The VICTORY VOICE

A Special Thanksgiving Edition - November 2015



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GRATTITUDE

by Pastor Elmo Parker

In his description of the "last days," the Apostle Paul was led by the Holy Spirit to say that men would in those days be "unthankful."

Many years ago our country established a national day of thanksgiving. Today, they don't want you to mention God outside of the Church House! What's wrong with America? Thanksgiving has degenerated to "Turkey Day!" Listen—IT'S NOT "TURKEY DAY!!!!"

True thanksgiving is more than a day, it is an attitude of life that every Christian should have. Colossians 2:7 tells us that we should be "...rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein WITH THANKS-GIVING." We should ABOUND in thanksgiving. It's a lifestyle!

As we read of the great men of the Bible we learn that they were thankful men. Thanksgiving was a part of their life.

Think of Daniel. He could have been bitter as a young man. He was carried off to Babylon and eventually called upon to face the lion's den because of his godly life. But did he pout? No! He continued to thank and serve the Lord! Thank God for this godly man. The Apostle Paul wrote from a dark and smelly prison cell, "Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say, rejoice."

But our best example is the Lord Jesus. Matthew chapter twenty-six records for us some of the events occurring on the eve of our Lord's crucifixion. He knew that the next day those nails would be driven into His hands and feet, but we read that at that last super, "..he took the cup and GAVE THANKS..." The cup was filled with that which pictured His own blood—but, "He gave thanks" none the less!

The Book of Psalms abounds with exhortations to acknowledge our Lord's goodness and be thankful for it:

- Psa 103:2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:
- Psa 100:1 A Psalm of praise. Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands.
- Psa 100:2 Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.
- Psa 100:3 Know ye that the LORD he *is* God: *it is* he *that* hath made us, and not we ourselves; *we are* his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
- Psa 100:4 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.
- Psa 100:5 For the LORD *is* good; his mercy *is* everlasting; and his truth *endureth* to all generations.

What do you think is the worst sin in America? I think the answer is found in II Timothy and the third chapter. Paul gives us a picture of the last days—what they will be like. Right in the middle of the account is a pair of sins that stand out from the rest—"unthankfulness" and "unholiness!" I believe that unthankfulness produces unholiness. When a nation is unthankful it becomes unholy! When a church is unthankful it becomes unholy! When an individual becomes unthankful that individual is on the road to being unholy!

The Word of God speaks of a people who lived centuries ago and how they found themselves on this very road:

Rom 1:21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, **<u>neither were thank-</u>** <u>**ful**</u>; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

- Rom 1:22 Professing themselves to be wise, <u>they be-</u> <u>came fools</u>,
- Rom 1:23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.
- Rom 1:25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.
- Rom 1:26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:
- Rom 1:28 And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;
- Rom 1:29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,
- Rom 1:30 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,
- Rom 1:31 Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:
- Rom 1:32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.



INTRODUCTION: In light of the discouraging decision from our supreme court regarding gay marriage and the awful implications it has for our society, I began preaching a series of sermons entitled, "Now What?" The first four sermons were from II Timothy 3 and appear in somewhat condensed version below. (HEAR THESE SERMONS ON <u>victorybaptisttemple.com</u> (CLICK ON, "NOW WHAT?")

I. The Reality

A. The existence of evil. Evil has existed ever since Lucifer rebelled against the Most High. It exists in our society and will exist until God makes a new Heaven and a new earth.

B. The evolution of evil. Our Scripture tells us that evil is not static; it continually worsens. ("But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." - v. 13). We should not be surprised that wicked people could behave wickedly, that evildoers do evil, or that sinners sin.

II. The Reason

This chapter gives us a terrible list of sins. People who are without natural affection, people who are blasphemers, people who are traitors, people who are trucebreakers and false accusers, people who despise those that are good. But it all starts with the first item on the list: "for men shall be lovers of their own selves." (v. 2) The idea is that there will be a lack of restraint on fleshly appetites, a lack of respect for God and His law, a lack of remorse for wicked behavior, and a lack of recognition of the wickedness in our own hearts. Man will live simply to satisfy himself.

III. The Result

money.

A. The sins (vs. 2, 3)

1. Lovers of their own selves.

2. *Covetous*. The idea is a love of

3. *Boasters.* Men seem to love to tell other men how important, significant, and valuable they are. The Beatles claimed that they were more popular than Jesus Christ. President Obama recently, in a phone call with some of his key followers, told them that he was a transformative president as Ronald Reagan was. The Bible does still say that we should, "Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips." - (Proverbs 27:2

4. *Proud.* A haughty spirit by those who think they are better than others.

