

# Thanksgiving

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## *Central Theme*

Every believer should understand why God tells us to always be thankful.

## *Outline*

1. What is Thanksgiving?
  1. Turkey Day – Feast, Family & Football.
  1. Nothing wrong with a good feast.

## **Exodus 23:14 (AV)**

Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year.

1. Feast of Unleavened Bread
2. Feast of Harvest or Weeks – Celebrates wheat harvest seven weeks after Passover
3. Feast of Ingathering or Tabernacles – Celebrates the end of the agricultural year. Celebrated with booths or tabernacles.
2. But is that all Thanksgiving is?
2. Thankful for Blessings of the year – Pilgrims.
  1. What we were taught in schools may not have been entirely accurate, but they did have a feast giving thanks for their harvest and supplies for the coming winter.
  2. Sit around the table and everybody say something they are thankful for.
    1. We live in the freest and richest country in the world. We should be able to find something to be thankful for.
  3. Are we only to give thanks for the things we like?

## **Job 2:10 (AV)**

But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

3. In everything give thanks.

## **1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 (AV)**

Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

2. What does it mean, “in every thing give thanks”?
  1. About 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the Psalms mention thanks or thankfulness

2. Can we be thankful when we're being corrected?

### **Proverbs 3:11-12 (AV)**

My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son *in whom* he delighteth.

1. God says I should not despise correction from Him.
  1. Should I despise correction from my brother or sister?
  2. Should I not give thanks for the correction from my brother?

### **Matthew 18:15 (AV)**

Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

2. Shouldn't I be thankful for those who love me enough to correct me?

### **Proverbs 12:1 (AV)**

Whoso loveth instruction loveth knowledge: but he that hateth reproof *is* brutish.

3. Can we be thankful when bad legislation is passed?
  1. We like to yell and scream at the stupidity that comes out of Washington or Nashville, but shouldn't we be thankful even when our government does foolish things?

### **Daniel 6:10 (AV)**

Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

2. Daniel thanked God regardless of the circumstances around him.
  1. Remember "Facing the Giants"?
  3. We should depend on God, not on government. Therefore we should give thanks even when government fails us.
4. Can we be thankful when things are going "wrong"?
  1. It's easy to give thanks when things are going our way.
    1. What about when someone is sick or there's a problem in the family?
    2. What happens when the crazy uncle starts a fight just before Thanksgiving dinner is served?
    3. What about when we loose a job or we're having one of those "Murphy" days or even weeks?

### **Philippians 4:6-7 (AV)**

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

2. Paul is telling the Philippians to not be anxious and pray with thanksgiving.
  1. How do we do that when our “lives” are falling apart?
5. Can we let Jesus rule in our lives with thanksgiving?

### **Colossians 3:15–17 (AV)**

And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

1. Are you prepared to let Jesus rule in your life?
  1. I've met a lot of “christians” for whom Jesus is not the ruler in their life.
  2. If so, we are told to give thanks to the Father in whatever we say or do.
    1. Give thanks while dealing with the troublesome family member.
    2. Give thanks when you get up Monday morning to go to work.
2. Are you thankful for God's peace in your heart, or do you struggle when things don't go your way?
  1. While you were sleeping – Then you have peace.
3. We will see football players point upwards giving thanks for a good play.
  1. Do we see them giving thanks when they fumble the ball or drop the pass?
4. Are we thankful to let the Word of Christ dwell in us?
  1. Are we thankful for it's wisdom and teaching?
    1. What about when the Word of God contradicts what we believe?
6. Can we be thankful for the Word of God?

### **2 Timothy 3:16 (AV)**

All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

1. God has given us Scripture, which is useful for many things.
  1. Are we thankful to have this tremendous resource?
  2. Do we show it?
    1. When was the last time you spent time reading God's Word?

2. How long has it been since you studied it for guidance, instruction or correction?
2. When God's Word brings something difficult to you attention, do you thank Him for it?
  1. Because God loves you enough to correct you.
7. Can our prayer life be thankful?

**Colossians 4:2 (AV)**

Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;

1. Do we dedicate time for pray and study?
2. Do we do so vigilantly or only haphazardly?
3. Do we pray only when we need something from God?
3. Why is giving thanks so important?
  1. Does God need out thanks?
    1. God is not in heaven hoping we thank him.
  2. When I was a child, I was taught three phrases
    1. Please, thank you and you're welcome
    2. These phrases were drilled into my by my parents to teach me to be polite in public.
      1. More importantly, they made me think about others.
        1. Please, may I take some of your time or effort?
        2. Thank you for giving into my life.
        3. You are welcome for what I have given to you.
3. God reminds us to always pray and to do so with thanksgiving.
  1. Our prayers do not change God, but they do change us.
    1. God may wait until we pray to do what He is going to do, but that is for our training not His benefit.
    2. Our thankfulness reminds us that God is in heaven. That He is in control. Rather than something we are owed, our very lives are a gift from Him.
      1. The fact the you were born is a gift from God.
      2. The very fact you can take a breath is a gift from God.
        1. Forces in a atom – God particle.
      3. Our ability to help others is another gift from God.

**Ephesians 4:28 (AV)**

Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

4. Just as my parents taught me to be considerate of others by saying please and thank you, God teaches us to consider others first through our prayers and thanksgiving.
  1. He also reminds us that He is the Creator and we are the creation.
  2. How much better would life be if more people recognized that there is someone more important than themselves?

4. If there is one thing we should be the most thankful for it's that our names are in the book of life?

### **Luke 10:17-20 (AV)**

And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

1. No matter what happens in this world, be thankful that your eternal life is secured by Christ Jesus.
2. Be thankful that he gave His life so your name could be written in the book of life.

### **Revelation 20:11-15 (AV)**

And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

3. Be thankful for the blessings you have.
4. Be thankful when things don't go the way you want.
  1. God is either correcting you or teaching you, both because He loves you.
5. Enjoy God's blessings and share them with your family and with those in need.
  1. Enjoy your feast, and share it with others.
  2. Enjoy your family, be thankful even for the ones who make you life difficult.
  3. Give thanks in everything,
    1. Because He has given you so much.
    2. Because you are not the center of the universe.
    3. And because it reminds you of what it cost Him.