

### Concluding Exhortations and Commandments (3)

#### Introduction:

Let us turn to our text, 1 Thessalonians 5:12-28. Today is the third Lord's Day in which we are working through these concluding exhortations and commandments that the Lord has given us through the hand of the apostle Paul. We have addressed the first 10 of a total of 18 exhortations and commandments. We concluded last week considering the command, "pray without ceasing." We explained that this is not a command that we pray every minute of every waking hour; rather, it is a command that we always be a praying people. As one expressed it,

The idea of the present imperative (i.e. present tense of the verbal command) is not that believers are to pray every minute of every day, but that we should offer prayers to God repeatedly. We should make it our habit to be in the presence of God.<sup>1</sup>

Today we will take up with verse 18, the 11<sup>th</sup> word of instruction given to us, which reads, "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." But let us once again read our passage, 1 Thessalonians 5:12-28.

<sup>12</sup>We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, <sup>13</sup>and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. <sup>14</sup>And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. <sup>15</sup>See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone. <sup>16</sup>Rejoice always, <sup>17</sup>pray without ceasing, <sup>18</sup>give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. <sup>19</sup>Do not quench the Spirit. <sup>20</sup>Do not despise prophecies, <sup>21</sup>but test everything; hold fast what is good. <sup>22</sup>Abstain from every form of evil.

<sup>23</sup>Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>24</sup>He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

<sup>25</sup>Brothers, pray for us.

<sup>26</sup>Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss.

<sup>27</sup>I put you under oath before the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers.

<sup>28</sup>The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. (1 Thess. 5:12-28)

We commonly read verse 18 as a separate command. It is one of those verses that we think of independent from its context. It is the kind of verse that stands alone, one that is commonly found on Christian posters or greeting cards. But actually, the command to "give thanks" is part of a larger sentence, which begins with verse 16. "Give thanks" is the third verb in this sentence. And so it reads--while highlighting the three verbs-- "**Rejoice** always, **pray** without ceasing, **give thanks** in all circumstances..." Of course verse 18 has a clause attached, which reads, "for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." We should ask ourselves to what does the word, "this", refer? Does "this" only refer to the command, "give thanks", or does it refer to all three commands of the sentence? The answer is that it refers to all three verbs. We are to **rejoice** always, "for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." We are to **pray** without

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Beyond the Basics; An Exegetical Syntax of the NT* (Zondervan, 1996), p. 521.

ceasing, “for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” We are to *give thanks* in all circumstances, “for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”<sup>2</sup>

Let us now give attention to this third verb in the sentence:

## 11. “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

We see that this command has two parts to it. There is first the duty that is pressed upon us: “**Give thanks in all circumstances.**” And then second, the reason attached to the duty: “**for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.**” Let us take these in turn.

### A. The duty that is pressed upon us

#### 1. We are to *give thanks*.

We are commanded to render thanksgiving. God has given us a duty. This duty is to express thanksgiving to Him for all things. Thanksgiving is a *pleasant duty* that God has entrusted to us. We express thanksgiving to God because we are commanded to do so, but we do so not as a laborious chore, but as a pleasurable delight. It is a pleasant duty for us, because thanksgiving flows freely from our hearts that overflow with gratitude toward our God.

Thanksgiving flows from gratefulness, which is the emotion of one who is contented and recognizes his indebtedness to another. One who is discontented cannot be thankful, but one who is contented is thankful for everything. Thankfulness, which is gratefulness expressed in thanksgiving, is a fruit of godliness; no one but a godly man can be truly a thankful man *toward God*. We read in 2 Timothy that one of the characteristics of fallen, unconverted persons in the last days is that they are “unthankful.” Listen to the list of sins to which unthankfulness is linked:

But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: <sup>2</sup> For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, <sup>3</sup> unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good... (2 Tim 3:1-3)

We read of the ungodly persons in Romans 1 who refused to respond to God Who has in a measure revealed Himself in creation. “Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, *neither were thankful*; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened” (Rom. 1:21).

#### 2. Our thanksgiving is to be rendered *to God*.

We are to render thanksgiving to all, but chiefly, of course, to God, Who works the good in all that is bestowed upon us. This is clearly the apostle’s intent, that our thanksgiving should be voiced to God.

Thanksgiving to God is repeatedly referred to in the Scriptures as a sacrifice we render to God. “Offer unto God the sacrifice of thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High” (Psa. 50:14). When we express thanksgiving to God we do offer a sacrifice far more valuable to God than any Old Testament sacrifice. The Psalmist wrote, “I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving. This also shall please the Lord better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs. (Psa. 69:30).

