

## GIVING THANKS

The Bible is filled with commands to give thanks to God ([Psalm 106:1](#); [107:1](#); [118:1](#); [1 Chronicles 16:34](#); [1 Thessalonians 5:18](#)). Most verses go on to list reasons why we should thank Him, such as “His love endures forever” ([Psalm 136:3](#)), “He is good” ([Psalm 118:29](#)), and “His mercy is everlasting” ([Psalm 100:5](#)). Thanksgiving and praise always go together. We cannot adequately praise and worship God without also being thankful.

Feeling and expressing appreciation is good for us. Like any wise father, God wants us to learn to be thankful for all the gifts He has given us ([James 1:17](#)). It is in our best interest to be reminded that everything we have is a gift from Him.

Without gratefulness, we become arrogant and self-centered. We begin to believe that we have achieved everything on our own. Thankfulness keeps our hearts in right relationship to the Giver of all good gifts.

Giving thanks also reminds us of how much we do have. Human beings are prone to covetousness. We tend to focus on what we *don't* have. By giving thanks continually we are reminded of how much we *do* have. When we focus on blessings rather than wants, we are happier. When we start thanking God for the things we usually take for granted, our perspective changes. We realize that we could not even exist without the merciful blessings of God.

[First Thessalonians 5:18](#) says, “In everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” We are to be thankful not only for the things we like, but for the circumstances we don’t like.

When we purpose to thank God for everything that He allows to come into our lives, we keep bitterness at bay. We cannot be both thankful and bitter at the same time. We do not thank Him for evil, but that He is sustaining us through it ([James 1:12](#)).

We don’t thank Him for harm He did not cause, but we thank Him when He gives us the strength to endure it ([2 Corinthians 12:9](#)). We thank Him for His promise that “all things will work together for the good, to those who love God and are called according to His purpose” ([Romans 8:28](#)).

We can have thankful hearts toward God even when we do not feel thankful for the circumstance. We can grieve and still be thankful. We can hurt and still be thankful. We can be angry at sin and still be thankful toward God. That is what the Bible calls a “sacrifice of praise” ([Hebrews 13:15](#)).

Giving thanks to God keeps our hearts in right relationship with Him and saves us from a host of harmful emotions and attitudes that will rob us of the peace God wants us to experience ([Philippians 4:6-7](#)).