

# get connected

We connect people to Jesus and equip them to be his disciples.



## Thanksgiving Gives Us Eyes for God

By Steve Fuller, lead pastor of Grace Church Abu Dhabi.  
He writes at livingbyfaithblog.com and desiringgod.org.

When I was 8 years old, I had an eye exam. As I tried to make out the letters on the chart, I got so many wrong that the doctor thought I was joking. But this was no joke; I was very nearsighted.

A week later, when I got my first pair of glasses, I was stunned. I could read street signs, recognize people's faces at a distance, see far-off mountains and individual leaves on trees. I could see more clearly than ever. That's a lot like gratitude. Gratitude is like glasses, as it helps us see the glory of God's mercy more clearly. And therefore, because our greatest joy is seeing God's glory, gratitude increases our joy.

### Gratitude Helps Us See

For many years, I did not experience more joy in God through gratitude. I dutifully thanked God for his blessings, but because I did not understand thanksgiving, my gratitude did not help me see God's glorious mercy, and so it did not increase my joy.

"The goal of thanksgiving is seeing and feeling the glory of God's mercy."

The problem was that I saw thanksgiving mostly as an obligation to be fulfilled. God had done

something for me, so now I owed him gratitude. And once I had said, "Thank you," my debt was paid, and I moved on to something else.



But that's not how the Bible talks about thanksgiving. Consider, first, how the Bible often links thanksgiving with joy.

Let us come into his presence with *thanksgiving*; let us make a *joyful* noise to him with songs of praise!

(Psalm 95:2)

*Rejoice* in the Lord, O you righteous, and *give thanks* to his holy name! (Psalm 97:12)

Let them offer sacrifices of *thanksgiving*, and tell of his deeds in songs of *joy*! (Psalm 107:22)

So, joy and thanksgiving are connected. But how?

We might think the connection is obvious: when we give thanks, we rejoice in what God has given. Think of the joy we feel in getting promoted, or being healed. Surely, joy in God's gifts is part of gratitude. But it's not the only

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## Eyes for God, *continued from Page 1*

joy of gratitude. And it's not the greatest joy.

### **Gratitude's Greatest Joy**

We can discover the greatest joy of gratitude by noticing how often God's word links thanksgiving with praise.

I will *thank* you in the great congregation; in the mighty throng I will *praise* you. (Psalm 35:18)

I will *praise* the name of God with a song; I will magnify him with *thanksgiving*. (Psalm 69:30)

Then one of [the ten lepers], 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*. (Luke 17:15-16)

"Gratitude is like glasses, as it helps us see the glory of God's mercy more clearly."

I was used to distinguishing thanksgiving and praise. And of course, they are different: thanksgiving does focus more on what God does, and praise on who God is. But these verses show there's a connection. The fact that thanksgiving is linked with praise shows that thanksgiving does not ignore who God is. Thanksgiving helps us see and praise who God is. And this act of seeing and praising God is thanksgiving's greatest joy.

How does this work?

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### **Putting on the Glasses**

Let's say you get a promotion and want to thank God.

Thankfulness starts with seeing the value and the mercy of God's gifts.



So, you would remind yourself of the value of this promotion – maybe it's more interesting work, higher pay, and a better career path. Then, you would ponder the mercy of this promotion – that because you are a sinner deserving only hell, this gift is an infinitely costly mercy, bought for you by Jesus's suffering on the cross.

Then, as you thank God, recounting both the worth and the mercy of this promotion, the experience will be like putting on glasses – you see even more clearly the glory of God's grace in Christ. And this will increase your joy *in God*, because beholding God's glorious mercy is our all-satisfying joy.

So, when God calls us to give thanks, he's not just calling us to thank him for what he's done. He's calling us to rejoice in who he is, as displayed in what he's done. And that's why Christian Hedonists love to thank God: thanking God leads to seeing more of God, and seeing more of God is our greatest joy.

### **Growing Toward Gratitude**

How can we thank God in a way that increases our joy in God? Here are five steps.

First, ask for the Spirit's help.

The goal of thanksgiving is seeing and feeling the glory of God's mercy, and we can't do that without the Spirit's work. So, ask.