We are to express thanksgiving *to God*. This is not a command to simply have feelings of gratefulness for how good we have it. This is a pet peeve I have in the manner that our annual Day of Thanksgiving is observed in our secular culture. The holiday was originally instituted for an occasion in which our people would publicly and privately give thanks to God. But God has been removed from the equation. Now the holiday is viewed merely as an occasion in which people should recognize and appreciate what they have,

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<sup>2</sup> For those who have interest in the technicalities of grammar, because the Greek word for “this” (τούτο) is a neuter pronoun, it refers to all the verbs in the sentence.

irrespective of God who gave them their blessing. We should not be this way. When we are grateful, we are to express thanksgiving to God for His kindness and mercy that He has extended to us.

The Holy Scriptures tell us that we are to offer thanksgiving to each of the persons of the Blessed Holy Trinity.

**a. Thanksgiving is to be given to God the Father.** Ephesians 5:20, “Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father.”

**b. Thanksgiving is to be given to the Son of God.** 1 Timothy 1:12, “I thank Christ Jesus the Lord.”

**c. Thanksgiving is to be given for (and to) the Holy Spirit.** All of the blessings of God come to us and are applied to us by the Holy Spirit. Paul wrote, “But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation *through sanctification by the Spirit* and belief in the truth, (2 Thess. 2:13).

### **3. Thanksgiving is to be rendered to God by believers.**

Now it is true that all people everywhere should thank the true God for who He is and for the blessings that He bestows, but Paul’s command before us is directed to believers. It is to Christians he addressed this epistle: “Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, *to the church* of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess. 1:1).

**Thomas Watson** (1620-1686) wrote of this:

*“Praise and thanksgiving is a saint-like work. We find in Scripture that the godly are still called upon to praise God: ‘ye that fear the Lord, bless the Lord’ (Psa. 135:20). ‘Let the saints be joyful in glory: let the high praises of God be in their mouth’ (Psa. 149:5, 6). Praise is a work proper to a saint:*

*(a) None but the godly can praise God aright. As all do not have the skill to play the lute, so not everyone can sound forth the harmonious praises of God. Wicked men are bound to praise God, but they are not fit to praise him. None but a living Christian can tune God’s Praise. Wicked men are dead in sin; how can they who are dead lift up God’s praises? ‘The grave cannot praise thee’ (Isa. 38:18). A wicked man stains and eclipses God’s praise. If an unclean hand works in damask or flowered satin, it will slur its beauty. God will say to the sinner, ‘What hast thou to do, to take my covenant in thy mouth?’ (Psa. 50:16).*

*(b) Praise is not comely for any but the godly: ‘praise is comely for the upright’ (Psa. 33:1). A profane man stuck with God’s praises is like a dung hill stuck with flowers. Praise in the mouth of a sinner is like an oracle in the mouth of a fool. How uncomely it is for anyone to praise God if his whole life dishonours God! It is as indecent for a wicked man to praise God as it is for a usurer to talk of living by faith, or for the devil to quote Scripture. The godly alone are fit choristers in God’s Praises. It is called ‘the garment of praise’ (Isa. 61:3). This garment fits handsomely only on a saint’s back.<sup>3</sup>*

Offering thanksgiving to God sets Christians apart from all others. The Christian is able to rise above all others in God’s creation in this God-glorifying duty. Again, **Watson** wrote:

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<sup>3</sup>The selections quoted of Thomas Watson are from his book, *The Godly Man’s Picture* (Banner of Truth, 1992), which was first published in 1666. The full title of the original work was *The Godly Man’s Picture Drawn with a Scripture Pencil, or, Some Characteristic Marks of a Man who is Going to Heaven.*

By this a Christian excels all the infernal spirits. Do you talk of God? So can the devil; he brought Scripture to Christ. Do you profess religion? So can the devil; he transforms himself into an angel of light. Do you fast? Satan never eats. Do you believe? The devils have a faith of assent; they believe, and tremble (James 2:19). But as Moses worked such a miracle as none of the magicians could reproduce, so here is a work Christians may be doing, which none of the devils can do, and that is the work of thanksgiving. The devils blaspheme, but do not bless. Satan has his fiery darts but not his harp and viol.

