

# THANKFULNESS

## Thanksgiving, Gratitude

In everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

(1 Thessalonians 5:18)

Beloved, the more we dwell in the heavenly realm (after all, this is our life now, as children of God), the more grateful we become—very grateful! Thankfulness is a sure sign of growing in God's grace. Our focus has to be on God and His kingdom, and our goal is to get to know God and to comprehend His love for us. It is in beholding God, our Father, and seeing everything from His perspective that His ways become our ways, His thoughts our thoughts, and His desires our desires. Thankfulness is a by-product of who we are in Jesus Christ. Gratitude becomes an overflow. It replaces the complaining, grumbling, and asking "Why? Why? Why?"

Our eyes have to be on Jesus. We have to be heaven-bound, not earth-bound. The earthly is only temporal, and it is passing away. We have to keep that in mind. We have a big God, and nothing, absolutely nothing is impossible for Him. He can change any circumstance in our lives. But above all, He wants to change us. He is making us over in the image of Jesus, and that is more important than changing our temporal circumstance.

### We Have to Let Go of the World

Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.

(1 John 2:15–17)

Brothers and sisters, don't let the world dictate to you how to think, what to have and how much of it. Don't let the world tell you how to live and what to do. Simplify. It is the things of this world, which will let you down and disappoint you. Live in the kingdom of God; there is no disappointment there. Know your inheritance in Christ Jesus. Know who you are in Him, know what you have in Him already. Know what God has done for you. Think about the sacrifice He made on *your* behalf. In the light of that you will be thankful, I guarantee you that! Ponder these following statements:

You have a new identity—a child of God  
You have passed out of death into life  
You are a citizen of heaven  
You are God's beloved  
You have eternal life

Romans 8:16  
John 5:24  
Philippians 3:20  
1 Thessalonians 1:4  
John 3:36

God loves you  
Christ accepted you to the glory of God  
You have forgiveness of sins  
In Jesus you have been made complete

1 John 3:1  
Romans 15:7  
Colossians 1:14  
Colossians 2:10

Beloved, we have to know these truths. We have to believe them in our hearts, and act upon them. How can we be anything but thankful believing it? (Read chapter “Christians.”)

. . . always giving thanks for all things in the name of our  
Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father.  
(Ephesians 5:20)

**“Give thanks for ALL things.”** What great advice!

We are limited in our knowledge, since we don’t know what will come our way here on earth. It is hard for us to discern what is really good or bad for others or ourselves. Something that seemed to be a catastrophe at first might turn out to be a blessing in disguise. Something we consider a blessing, might turn out to be a disaster. I am sure that all the people aboard Titanic thought how privileged they were to be a part of that voyage— until that “unsinkable” ship hit the iceberg. On the other hand, I have heard many testimonies of people who went through terrible ordeals, only later had claimed that that was the best thing that ever happened to them.

Beloved, we don’t know our future here on earth, but we sure know our eternal future. Dwell on the things of God and be thankful. Rejoice in who you are in Christ. Think big—*think eternity!*

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Oh give thanks to the Lord, call upon His name;  
Make known His deeds among the peoples.  
(1 Chronicles 16:8)

O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good;  
For His lovingkindness is everlasting.  
(1 Chronicles 16:34)

I will give thanks to the Lord with all my heart;  
I will tell of all Thy wonders.  
I will be glad and exult in Thee;  
I will sing praise to Thy name, O Most High.  
(Psalm 9:1, 2)

It is good to give thanks to the Lord,  
And to sing praises to Thy name, O Most High.  
(Psalm 92:1)

Be glad in the Lord, you righteous ones;  
And give thanks to His holy name.

(Psalm 97:12)

Praise the Lord!  
I will give thanks to the Lord with all my heart,  
In the company of the upright and in the assembly.

(Psalm 111:1)

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and  
supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made  
known to God.

(Philippians 4:6)

As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so  
walk in Him,  
having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him  
and established in your faith, just as you were instructed,  
and overflowing with gratitude.

(Colossians 2:6, 7)

And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which  
indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.

Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all  
wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms  
and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in  
your hearts to God.

And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name  
of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the  
Father.

(Colossians 3:15–17)

Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an  
attitude of thanksgiving.

(Colossians 4:2)

Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be  
shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to  
God an acceptable service with reverence and awe;  
for our God is a consuming fire.

(Hebrews 12:28, 29)

Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.

(Hebrews 13:15)