or strength.**

**Optimism** is a matter of optics. Accentuate the positive.

**Hope** looks the mess right in the face and believes God's promises of the future. **Hope is faith in the promises.**

**Abraham** — In hope he believed against hope. (Rom 4:18) Not his own situation, but the One who had promised.. (4:21)

**Job** — Though he slay me, yet I will hope in him. (13:15)

**Habakkuk** — Though the fig tree should not blossom nor fruit be on the vine... yet will I rejoice in the Lord. (3:17-18)

**We are pilgrims heading home. Thanksgiving allows us to smell the aroma of Heaven.**

## **C. Loneliness and alienation**

**Time alone with God.**

**If you are alone on the Holidays, make it a day of prayer and intercession for**

**Gratitude to increase**

**Surprises**

## *Life giving connections.*

### **III. Every Table is an Altar**

In Jesus the unknown has made itself known in the finitude of space and time. Jesus says of himself, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." He is the human face of God.

We come to the Lord's Table. This altar. We partake of Jesus, we remember our Exodus out of darkness of sin and death, through the Red Sea and wilderness, heading toward the Promises

This meal is full of wonder — At this table, Jesus reminds us that the finite is capable of the infinite— *Finitum capax infiniti*. In Jesus Christ, the infinite and the finite are one. If the infinite did not include the finite, it would not be infinite.

At the Cross and at this Table we partake of His once and for all fully sufficient sacrifice, His infinite love and His Eternal Life.

Bread of Heaven. True Bread and True Drink.

**Jn. 15:9** As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love.

**Jn. 15:12** This is **my commandment**, that you love one another as I have loved you.

**A. *Communion, participation in the glorious reality of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.***

### **IV. May the God of Hope Fill You!**