Second, ponder the value of God's gifts. Consider the value of each gift. Think about health, friends, the food in front of you. Think especially about the Savior, whose death paid for your sins and purchased fullness of joy in him forever.

Third, think about the mercy of God's gifts. Not only do we not deserve these gifts, but because of our sin, all we deserve is God's judgment. Ask God to help you see that, so you feel more wonder at the grace and mercy displayed in this blood-bought gift.

Fourth, do this until you see and feel more of God's glorious mercy. Keep praying for the Spirit's Jesus-revealing work, and keep thinking about the worth and mercy of God's gifts, until you sense more of God's glorious mercy in Christ.

Fifth, express your thanksgiving and joyful praise to God. Thank him for his gifts, expressing the worth of each gift and the mercy of each gift. And rejoice in how each gift displays the glory of God's grace to you in Christ.

We all need help seeing God's glorious mercy. And gratitude, like glasses, can help. So, for the sake of your joy in God, put on the glasses of gratitude. And *see*.

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## Prayer Focus – Thanksgiving

Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good. His steadfast love endures forever (1 Chronicles 16:34)

Or in Bill Gaither's words: His love has no limits, His grace has no measure, His power no boundary known unto men; For out of His infinite riches in Jesus He giveth, and giveth, and giveth again. LORD, we give thanks to you! You are worthy of all praise. You are the giver of infinite joy.

Pour out your Spirit upon us so we can see and feel the glory of your love. O how we need you to even know our need for your mercy and grace.

Guide our thoughts to the infinite worth of your giving. The blessings we have here – our health, our friends, our family, shelter, food, work.

The ever-lasting blessings Jesus secured for us – our sins forgiven and eternal life with Him.

Convict us again of the depths of our sin-nature and sinful thoughts and actions. We deserve condemnation and death, not the blessings you shower upon us. All you provide flows from your very nature – the good shepherd who cares for His sheep.



Do not let this awareness not lead us to despair. No! Let it reveal to us more about you – the all-knowing, all-powerful creator and redeemer – who reconciled justice and love in Jesus. May gratitude blossom into praise and thanksgiving. How wonderful, how amazing is your grace. How glorious is your mercy to us.

Open our hearts, open our mouths to pour forth thanksgiving and joyful praise to you. May your praises be continually on our lips as we rejoice in the gifts that show your glory and grace. Let the whole earth resound with praise and thanksgiving.



### **Operation Christmas Child Packing Party** **POSTPONED**

Due to unforeseen circumstances, we will not be holding our OCC packing party on November 11th as originally scheduled. Look for updates in the coming year for when the packing party will be re-scheduled. Please contact Linda Lyke, our outreach coordinator, with any questions that you may have.

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## See the World from God's Perspective

**Perspectives on the World Christian Movement** is a 15 lesson education course exploring different aspects of God's global purpose in a multi-faceted learning experience. ([www.perspectives.org](http://www.perspectives.org))

This class is being held in person only 45 minutes from Milton in Mukwonago at Brooklife Church. Or it can be attended entirely online if you don't want to travel.

Linda Lyke says, "Perspectives was an eye opening class for me, understanding God's mission for all peoples to know him. The class featured reading material by highly acclaimed experts in the mission field, speakers who served in areas where Christ is not known and a Biblical foundation of God's desire to share himself with all. I'd highly recommend this class to any Christ-follower!"

Class begins January 15<sup>th</sup>. Contact Linda Lyke for more information.

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# Biblical Stewardship – Part 2

By Pastor John Pethtel

*NOTE: This article is part two in a series of articles focused on biblical stewardship encouraging us to take a closer look into how to become biblical stewards of what God has given to us and our church. Part one can be found in the October newsletter.*

## Our Role as Stewards

God has entrusted the managing of His resources to us.

*-You shall remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day (Deuteronomy 8:18)  
-The Lord makes poor and makes rich; he brings low and he exalts (1 Samuel 2:7)  
-Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all (1 Chronicles 29:12).*

We all work hard to convert our time and skills into a salary that will sustain us. But that should not make us feel entitled. God gives us the ability to work and make a living. So not only do we have the honor of managing His assets, we are supported by those resources as well. And there lies the tension of stewardship.