5. *Blasphemous*. This refers to reviling and abusive speech, especially toward God.

6. *Disobedient to parents*. I read recently that the average child watches 22,000 hours of television by the time that they are 18. Is it any wonder that a spirit of rebellion and disobedience has been fixed, fostered and fomented in the lives of many of them?

7. *Unthankful*. Isn't it interesting that this sin, of which all of us are guilty, is right in the middle of these other "terrible" sins?

8. *Unholy*. The idea is of a person who is profane; a wicked man who has no place in

his heart or life for God.

9. *Without natural affection*. Who would have ever believed 75 years ago or 50 years ago that mothers would march for the right to murder their own children?

10. *Trucebreakers*. I am convinced some of these live in Iran and in Russia.

11. *False accusers*. Remember Harry Reid's lie, told on the Senate floor, that Mitt Romney had not paid taxes for years? And remember his response when confronted about it; "He didn't win, did he?"

12. *Incontinent*. This is a person who has a lack of self-control.

13. *Fierce*. The word refers to untamed savages; people like the radical Muslims who not only viciously behead their victims, but videotape it for the world to see.

14. *Despisers of that which is good.* How true this is of our modern society! They are angry at those who try to obey and please God.

15. Traitors.

16. *Heady*. The idea is headstrong, unteachable.

17. *High-minded*. The term means to be wrapped in a fog; insolent people, unaware of their own ignorance and weakness

18. Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. We are indeed a nation of pleasure-lovers. I am told that Americans drive 350 billion miles per year in search of pleasure.

19. Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof. How many of our mainline and contemporary churches have the shell of Christianity without really bringing people to a personal knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ?

B. The Sinners

1. Truth removed. ("Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." - v. 7)

2. Truth resisted. ("Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth; men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith." - v. 8) There is no "live and let live" with the opponents of truth. The radical element of the gay community does not want anyone to have the freedom to say that homosexuality is an ungodly lifestyle.

C. The Saints. ("Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." - v. 12)

IV. The Reminder

A. The power of the Gospel. ("But they shall proceed no further; for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was." - v. 9)

John Philips says that this means that they will be "stopped in their tracks and stripped of their power." How many times has it seemed that a movement or a man was about to dominate the world—but God stopped them?

B. The power of God. ("But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned" -v. 14) We will be able to continue in spite of all the opposition.

V. The Response

A. Know the Bible. The Sunday after the supreme court's decision regarding gay marriage I had, as an insert to our bulletin, a list of Bible verses against homosexuality. Too many Christians are deceived by error because they do no know the truth.

B. Understand the real issues. ("Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy." - Ezekiel 16:49) It is interesting to me that though sodomy is a terrible sin and God does judge it, it is not listed in this passage. You see, the root sin wasn't sodomy. The root sin was pride. A proud person does not commit every sin, but every sin goes back to the issue of pride.

C. Teach your family. Make sure they know by your example and by Bible precept and principle how they should live.

D. Be bold. ("And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word," - Acts 4:29) Not brash, not bossy and not bullying; but bold.

E. Demonstrate the love of Christ.

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Remember that while on the cross, our Savior said of those who attacked, accused and afflicted Him, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34)

F. Do not feel abandoned by God.

("Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."- Hebrews 13:5

G. Prepare to be criticized, marginalized, and ostracized. We have had it very easy in 20th and 21st century America. The cost for our stand has been slight, the burdens we have borne for our Savior have been light. Things may get a little bit worse. We should accept it with gladness. "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." (Matthew 5:11, 12)

H. Remember that God is in Control. ("Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bans asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision." - Psalm 2:1-4

Hear the four messages on, "WHAT NOW" by going to victorybaptisttemple.com (CLICK ON "WHAT NOW")

SINGSPIRATION SUNDAY! November 29th—6PM

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by D. W. Board Sr.

ount

I know! You're wondering, "Who's the guy in the picture?" Well, he used to be me—or is it, I used to be him? Anyway—I've noticed that, whenever they need a photo for a publication, older preachers start using pictures that look like their high school graduation pictures! So, now you know. Only I did not use my high school picture. That would be too much! Being much more realistic in my thinking I decided to use a picture I used in a newspaper ad for the first church I pastored. The year was 1972. We'll see how this works.

