

**What Can We Learn about Thanksgiving from Babies?  
Psalm 131**

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**Text Introduction:** Our text today comes from a particular section of the Psalms called the Book of Ascents. Sometimes these songs are called processional songs. We assume that these are songs that would have been used as the worshippers proceeded to the temple. Each Psalm helps us to see the kinds of things that the worshippers had upon their hearts as they entered for worship. We would do well to use these psalms as our own preparation for worship. The particular Psalm before us today is very brief, but helps us to see the child-like spirit that we ought to have in coming to God.

I was thinking about this text today as we observe these families with their babies in the Parent Child Dedication Service. As are all the Psalms, this text also helps us to think about Thanksgiving. So, my message today is “What Can We Learn about Thanksgiving from Babies?”

**Text:** <sup>1</sup> LORD, my heart is not proud;  
my eyes are not haughty.  
I do not get involved with things  
too great or too difficult for me.

<sup>2</sup> Instead, I have calmed and quieted myself  
like a little weaned child with its mother;  
I am like a little child.

<sup>3</sup> Israel, put your hope in the LORD,  
both now and forever.

**Introduction:** The famed preacher of another generation, C.H. Spurgeon, said of this Psalm, “It’s the shortest Psalm, but take the longest to learn.” Indeed it takes a long time to learn how not to be proud or haughty, how not to get involved with things that are too difficult for us, how to calm and quiet ourselves, and how to always put our hope in the LORD. This is a process of maturity. The irony though of this truth and the irony of this Psalm is that we arrive at this point of maturity by becoming more and more like a child—like a young child—a baby.

Think with me this morning on this Sunday before Thanksgiving about what we have to learn about Thanksgiving from a baby.

**A life of humility is a thankful life.**

In verse 1, the Psalmist, David we presume, indicates that his heart is not proud or haughty. He refrained from involving himself in things that were too difficult for him. Interesting concept, don’t you think, for a king to say these words. We don’t know at what point in David’s life he would have written these words, but I tend to think it was the older David--David, at the end of his life, reflecting on what was most important. This is the David that has discovered that he does not have all of the answers for life, nor does he need them.

That is where a baby speaks to me? I have a baby as you know. I was thinking the other day that my baby does not worry about all the things I worry about. He doesn't have to. Unfortunately, one day he will, but now he doesn't. He has no opinions (well except that his dad is cool and he likes to eat) and because of that his life is a picture of perfect humility.

Now, lest you think that I want him to stay that way, you are missing the point. I want him to grow up and be concerned about his world, to love his world, to love God, and many other things. But, I hope that he will always have a part of himself that does not have to be burdened about the things that he doesn't have to be burdened about.

Anselm of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, a bishop, communicated this well. "I do not seek, O Lord, to penetrate thy depths. I by no means think my intellect equal to them; but I long to understand in some degree thy truth, which my heart believes and loves. For I do not seek to understand that I may believe, but I believe, that I may understand."

That's it! That's where God wants us all to be. And, that will put us in a very thankful place. It is the place where all of us need to be.

In 1969, in a science lab in New Jersey, Canadian physicist Willard Boyle and his colleagues invented the concept of an electronic eye. Using their knowledge of mathematics and the behavior of light they provided the science behind digital cameras known as a charged-coupled device or CCD. The CCD technology revolutionized photography, as light could now be captured electronically instead of on film. CCD technology is used on the Hubble telescope and the Mars Lunar probe. It was Boyle's invention that allowed us to see the surface of Mars for the first time. In 2009 Boyle was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics.

A few years after the original invention of CCD technology, Boyle walked into a store to purchase a new digital camera based on his invention. During the visit, the salesman tried to explain the intricacies of the digital camera, but stopped, feeling it was too complicated for his customer to understand. Boyle simply said, "No need to explain. I invented the technology." (Copied from Preachingtoday.com, search Psalm 131.)

I think that is exactly what God wants to say to us sometimes. We want to try to explain God or figure something out and He just simply says, "I invented life."

**A life of simplicity is a thankful life.**

I think I can pretty much matter of fact say that a baby's life is a simple life. Now, not everyone would think that a simple life is a good life, but from my vantage point, that simple life is often the most contented kind of life. Somebody said it this way, "The reason that so many people are unhappy is that they have too many options." Babies don't have a lot of options. But again, in this lack of options, most babies seem to me to be pretty content. Verse 2 is a picture of perfect contentment.

The more complex life gets the more that life weighs on us. Want proof? What would seem to you to be the most stressful job? No, not your job! How about the Presidency? You have seen this before I think.

Learn the lesson of thanksgiving. Simplicity is good. We need people to enter into complex things of life; however, we also need to learn to be in the place that God wants us to be. Be thankful for the life that God has given you. Like a baby next to his mother, that is the kind of peace that all of us long to have.

**A life of dependence is a thankful life.**

A baby is totally dependent on someone else. This is the greatest lesson we can learn from a baby. This is the position all of us need to have.

I originally had titled this sermon "What Can We Learn about Thanksgiving from Children?" I decided that I needed to change the title. Why? Children learn pretty quickly not to be humble, contented, and dependent.

May this thanksgiving find us living a humble life, a simple life, and a life dependent on God.