

## "Giving Thanks"

Would you like to have a way to rejoice every day? Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." This joy comes from a heart that gives thanks to God. Let's be grateful to God for all we have.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. The word of God not only gives us the path to salvation and eternal life; it also teaches us how to live the best life possible. It teaches us how to live morally, how to treat others, and how to draw close to God. The happiest people I know count their blessings regularly and show their love for God by giving thanks in worship. We'd love to hear from you and we want to be a part of your life each week.

In the hurry of our busy lives, it's easy to overlook the simple yet profound act of giving thanks. The Bible places great emphasis on gratitude in our relationship with God. From the Psalms of David to the epistles of Paul, Scripture repeatedly calls believers to cultivate a heart of thanksgiving. Thanksgiving in the Bible isn't merely a polite response to blessings; it's an attitude that shapes our faith, fosters joy, and draws us closer to the Creator. James 1:17 says that, "Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow."

Gratitude isn't optional; it's essential for spiritual vitality. The Apostle Paul said this in 1 Thessalonians 5 and verse 18, urging believers to "give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." Now this verse sets the tone: thanksgiving covers every situation. Giving thanks is rooted in God's unchanging character. Whether in abundance or adversity, gratitude acknowledges His ever-present watchfulness and care. Paul said that he could rejoice and be content in whatever circumstances he was in (Philippians 4 verse 11). We all face tough times and we all feel the uncertainty of what lies ahead. Let's focus on what we have in Christ, and rejoice, and give thanks.

Now we offer this study, Giving Thanks, free! If you'd like a printed copy and live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to [searchtv@searchtv.org](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or, you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also have programs and free materials on our website, [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org). You can also see us on YouTube.

Larry Owsley will lead us in song. We'll read from Psalm 100, and examine what we can do to keep God alive in our hearts.

Our reading today comes from Psalm 100. This is a psalm of thanksgiving.

Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth.  
Serve the LORD with gladness;  
Come before Him with joyful singing.  
Know that the LORD Himself is God;  
It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves;  
We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.  
Enter His gates with thanksgiving  
And His courts with praise.  
Give thanks to Him, bless His name.  
For the LORD is good;

His lovingkindness is everlasting  
And His faithfulness to all generations.

Oh what a wonderful Psalm. Let's pray together. Father we're thankful that Your love and Your kindness and Your blessing has come down to us. Even to this generation. Help us always to love You from our hearts. Help us to put You first in everything. This is our prayer in the name of Jesus, Amen.

First, let's examine reasons to give thanks, that are grounded in God's attributes and His actions. And then, we'll explore what we can do to express our gratitude. The reasons to say thanks to God are limitless, but here are some important ones. Psalm 107 verse 1 says, "Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever." God is certainly good to us. Psalm 136 repeats the refrain "His love endures forever" 26 times, and it's paired with accounts of creation, some of deliverance, and some of His provision. This psalm teaches that God's mercy is eternal and prompts us to continually give thanks. In a dark world stained by sin and suffering, God's goodness shines as a beacon, calling our praise and thanksgiving.

God's goodness shifts our focus from the problems we have to His wisdom and providence. Revelation 4 and verse 11 reminds us of the prayer of those around the throne of God in heaven: "Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created." His goodness reminds us that even when we have trials, His love persists. We couldn't breathe without His air; we couldn't quench our thirst without His water; we couldn't nourish our bodies without the food that He provides. We wouldn't know the truth, if He had not spoken through the Bible.

So first, God sustains us every day, providing food, and shelter, and safety. The Lord Jesus taught in Matthew 6:25 to 33, "For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life? And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these.

"But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith! Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' "For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." Yes, God cares for His people! Philippians 4:6 to 7 reminds us, "Be anxious for nothing, (that is stop worry about anything) but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Second, we couldn't be saved were it not for the body and blood of Jesus, sacrificed for our sins. God's goodness and love shines on us, even when we don't deserve it. The Lord Jesus reminds us to love our enemies and to pray for those who persecute us in Matthew 5:44. Well why? "So that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous."

Our salvation and the promise of eternal life does indeed come through our Savior Jesus Christ. Colossians 1:13 to 14 proclaims, "For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." Oh He rescued us at great cost. When I consider the Lord's suffering, the beatings, the scourging, and the terrible cross, I marvel at His love. He did this for our sakes. The sacrifice of Jesus encourages us to joyously give thanks "to the Father who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light" (Colossians 1:11 to 12).

Hebrews 12:1 to 3 urges us, "Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart." Oh everything Jesus did at His trial and on the cross, He did for us. Let's not grow weary and lose heart over the struggles that we face today.

Third, we should be thankful that God answers our prayers. In Luke 17, as Jesus passed between Samaria and Galilee, ten lepers called out, "Master have mercy on us!" Well, verses 14 to 18 tells the story: When He saw them, He said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they were going, they were cleansed. Now one of them, when he saw that he had been healed, turned back, glorifying God with a loud voice, and he fell on his face at His feet, giving thanks to Him. And he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But the nine—where are they? Was no one found who returned to give glory to God, except this foreigner?"