Ultimately, stewardship is about recognizing that the world is God's and we are

simply managers of His resources. This includes everything we tend to think of as our own. It comprises our money and possessions, but it also includes resources like our time, energy, and skills. Our goal as a steward/manager is to faithfully use these resources for the Lord.

## Jesus' Parables About Stewardship

During Jesus' ministry, He taught on the subject of stewardship multiple times. To fully understand stewardship, we need to wrap our heads around these parables.

**Parable 1:** The parable of the shrewd manager: Luke 16:1-13

There are a few parables that always seem to leave people scratching their heads, and the parable of the shrewd manager is one of them. We are used to parables where the listener is expected to imitate one of the main characters. That is not the case here. None of the individuals seem to be very praiseworthy. So what is Jesus getting at?

The rich man discovers that his steward is mismanaging his affairs and fires him. The steward has become accus-

tomed to a particular lifestyle and is not too excited about having to beg. So he decides to use his position to build a relationship with the people who owe the rich man money. That way, he will hopefully have somewhere to work in the future.



Jesus' point is that the unbelieving people in the world tend to be more shrewd with worldly resources than the "sons of light." He is telling His followers

to use money (which typically has a corrupting influence) in a future-oriented way. We are not to copy the shrewd manager's behavior; we are to notice his ingenuity in preparing for the future.

It is a reminder to lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, "*where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal*" (Matthew 6:20). Obviously we cannot literally store treasure in heaven; we do it by investing in things that God cares about.

**Parable 2:** The parable of the talents: Matthew 25:14-30

In the parable of the shrewd manager, Jesus encourages His followers to use God's resources in a way that considers their future. In this parable, Jesus encourages stewards to ensure that they

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## Biblical Stewardship – Part 2, *continued*

are using God's resources in a way that will bring in a return on His investment.

The master in Jesus' parable has expectations for his resources, and this places a responsibility on the stewards to manage them in a way that meets or exceeds those expectations. In this case, any improvement upon what they

have been given is acceptable. It is important to realize the steward that incited the master's wrath did not lose any money – he simply did not offer any return on the master's investment.

For the Christian, this means that every asset and resource in our lives should be managed with an eye on growing

the Kingdom. Everything from the way we use our time to the way we spend money should be done with the understanding that the master could return at any time and demand an account.

Next month, in part 3 of Biblical Stewardship, we will take a look at what being a biblical steward means for us.

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### SHAPE

## What S.H.A.P.E. has God given you?

*by Pastor John Pethtel*



S.H.A.P.E. is an acrostic for an assessment that takes a look at your **S**piritual Gifts, **H**earth, **A**bilities, **P**ersonality, and **E**xperiences to help you better understand who God made you to be. It is our earnest prayer that you will understand more fully what it means for you to serve God and His Kingdom so that your passion can meet God's purpose! If this is your church home, we are hoping that you will spend a few minutes and take the assessment to find your S.H.A.P.E.

There are copies in the Welcome Center and online at <http://theconnecting.church/shape>.

You can drop off your results in Pastor John's mailbox in the church workroom (by the church office). You can also email the results to Pastor John at [pastorjohn@miltonsdb.org](mailto:pastorjohn@miltonsdb.org). A pastor will follow up with you to discuss your results.

If you have any other questions, please ask any pastor or elder.



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**KWIK TRIP CARDS**  
**make Great Christmas Gifts**  
Proceeds from the purchase of Kwik Trip cards supports our Outreach Ministry.

Plan ahead and purchase Kwik Trip cards for Christmas gifts or stocking stuffers by contacting our church office.

### **Christmas Music Sabbath is coming!**

Dust off your instruments, warm up your voices and start practicing. Soon it will be time to sign up to offer up your praises on Sabbath, December 16 at the 10:30 service.