I am thankful that our dear Lord has been so kind as to allow me to serve Him all these years. It has been wonderful! However, I must confess that there have been times when I did not think that my life's work and calling were so wonderful. The Lord helping me, I want to use the lyrics to an old familiar song to help me to speak to you about the matter of being thankful. That song is, "Count Your Blessings." It seems the writer got right to the heart of our outlook on life when he wrote:

When upon life's billows

you are tempest-tossed,

When you are discouraged, thinking all is lost,

Whoa! How did he know? Who told him that I was in distress and was discouraged? The truth is no one needed to tell him. The fact is that we are born with trouble just waiting for us to arrive! There are times that we could mimic the old saying, "Bless the Lord, if I didn't have bad luck—I wouldn't have no luck at all!" What a poor and negative outlook on life. But friend, haven't we all thought that at times? Do we not engage ourselves in pity parties instead of praise parties? Oh, that we would remember that nothing comes our way unless our Heavenly Fa-

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ther allows it. The Word of God assures us that:

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." I Cor. 10:13

When we complain and rebel against what the Lord, in His providence, has allowed to come our way we are saying that we know better than He does—that He is being unkind or unloving! We need to heed the words of our song:

Count your many blessings,

name them one by one,

And it will surprise you

what the Lord has done.

With the Lord's help, let us express a genuine feeling of thankfulness for His provision of everything we NEED and some of what we WANT. We <u>think</u> we need sunshine, - but He <u>knows</u> we need rain. We <u>think</u> we need a calm and gentle breeze, - but He Count Your Blessings

In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. 1 Th. 5:18 Blessed be... God... who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings... in Christ. Eph. 1:3

1. When up - on life's bil - lows you are tem - pest - tossed, When you are dis-2. Are you ev - er bur-dened with a Does the cross seem load of care? 3. When you look at oth - ers with their lands and gold, Think that Christ has a - mid the con - flict wheth - er 4. So, great or small, Do not be discour-aged, think-ing all is lost, Count your man-y bless-ings, name them heav - y prom-ised you are called to bless-ings, eve - ry bear? Count your man-y you His wealth un - told; Count your man-y bless-ings-mon - ey cour-aged, God is all; Count your man-y bless-ings, an - gels o - ver one one, And it will sur-prise you what the Lord hath done. bv doubt will fly, And you will keep sing -ing as the days go by. buy Your re-ward in heav-en, nor your home can - not high. on will tend, Help and com-fort give you to your jour - ney's at end. Refrain Count your bless-ings, name them one by one. Count your Count your man bless - ings Count your man -* bless-ings, see what God hath your bless-ings, done! Count bless - ings, Count your man bless - ings, y a tempo name them one by one, Count your man - y bless-ings, see what God hath done. ÷ ÷

<u>knows</u> that our barge must be farther down the river by dark—so He sends a strong wind to drive us to the place of blessing that awaits us a day's end. Instead of complaining we should be praising!

I recall a situation in which the Lord was opening doors of opportunity for the spread of the

gospel to folks who had NEVER heard. At the height of that ministry the evil one stirred up carnal people in places of leadership. They openly opposed the presence of the very people we had worked so hard to reach. Some even went to these precious lost or new born babes and told them they were NOT welcome at our church! Within a few weeks SEVERAL HUNDRED people disappeared! People we gathered one by one. People we had earnestly prayed for. People we had invested a great deal of our time and money to reach! How real the words of our hymn seem: "When you are discouraged thinking all is lost!" For a while it seemed a vain thing to serve the Lord! For a while it seemed that indeed, "all was lost!"

While it seemed a tragedy, ALL was NOT lost! There were still hundreds of people who heard the gospel: many, many, of whom AC-CEPTED CHRIST AS SAVIOR!

There were scores of workers who will have eternal reward for doing the Master's business and who saw Him use THEM to alter the temporal and eternal lives of others. There are many who are now in "full time Christian service" who can look back to those days as the seedbed for their life's work! "THANK YOU LORD, THANK YOU!!!!"

Friend, if you and I will do what the Bible teaches and the songwriter encourages we will not only be happier people, but, we will be better Christians.

Count your blessings

Name them one by one And it will surprise you What the Lord has done! Psa 107:8 Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!

Our song also speaks of earthly possessions and wealth.

When you look at others

with their lands and gold,

Think that Christ

has promised you His wealth untold;

Count your many blessings

money cannot buy

Your reward in heaven,

nor your home on high.

I read an account of a man who in his early years invested a great deal of money in the building of a gospel preaching church in his city. As the Great Depression came he lost all of his vast fortune.

