

Estimates put the world's population at around 6.8 billion people. Besides trying to wrap your mind around a figure that large, think of the resources it takes to feed every last person...every day. The cows producing milk for all those people. Chickens to lay eggs. Fields to produce wheat to make bread. Turkeys to put on tables for Thanksgiving. It's staggering to think about that the majority don't go hungry.

For many that's what they're thinking about this Thanksgiving. They're giving thanks for the food they eat, the clothes they wear, the family they enjoy, and the jobs they have. But who are they giving thanks to? Is it themselves or some unknown provider? Today is a natural day to answer that question, who should we thank? We look at selected verses of Psalm 145 this morning and realize very quickly that on Thanksgiving and every day we are to...

**Thank our great God  
For the open hand of earthly blessing  
For the open hand of heavenly blessing**

With everything on demand pretty much when you want it, you really have no reason to wait for anything anymore. No pumpkin pie for today's desert, no problem Crest is open. Need new lights for the tree you're decorating, no problem Wal-Mart has them. With everything so readily available we forget how all these things come about. The farmers growing pumpkins in California. The stock person at Wal-Mart working so you have lights to buy. The probably hundreds of others who are growing things that will end up on our table and making things that will end up in our homes.

It seems only natural to think that by strength and hard work we provide for ourselves. If I grow pumpkins to provide pie for someone else, they stock shelves so I have Christmas lights. Everybody does something that helps out someone else. This way the human race takes care of itself. But we've forgotten the most important component. David described it in the Psalm. **"Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom."** God's got greatness we can't explain. Because he's behind everything he is who we thank. Our great God pours out blessings on the earth in grace.

That means everything that we see, everything we make use of, everything originally in some way came from God. he's keeping his promises every day. **"The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time."** Without God there's no technology for farmers, no rain to make plants grow, no natural resources to power processing plants, and no intelligence to keep everything right on schedule. And this doesn't just go for believers. The eyes of all see God providing. It's there in plain sight, they just don't always see it. Behind the food, the jobs, the sun, and the rain God is in action. When the earth receives from his open hand earthly blessings we are seeing God's love.

People always look for God where they feel comfortable finding him. They also want to find something they understand, something that makes sense. God should be uncomplicated and pretty easy going. God should let individuals take credit for accomplishments. Getting good grades, receiving a job promotion, building a home, these are our accomplishments. Even more so people want to take credit for their eternity. "If I end up in heaven it will be because of hard work and determination. God will see the good I've done in the world and he'll welcome me with open arms for a job well done. If I get knocked down, I'll just pick myself up and dust myself off and keep going."

Those that think they know this type of God don't know my God, your God. Sure the earth shows the very existence of God. Nature is one of God's tools for helping people realize he's there. But it's only part of the story. If people only know God as the big guy who provides earthly blessings, they don't know the whole truth. To know him completely he needs to reveal himself. And he has in one place, the Scriptures. God promises that when somebody looks there they'll always find him. **"The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth."** Leave your reason and pride at the door when you come to Scripture. Let the Word speak, be willing to hear, and listen for what God has to say.

Then prepare yourself for blessings. **"The LORD upholds all those who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down."** When God opens his hand to bless all credit to myself fades away. I can't pick myself up from my life of sin. I can't even hold myself up so I don't fall into sin. God picks up and lifts up, for this life and for the heavenly life to come. God gets the credit and the praise. Thanks to our great God.

Each of us has many desires. But look past the boats, vacations, and all the sinful desires. The Bible calls us sinners with no future hope. Our fear of God is real, a trembling "he's going to destroy me" fear. But the Psalm writer David wrote, **"He fulfills the desires of those who fear him; he hears their cry and saves them."** How is this possible? Jesus the Savior. In Christ, approach God with a holy awe, a wonder that God who should destroy me actually calls me his child. Approach in repentance with a cry for mercy. Jesus gave himself into death for you. Your sins are forgiven and heaven is yours. God opened his hands with heavenly blessings.

Look around the Thanksgiving table today and take note of the generations gathered. God has given you the task of speaking to the next generation. Tell them his awesome promises and fulfilled blessings. Tell them about Jesus because they won't know him otherwise. Take a moment to offer thanks for the generation that told you about your Savior before you thank our great God for the wonderful food.