

The Power and Glory of Giving Thanks to God

"Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (I Thessalonians 5:18; Romans 8:28-32).

- I. **After we receive Jesus, our lives become one big "Thank You!" in response. This is very different from simply being a "religious" person. We celebrate what we have been redeemed from and redeemed for.**
 - A. "Giving thanks in all circumstances" is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. We are under new ownership (I Thessalonians 5:16-18).
 - B. We are not just religious people; we are loved and become lovers. We are absolutely changed in our motives and appetites (I John 4:19; Colossians 3:15-17; Luke 17:11-19).

- II. **The thing we call "salvation" is a very relational issue. One of the first things we teach our kids in their relational skills is how to say, "Thank you" and how to express appreciation.**
 - A. The sacrifices of the Old Testament forecast the atoning death of Jesus, turning the state of alienation between God and man. The sin and burnt offerings, which covered sin, were later fulfilled in Jesus Christ's offering on the cross.
 - B. There was another kind of sacrifice called fellowship offerings (or peace offerings) that declared the beauty of our fellowship and communion with God. Included in these offerings were the thanksgiving offerings which acknowledged God's mercies to the one presenting the offerings. In later Judaism the thanksgiving offering came to be valued as the highest type of sacrifice.
 - C. Appreciation is key to any relationship. We warm each other's hearts with it. We also warm God's heart with it (e.g., The Sinful Woman, Luke 7:36-50).

- III. **Thanksgiving and praise enhance the closeness and presence of God (Psalm 100:4; I Thessalonians 5:16-19). "Do not quench the Spirit" (Verse 19).**

- IV. **Thanksgiving and appreciation are directly connected to breakthrough in our lives. "How you remember your last miracle is how you face your next problem" (Bill Johnson, Psalm 106:7-15).**
 - A. "But they soon forgot what He had done and did not wait for His plan to unfold" (Psalm 106:13).
 - B. "Giving thanks in all circumstances..." (I Thessalonians 5:18) softens my troubles and releases my faith. Thanksgiving helps me remember my unique standing and testimonies with God, not only verbally, but emotionally. So, I pay forward my past victories into the new problem and find the faith and grace of God "to wait for His plan to unfold" (Psalm 106:13).
 - C. Notice the connection of thanksgiving and breakthrough in Psalm 50:14, 15, 23.
 - D. Worship, prayer, and thanksgiving are a beautiful recipe for the presence of God and breakthrough in your life (Acts 16:25-31; Philippians 4:4-9).

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