**Helpers are needed to decorate for Christmas  
Nov. 26 - Dec. 1. Call the church office to volunteer!**



- 2 Jocelyn Dutcher
- 5 Cindy Greene
- 6 Zoey Kersten
- 9 Sydney Rotzoll
- 11 Rinald Kersten
- 11 Kathleen Holbrook
- 12 Lukas Mullen
- 14 Benny Uhlich
- 18 Nick Kersten
- 26 Lance & Perla Call
- 27 Carol Aiken
- 28 Kory Geske

## November Children's Church

**November 4**  
**Unit 18 : Session 5**  
**Big Truth Session**  
 We Should Be Sorry for Sin  
 (Romans 8)

**Begin Volume 7**  
**From Heaven to Earth:**  
**The Gospels**

**November 18**  
**Unit 19: Session 1**  
 Jesus Was Born  
 (Matthew 1, Luke 2, John 1)

## Ladies Sit 'n Sip

Tuesday, Nov. 14th  
 9:00 a.m. at Sharla's  
 Come relax with some  
 church friends!

### GIFTS Homeless Shelter

*Thank you to all who helped  
 with our week at the GIFTS  
 Men's Homeless Shelter  
 ministry in October. It took  
 many of you to make this  
 happen - donating the food,  
 cooking, serving the meals.  
 Thank you for supporting  
 such a worthwhile ministry!*



November	
1	Bible Study @ The IceShantea (4:30-6) Collision @ Camp Wakonda (6:30-8:00)
6	Roller Skating with Koinonia Youth Ministries
8	Bible Study @ The IceShantea (4:30-6) Collision @ Camp Wakonda (6:30-8:00)
15	Bible Study @ The IceShantea (4:30-6) Collision @ Camp Wakonda (6:30-8:00) PIZZA NIGHT
22	No Collision - Happy Thanksgiving
29	Bible Study @ The IceShantea (4:30-6) Collision @ Camp Wakonda (6:30-8:00)



November	
1	Club
8	Club - Bring a Buck Night
15	Club - Board Game Night
22	No Club - Happy Thanksgiving
29	Club - Christmas song rehearsal @ 6:00



### Focus on Funds

as of September 30, 2023

General Fund Balance	\$ -8,542.56
Cash at Mem. Fund	\$46,126.95
Sept. Undesignated Inc.	\$14,546.11
Sept. Total Income	\$19,009.32
Sept. Expenses	\$25,104.42
Denomination Giving YTD	\$ 3,540.00
Capital Campaign Fund	\$ 9,724.38

# November 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Sabbath Sunset Times</b></p> <p>Nov 3 5:47 p.m.    Nov 4 5:46 p.m.            Nov 10 4:39 p.m.    Nov 11 4:38 p.m.            Nov 17 4:32 p.m.    Nov 18 4:32 p.m.            Nov 24 4:27 p.m.    Nov 25 4:27 p.m.</p> </div>			1	2	3	4
			6:30 Men's Bible Study - Sharla's 9:30 Women's Bible Study - In person and on zoom 4:30 Youth Bible Study 6:25 Awana 6:30 Collision			9:00 Sabbath School 9:00 Kids Fellowship 10:30 Worship and Children's Church
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
 <p style="text-align: center;">DAYLIGHT-SAVING TIME ENDS</p>	8:00 TOPS	7:00 Scouts 8:00 Finance Team Meeting	6:30 Men's Bible Study - Sharla's 9:30 Women's Bible Study - In person and on zoom 4:30 Youth Bible Study 6:25 Awana 6:30 Collision			<b>11 Veterans Day</b>  9:00 Sabbath School 9:00 Kids Fellowship 10:30 Worship - Communion
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
9:00 Trustee Meeting	8:00 TOPS	9:00 Ladies Sit 'n Sip - Sharla's  7:00 Scouts	6:30 Men's Bible Study - Sharla's 9:30 Women's Bible Study - In person and on zoom 4:30 Youth Bible Study 6:25 Awana 6:30 Collision	7:00 Trustee Meeting - Library		8:00 Men's Chorus Rehearsal 9:00 Sabbath School 9:00 Kids Fellowship 10:30 Worship and Children's Church
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	8:00 TOPS	7:00 Scouts	6:30 Men's Bible Study - Sharla's 9:30 Women's Bible Study - In person and on zoom  No Youth Bible Study No Awana No Collision	 <i>Thanksgiving</i>		9:00 Sabbath School 9:00 Kids Fellowship 10:30 Worship
26	27	28	29	30		
	8:00 TOPS	7:00 Scouts	6:30 Men's Bible Study - Sharla's 9:30 Women's Bible Study - In person and on zoom 4:30 Youth Bible Study 6:25 Awana 6:30 Collision	Piano Recital		



