

BIBLE LIFE MESSAGES

Thanksgiving

Philippians 4:4-7

¹ Let's look at thanksgiving and Thanksgiving Day. To root our thinking today, look at Philippians, chapter 4, verses 4 through 7. ² It reads, **Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.** ³

Let's look at some . . .

I. Examples of Thanksgiving

Examples of thanksgiving. ⁴

The first is the Lord's encounter with the Ten Lepers. ¹ As the Lord and His disciples were on their way to Jerusalem, ten men approached them. They had leprosy. They called out to Him, **Jesus, Master, have pity on us!** Lord Jesus answered them, **Go, show**

¹ Luke 17:12-19.

yourselves to the priests. As they started their journey to the priests, they noticed their leprosy had disappeared. When only one of them came back to express his gratitude Jesus asked, **Where are the other nine?** The Lord appreciates a “thank you” for His blessings and is disappointed when He doesn’t get it from you! ⁵

Another example was shortly after Jesus had resurrected His friend Lazarus from the grave, his sister Mary approached the Lord as He was seated at a meal. ² As an expression of her gratitude, she broke open a vase of very expensive perfume and anointed the Lord’s feet with it, rubbing them with her hair. The Bible says the Lord appreciated it. ⁶

In John, chapter 8, ³ a woman was dragged in and thrown at the Lord’s feet. They caught her in the very act of adultery and were ready to execute her right on the spot. She was guilty. She knew it, the men knew it and the Lord knew it. After persuading the men to

² John 12:1-8.

³ John 8:1-11.

leave, He forgave her and told her to stop her life of sinning.

Many biblical scholars believe this very woman came back to the Lord to express her gratitude in Luke, chapter 7. ⁴ While sitting at a meal, this woman crept in behind the Lord, broke open a jar of perfume and began pouring it on His feet. She wiped His feet with her hair and kissed them. He, again, forgave her of her sins. He appreciates thanksgiving! ⁷

Here's . . .

II. What God Expects

What God expects. ⁸

He wants you to give thanks for those who have received salvation. First Thessalonians, chapter 2, verse 13, says, **And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of**

⁴ Luke 7:36-50.

men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe. 9

He, then, wants you to give thanks especially for the Christian growth you observe in one another. Colossians, chapter 1, verses 3 through 5, We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints - the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel. 10

Again, in First Thessalonians, chapter 1, verse 1 and 2, We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. 11

He wants you to give thanks for the privilege of representing Him in your life. From Colossians, chapter 3, verse 17, we read, **And whatever you do,**

whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. ¹²

You can give thanks in anticipation of His answering your prayers! Philippians, chapter 4, verse 6, **Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.** ¹³ You can thank God knowing that His answers will always be in accord with His perfect will for your life. ⁵ ¹⁴

And you can give thanks to God in all circumstances. First Thessalonians, chapter 5, verse 18, **Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.** ¹⁵

How can you genuinely thank God for adverse things? ¹⁶ The emphatic answer is found in Romans, chapter 8, verse 28, **And we know that in all things God works for**

⁵ Romans 8:28-29 - And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. ¹⁷ And, again, in Ephesians, chapter 5, verse 20, **Always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.** ¹⁸

What's the test of faith? Do you really believe God does that?

Thanksgiving should spring from a grateful heart, like the one healed leper. But it's a command for all of us regardless of our attitude! ¹⁹

Now, here's . . .

III. How to Show Thankfulness

How to show thankfulness. ²⁰

You can show it by faithfully witnessing, sharing your faith. First Chronicles, chapter 16, verse 8, **Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done.** ²¹

You can show it by joyfully singing to Him. Psalm, chapter 92, verse 1, **It is good to praise the LORD and make music to your name, O Most High.** ²²

And you can show it by praising the Lord Jesus through prayer. First Timothy, chapter 4, verse 4, **For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving.** ²³

Thanksgiving is not “Turkey Day”! It’s the day to focus on your blessings from Almighty God!

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