One day, during those dark days of financial loss, he and a friend went for a walk together. As they walked they came to the very church that the formerly wealthy man had built. His friend, with a smirk said, "Bet you wish you had not spent all that money on that church!" To this remark the man replied, "No, buddy, that money is the only money I have left. All the rest is gone—but that money is still safely invested for my future!"

Our wealth is not measured by what we keep, but by what we have invested for our future. The true "riches" we posses, are our salvation, our work for our Lord, and our family!

THE THOUGHTS OF THREE GREAT MEN!



Let us remember that, as much has been given us, much will be expected from us, and that true homage comes from the heart as well as from the lips, and shows itself in deeds.

Theodore Roosevelt, 1901



God has been very good to many of you, and yet you are unsaved. Why don't you say today with the psalmist, "Because of all his benefits to me, I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord"? God help you to do it, and to do it NOW."

Dr. Curtis Hutson

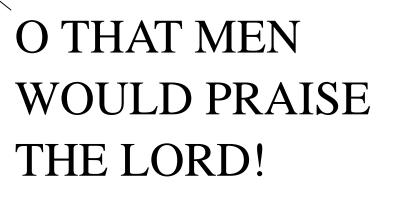




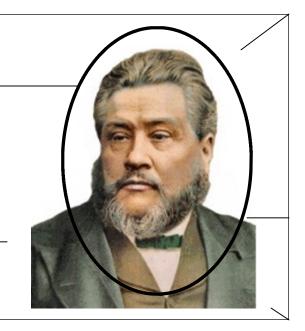


The loveliest flower that blooms in the garden of the heart is the flower of gratitude; and when gratitude dies on the altar of a man's heart, he's well nigh gone.

Bob Jones Sr.



by CHARLES SPURGEON



Psa 107:8 Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!

If we complained less, and praised more, we should be happier, and God would be more glorified. Let us daily praise God for common merciescommon as we fre-

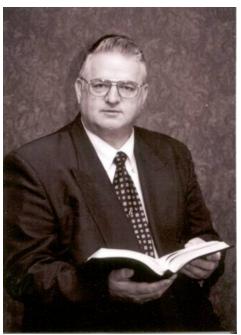
quently call them, and yet so priceless, that when deprived of them we are ready to perish. But, beloved, the sweetest and the loudest note in our songs of praise should be of redeeming love. redeeming God's acts towards his



chosen are for ever the favorite themes of their praise. If we know what redemption means, let us not withhold our sonnets of thanksgiving. We have been redeemed from the power of our corruptions, uplifted from the depth of sin in which we were naturally plunged. We have been led to the cross of Christ-our shackles of guilt have been broken off;

> we are no longer slaves, but children of the living God, and can antedate the period when we shall be presented before the throne without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Child of God, canst thou be silent? Awake, awake, ye inheritors of glory,

and lead your captivity captive, as ye cry with David, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name." Let the new month begin with new songs.



Timely Thoughts of Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving, that much-neglected attitude of gratitude, is one of the very first evidences of a Spiritfilled Christian. The only place in the entire Bible where we find a command to be filled with the Holy Spirit is Ephesians 5:18.

The sentence that begins in that verse does not end

in that verse. It actually doesn't end until verse 21. Verses 18 records the command, and verses 19-21 reveal the characteristics of the one who obeys that command.

The first characteristic mentioned is joy, and the second, is an ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE. Thanksgiving is more that a patriotic November holiday; it is the watchword of a good Christian.

That verse says, "Giving thanks ALWAYS for ALL things UNTO GOD and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Anyone can be thankful when everything is peaches and cream. Did you thank the Lord for the more distasteful experiences? Anyone can thank the Lord when there is more money than month. Did you ever thank the Lord for those barren times when there is more month than money? Anyone can thank God for health. Did you ever thank God for your sickness?

AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE IS MORE THAN A PLATITUDE; IT IS THE SYMPTOM OF A SPIRIT-FILLED CHRISTIAN.

Bro. Tully



Living with Gratitude!

Philippians 2:14

by Pastor Scott Miller

Throughout the forty years of wilderness wandering, the nation of Israel grumbled and complained. It was due, in part, for their unbelief in not entering Canaan when God told them to do so. Actually, the ten spies were the first to complain, and it seems as if the grumbling never ended.



Our God clearly is not pleased with murmuring, complaining and griping. It doesn't make Him excessively glad to hear His children constantly complaining. Does this sound like anyone in your house?

