

GIVE THANKS WITH A GRATEFUL HEART

Life Connecting Teams ~ November 2024

New Covenant Church of Philadelphia

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 NIV says, "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

OBJECTIVE: To be assured that we should give God thanks believing that He can sustain us and redeem the most difficult circumstances, ultimately bringing forth some good.

INTRODUCTION:

Christians can celebrate holidays like Thanksgiving Day, since spending time with family and loved ones while giving thanks is important in maintaining bonds of love and fellowship. However, believers should "give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (**1 Thessalonians 5:18**). Every day can be a day of "thanksgiving" to the Lord.

LESSON:

For a Christian, giving thanks is a response to the goodness and mercy of God. Additionally, it is a mark of obedience because we are commanded to give thanks. This is because God knows giving thanks is good for our relationship with Him and our sense of peace within.

The Bible says having a thankful heart is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. When we begin to thank God for what we have rather than comparing ourselves with others, it opens the door for God's blessings. God is pleased when we praise and thank Him continually since it is an act of obedience to His will for us.

The following scriptures give us just a glimpse of the goodness of God toward His creation. Take time to read each one and discuss the ways God demonstrates His love in them and why we should give thanks.

Psalm 106:1 NKJV: "Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever." **Romans 2:4 NKJV:** "Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?" **Romans 5:8 NIV:** "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Romans 5:8 tells us we were far from Him when He pursued us to make us His own. **Our response to this great pursuit of love should be thankfulness for His great love.** It is a human tendency to become inward focused and self-centered. Even secular society recognizes the emotional benefits of being thankful. Gratitude helps us look beyond ourselves and gain better perspective on the benefits of gratitude.

Christians know that everything good ultimately comes from God. **James 1:17** says, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change." In giving thanks to God, we are reminded of how deeply loved we are and that there is purpose in our lives. We see the gift of all that God has provided for us, both materially and spiritually, and can rest in His continual promise of faithfulness.

To be clear, we are not necessarily thankful for the difficult circumstances but can give thanks for God's presence in the midst and what He promises to do through it. Even when we are surrounded by evil, we

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can thank God that He is more powerful. **He can sustain us, and He can redeem the situation, ultimately bringing forth some good.**

Read and discuss this scripture of how Paul faced a trying circumstance with faith and a joyful heart.

Paul was in jail when he wrote the letter to the Philippians, yet it is replete with the theme of joy. Here is what he counseled: **Philippians 4:6-7 NKJV**, *Be anxious for nothing, 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 understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

Seeing God's Hand Move in the midst of trials

It is not always easy to give thanks, but this is the very thing we must do to see God's will accomplished in our lives. This is how we move into higher realms of faith for ourselves and our families. **Thanksgiving has great power to bring joy and break the power of the enemy.** Whenever you give thanks to God, despite the most difficult circumstances, the enemy loses a big battle in your life. When you give thanks during difficulty, you bring pleasure to God's heart. Satan is defeated when we have a thankful heart because thankfulness during difficulty is a sacrifice pleasing to God.

Are you thankful? Are you thankful for your present circumstances? Are you thankful for your salvation, your ministry, your family, your friendships, your church family, and your job? Thankfulness is a key to your life. It is the key that turns your situation around because it changes you, your outlook, and your attitude. There is power in a thankful heart.

Gratitude is a testimony

When we thank God openly and acknowledge what He's done for us, we proclaim a personal, caring God to the world around us. We show that contentment and peace come not from what we have but Who we know.

Give thanks to the LORD and proclaim his greatness. Let the whole world know what he has done. Psalm 105:1

Remember in Prayer

- Bishop Grannum & family; Pastor Oliver & Lady Denise & family; Pastor Wangui & family; Pastor Omar Barlow & Sis. Jeneen; Pastor Andrew Grannum & Chivas & family.
- Ministers, Deacons, all heads of ministry and ministry leaders
- The Capital Campaign
- Pray for protection for our children and youth
- That more members participate in the Prayer Ministries of NCC
- That more members participate in Life Connecting Teams
- Pray for an increase in food resources for 2 Fish 5 Loaves ministry.

Resource: <https://www.crosswalk.com/special-coverage/thanksgiving/thanksgiving-the-power-of-a-thankful-heart>