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## Thanksgiving and Prayer

*"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."*

(Philippians 4:6)

In this verse, we see God exhorting us not to be worried about anything. Instead **pray** regarding our needs *"with thanksgiving"* and stand in faith trusting God.

Being thankful leads us to prayer. Such prayer results in God's answers, which in turn should cause us to be grateful.

## God is faithful!

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## Thanksgiving and Victory

*"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

(1 Corinthians 15:57)

Our **victories** through Jesus are yet another motivation for a **thankful lifestyle**.

Believers may get knocked down, but in Christ, **we are never defeated! Praise God and be thankful!**

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## Thanksgiving In And For Everything

*"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."*

(1 Thessalonians 5:18)

*"Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;"*

(Ephesians 5:20)

Gratitude **IN** and **FOR everything** may be the most challenging aspect of a study of thanksgiving.

How can we be thankful when we are suffering? How can we express loving appreciation when we don't *feel the love*?

Remember, in Jesus, **we have victory!** Therefore we must focus on what God has done for us. We must remember the **death, burial, and resurrection** of Jesus Christ for our sins.

We must remember that we are **not alone** when it comes to the feelings of being alone.

*"...My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"*

(Mark 15:34)

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## Conclusion:

Thanksgiving is **far more** than a trite approach to an annual holiday.

Thanksgiving should be an **increasing heart condition** of a person who has **genuinely** experienced **salvation in Jesus Christ**.

This attitude will grow as our intimacy with God is enhanced. Do what the early church did...

*"And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."* (Acts 2:42)

(Mark 15:34)

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*"Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms."* (Psalm 95:2)

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## Thanksgiving Day

Thanksgiving Day celebrations often are quite generic, some emphasize being grateful for families, jobs, homes, and other earthly relationships and provisions. Many people indeed give thanks to God for His tremendous blessings in their lives. This is good, but it does not come close to the **thanksgiving** as found in the Bible.

As believers, Thanksgiving truly can be a special holiday to remind us of what we have in Jesus Christ. In addition, this day can serve as a reminder that an **attitude of gratitude** should be an *all-the-time* lifestyle. As such, we in no way want to diminish the holiday.

However, we do want to take a look at the Bible in the hope of gaining a deeper understanding of **thankfulness** toward God and how it should impact the life of a believer.

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## Thanksgiving and Evangelism

*"That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works."* (Psalm 26:7)

# THANKSGIVING

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There are many motives and methods for evangelism, but telling people about Jesus from an overwhelmed and **thankful** heart is powerful.

Thanksgiving results in a **voice** that desires to preach the Gospel and tell everyone the news of God's "**wondrous works**."

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## Thanksgiving and Faith

*"Rooted and built up in him, and **stablished in the faith**, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with **thanksgiving**."* (Colossians 2:7)

When one repents and trusts in Jesus and His sacrifice for their sin, they become established "**in the faith**." As we realize the depth and reality of our salvation, it **will** lead us to **abounding thanksgiving**.

If we are not abundantly grateful to God for saving us...we might want to **check the veracity of our salvation**.

*"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that **Jesus Christ is in you**, except ye be reprobates?"* (2 Corinthians 13:5)

Genuine faith and exceeding gratitude go hand-in-hand.

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## Thanksgiving and Grace

*"For all things are for your sakes, that the **abundant grace** might **through the thanksgiving** of many redound to the glory of God."*  
(2 Corinthians 4:15)

God's extraordinary **grace** should lead us to express the exuberant **thankfulness** of our hearts.

This verse from 2 Corinthians also reflects **gratitude-generated evangelism** previously discussed. It tells us that "**through the thanksgiving of many**," God will be glorified.

It is impossible to be the recipient of God's grace and **not** be tremendously **appreciative**!

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## Thanksgiving and Praise

*"Enter into his gates with **thanksgiving**, and into his courts with **praise**: be **thankful unto him**, and **bless his name**."* (Psalm 100:4)

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

Thankfulness and praise are inseparable. Why would we praise God if we were not thankful for what He has done?

Our grateful heart shows those around us how big God is. We "**magnify Him with thanksgiving**!"

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## Thanksgiving and Provision

*"Being **enriched** in every thing to **all bountifulness**, which **causeth** through us **thanksgiving to God**. (12)  
For the administration of this service not only **supplieth the want** of the saints, but **is abundant also by many thanksgivings** unto God;"*  
(2 Corinthians 9:11-12)

In this passage from 2 Corinthians 9, Paul is

addressing the generosity of the believers in Corinth. He boasted of their eagerness to give.

God's provision for these believers and His provision for other followers of Jesus **through** those in Corinth led to **abundant thankfulness to God**.

God bountifully blesses His people so that we can be a bountiful blessing to other saints.

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## Thanksgiving and Sacrifice

*"And when ye will offer a **sacrifice of thanksgiving** unto the Lord, **offer it at your own will**."*  
(Leviticus 22:29)

*"And let them sacrifice the **sacrifices of thanksgiving**, and declare his works with **rejoicing**."* (Psalm 107:22)

Thanksgiving is a **sacrifice** that we **offer at our own will**, which results in evangelism (*declaring His works*.)

Being grateful to God is a sacrifice. It costs us our time to recall the abundant goodness of God.

God says we should be thankful both "in" and "for" **all things**. It is a tremendous **sacrifice** to thank God when we are suffering adversity. Only with the help of the Holy Spirit can we make this sacrifice.

We must enact our will and **choose** to offer the sacrifice of Thanksgiving!