# November 2023

**Milton SDB Church**  
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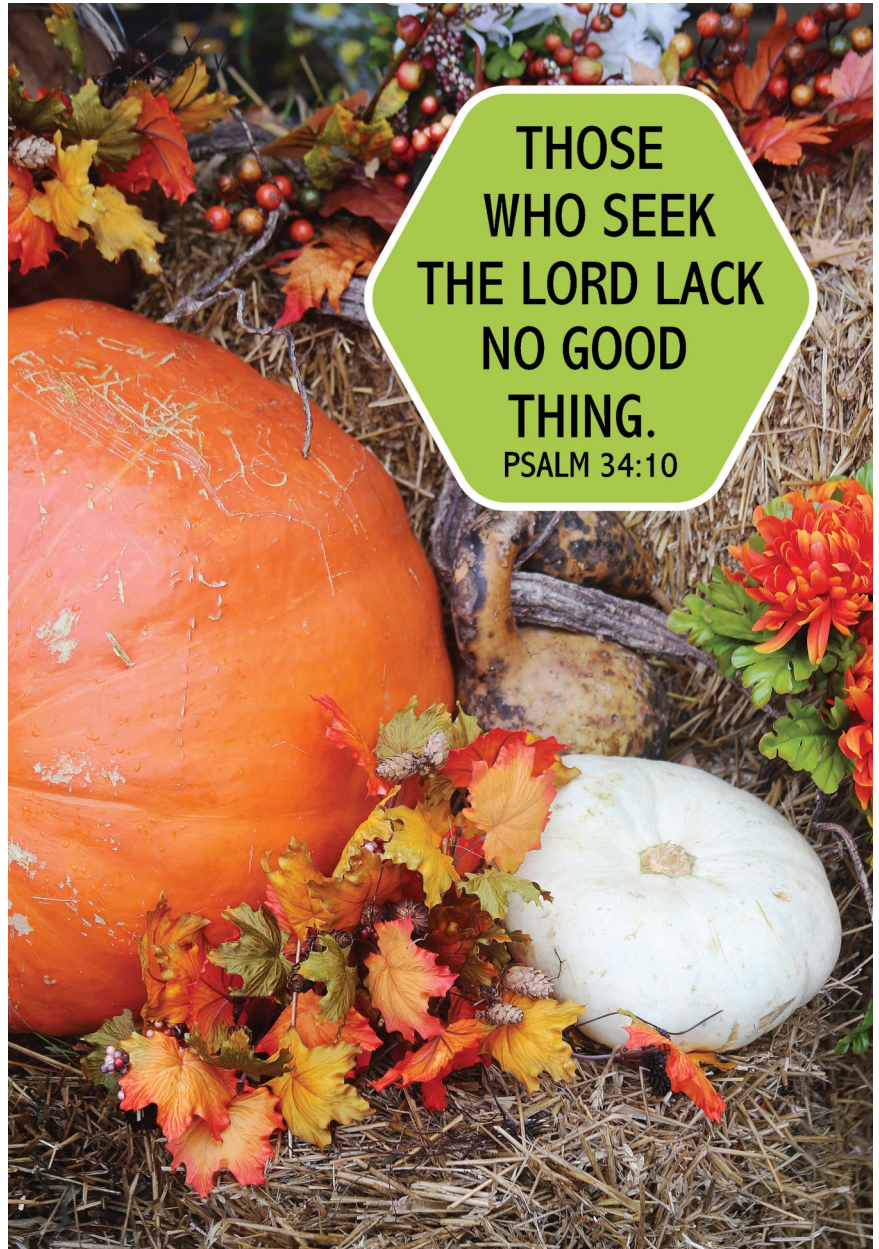
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**THOSE  
WHO SEEK  
THE LORD LACK  
NO GOOD  
THING.  
PSALM 34:10**

## Online Worship

Our Sabbath morning worship service is available **live** on our YouTube channel.  
Go to <http://TheConnecting.Church/WorshipOnline> for the link.  
We are also posting links to the sermon notes on that same page.