Our being grateful is a choice. It is not dependent upon our feelings or circumstances. The Pilgrims understood that. We certainly know the difficult circumstances they endured in order to enjoy the blessings of worshipping God according to the dictates of the Bible instead of the Anglican Church. They believed in divine Providence, as they called it. Circumstances simply did not just happened to them, they were allowed by God for our good and for His glory.

Author John Piper writes, "Remembering our dependence on past mercies kindles gratitude. Gratitude is past-oriented dependence; faith is future-oriented dependence. Both forms of dependence are humble, self-forgetting and God-exalting. If we do not believe that we are deeply dependent on God for all we have or hope to have, then the very spring of gratitude and faith runs dry."

Thanksgiving is a time for us to remember God's past mercies and providences over the year, and thank Him for them. It is also a time for us to humbly live each day by faith, relying on His grace to guide us into areas that are unknown; much as our Pilgrim forefathers did when they modeled dependence on God in crossing the Atlantic. Their faith was stretched and increased much like ours will be as we trust God with our future.

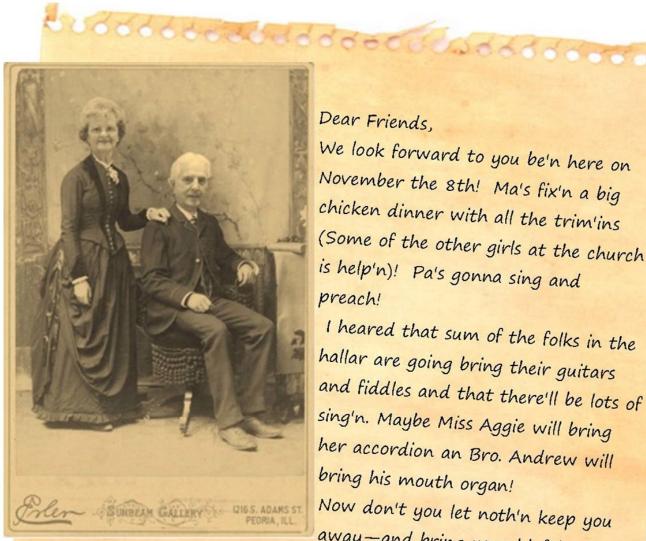
The Bible is replete with verses on giving thanks. Our problem is not that we don't know we are to be thankful, but we often choose to complain instead. In Psalms there are a number of verses that call giving thanks a sacrifice. Consider these verses:

Ps 50:14 Offer unto God thanksgiving...

Ps 107:22 And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing.

Ps 116:17 I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD.

Why is it a sacrifice to give thanks to the Lord? Because it moves our focus from ourselves to Him. When we deny ourselves to uplift Him, God is pleased. As a nation, we all know that we have inherited tremendous gifts from God. However, we are losing what we had due to our forgetfulness that God is the One Who allowed us to enjoy them. We have lost the grateful attitude that we should have had all along. Developing a heart of gratitude is a step in the right direction in growing stronger in faith. Let's remember this year what God has done and believe that He is able to care for us in the future too.



Dear Friends, We look forward to you be'n here on November the 8th! Ma's fix'n a big chicken dinner with all the trim'ins (Some of the other girls at the church is help'n)! Pa's gonna sing and preach!

I heared that sum of the folks in the hallar are going bring their guitars and fiddles and that there'll be lots of sing'n. Maybe Miss Aggie will bring her accordion an Bro. Andrew will bring his mouth organ! Now don't you let noth'n keep you away—and bring your kinfok with

you.

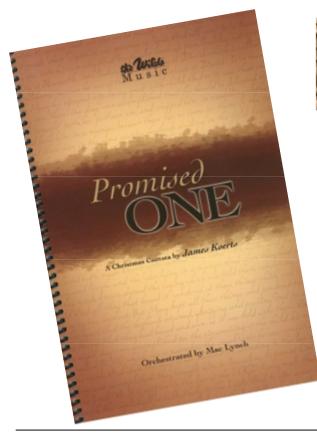
Dress up in your best "OLD" dresses girls and you guys grease your hair and your shoes so's you look decent now -you hear?

Love you all, Ma an Pa Parker

P.S. The preach'n and sing'n will start about 11:00 AM. Reckin the eat'n will start about 12:30 or so.

DON'T MISS "OLD FASHIONED DAY" ON NOVEMBER 8TH AT 11 AM. THERE WILL BE A LOT OF FOOD—FELLOWSHIP—AND FUN!!!







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