In our own lives we often forget to say thank you to the One who provided all the good things that we enjoy, things for which we have asked God. Many of our prayers ask God for what we need and want. It's right to do this now! But when God grants our requests, let's give thanks. Let's not be thankless people who rejoice in our blessings but forget the One who gave it. Are you one of the nine? Or, are you like the Samaritan? David said to God in Psalm 30:11 to 12, "You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; You have loosed my sackcloth and girded me with gladness, That my soul may sing praise to You and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks to You forever."

Giving thanks is not merely an expression of faith and gratitude. It should reflect what we hold dear in our hearts and how we react to the challenges we face. James 1 verses 2 to 4 says, "Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing." We can be thankful for the difficult circumstances of life, because God uses them to shape and mold our character, so that we can be mature and lacking nothing.

We actively give thanks in several ways. First, we give thanks in prayer. Colossians 4:2 says, "Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving." 1 Thessalonians 5:17 to 18 urges us to "pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

Second, we also give thanks to God through singing with our brothers and sisters. Ephesians 5:19 to 20 says, "speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father." When we sing together we give thanks and we also encourage others to do the same. We must always give thanks. When you sing in your assemblies do you go through the motions or do you give sincere thanks to God. Hebrews 13:15 exhorts us, "Through Him (that is Jesus) then, let

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

Third, we can give praise and thanksgiving to God in our friends’ presence every day. A dear friend, many years, urged me to “speak a good word about Jesus.” Some of the best sermons are really only a sentence long. Just a word about God’s goodness to a friend can encourage that friend and perhaps waken them up to what great good God can do for them. David wrote in Psalm 28:7, "The LORD is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts, and I am helped; my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him." Your example of giving thanks daily can make a difference in someone’s life.

Fourth, we can give thanks to God by our offerings and service to the church. 1 Peter 4:10 and 11 says, “As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

When we worship at church, we’re giving thanks. When we worship as children of God, we are praising God and giving thanks. When we teach and when we listen to the wisdom of God in Bible classes and assemblies, we’re showing our appreciation for God’s word. When we take communion, we remember and give thanks for the body and blood of Jesus Christ. When Paul urged the Corinthians to give to the needy saints in Jerusalem, he knew that it would produce thanksgiving to God (2 Corinthians 9 verse 11). He wrote, “For the ministry of this service is not only fully supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing through many thanksgivings to God. Because of the proof given by this ministry, they will glorify God for your obedience to your confession of the gospel of Christ and for the liberality of your contribution to them and to all.”

Paul frequently gave thanks for churches and for brothers and sisters who served the Lord in faith and love. When I see good deeds given out of hearts of love, it fills my soul with joy and it encourages me to do more. Paul told the Philippians who supported him in Philippians 1:3 to 6, “I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all, in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now. For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.”

Well why does all this matter? It matters because thankfulness, thankfulness identifies us as Christians. If you are thanking God, you don’t have time for complaining, gossiping, or fighting with others. If you’re giving thanks to God, you’ll remain close to God. And when you count your blessings, your heart will be grateful for each of them. Oh, Paul urges us in Ephesians 5:1 to 2, “Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.” Giving thanks to God means following Him and loving like He loves.

Let’s pray together. Oh Father help us always to love You from the bottom of our hearts. To serve You and to live close to You. In Jesus name, Amen.

Obedience to His word honors God and shows love and gratitude. The Lord said, "If you love Me, you will keep my commandments" (John 14 verse 15). Thankfulness puts God’s kingdom and righteousness first. Loving God means taking His word seriously. Thanks for God also demonstrates itself in serving others. The Lord said in Matthew 25:40, “Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of (the least of) these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.”

You know if we've been blessed, let's pay it forward. Volunteer, help neighbors, or give to your local congregation. Acts of service offers thanks to God. Hebrews 13:16 says, "And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased." 1 John 3:16 to 18 says, "We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth."

Living the Christian life has a beginning, a new birth with newness of life and freedom from sin. When we believe in the Lord, and we repent of our sins, we confess His name, we're ready to be born again in baptism. Romans 6 verses 3 to 4 says, "Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life." Won't you be born again and serve the Lord?

We hope that our study, Giving Thanks, has caused you to praise God for all the good He's done for you. If you live in the United States and you want a free printed copy, send your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to [searchtv@searchtv.org](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or, you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. There's a schedule of our programs, a map of churches in your area at [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org). SEARCH is on YouTube! Subscribe to our channel, "SearchTVMinistry" and like the programs. We offer free Bible Correspondence courses. And don't worry if you ask, we're not asking for money. We're here to help you draw close to God.

Show God your love by worshiping at church. If you need a church family and you can attend, don't neglect worshiping at church. There's probably a church of Christ near you. And if you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll gladly help you find one. We'll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God's Word with us. Tell a friend about this program. And as always we say to you, God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.