#### **4. Thanksgiving is to be rendered to God by believers for everything.**

Our English Standard Version reads, ‘give thanks in *all circumstances*.’ The KJV and the NKJV reads, “*In everything* give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” I think that the latter English translation is to be preferred. It is broader also. It is one thing to thank the Lord in all circumstances, but it is something more to thank the Lord in every thing.<sup>4</sup> This speaks about each and every thing, not just our present circumstances. In Ephesians we read that we are to give thanks for *all things*. “Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Eph. 5:20). In every thing and in all things we are to render thanks to God. How can this be? Even in tragic things? Yes, in all things. Again, here is **Watson**:

And as a godly man expresses thankfulness in every duty, he does so in every condition. He will be thankful in adversity as well as prosperity: *‘In every thing give thanks’* (1 Thess. 5:18). A gracious soul (*i.e.* one which has been saved by grace) is thankful and rejoices that he is drawn nearer to God, though it be by the cords of affliction. When it goes well with him, he praises God’s mercy; when it goes badly with him, he magnifies God’s justice. When God has a rod in his hand, a godly man will have a psalm in his mouth. The devil’s smiting of Job was like striking a musical instrument; he sounded forth praise: *‘The Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord’* (Job 1:21). When God’s spiritual plants are cut and bleed, they drop thankfulness; the saints’ tears cannot drown their praises.

##### **a. We are to thank God for the temporal mercies that we receive from Him in this life.**

God is described as the “Father of mercies.” (2 Cor. 1:3). In this life we are the objects of His mercies. We, therefore, may be thankful for

**(1) For the physical life He has given us.** That God brought us into being that we may live in this wonderful creation that He has made should be a cause of us rendering thanksgiving to God.

Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is He that has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless His name. (Psa. 100:3f)

That God made us and the way He made us should be a cause of rendering thanks to Him.

I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knows right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. (Psa. 139:14)

**(2) For the specific life that He has given each one of us.** He has made us each individually, with unique appearance, abilities, and unique experiences. He has made us each uniquely and has given each

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<sup>4</sup> The Greek phrase is ἐν παντί, which is a prepositional phrase, “in every thing” or “in all things” (1 Thess. 5:18).

of us a different kind of life through which we can walk with Him individually and personally. That we were each born at this time, in the place that we were born, and having been brought here this morning is no accident. He directs the path of all of His creatures according to His own purposes and wisdom. Acts 17:26f,

(He) has made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and (He) has determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation, that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us:"

**(3) For the preservation of our being and life.** He visits us every day with His mercies. "Every morning, He preserves our spirits; He upholds our souls in life. He is therefore truly called, the 'Preserver of men', and is worthy of praise and thanksgiving on that account; the reason that Scripture gives is not only because he has made the heaven, earth, and seas, and all therein, but because He 'preserves them all'" (Neh. 9:5, 6).

**(4) For our health, either the continual giving of good health, the restoration of good health, or the fact that there is possibility of restoration of good health is a reason to express thanksgiving to God.** Good health is a very rich blessing. It may be lost quite easily and quickly. This blessing of life should not be taken for granted. Not all enjoy continual good health. If God has blessed you with it, be thankful for it. There are some who would give all they have to have their good health. Good health is a blessing and a mercy from God, not a right that we can demand of Him. If He chooses to withhold good health, He cannot be blamed, for by its very nature a gift cannot be demanded. If it is given to us, we therefore should be thankful.

**(5) For every mercy enjoyed,** whether it be for the life He has given us, the health that we enjoy, the food and clothing He provides. In all things and for everything give thanks.

**b. We are to thank God for the *spiritual* mercies that we receive from Him.**

**(1) We should be thankful for the gospel and the ministry of the gospel that He has given us.** There was a time in history when the gospel was not available to the whole world. The gospel was in the beginning restricted to Israel alone, to the Jewish people only. But thankfully in God's purposes He gave His Apostles the commission to [proclaim the Gospel to the whole world. We should be thankful that this is the case and that we live in the time when the Gospel has been extended to us. We tend to take this for granted, but in the New Testament this extension of the blessing of salvation to the Gentiles was a great cause of thanksgiving. We should not take it for granted. Listen to one description of the occasion:

The Gentiles embraced it (the gospel) gladly, glorified it, or were greatly thankful for it; and when this (Gospel) is blessed to the conversion of sinners, it is matter of thankfulness; not only to them, but to all true believers, and to the ministers of the word: when the Jewish Christians perceived that God had given repentance to the Gentiles also, they glorified God, or were thankful to him, and blessed His name; and when the apostles declared the conversion of the Gentiles by the ministry of the word, it caused great joy among the brethren; and when they were successful in all parts, in making conquests of souls to Christ, they could not but express their thankfulness to God, saying, "Now thanks be unto God, which always causes us to triumph in Christ" (2 Cor. 2:14).

We are living in a land where the gospel may be preached freely and openly. We are not in those places in the world where there is a "famine" of the Word of God, except in our public schools where it is sharply restricted. The removal of the Word of God is a great curse of God upon a people. God had one time pronounced judgment upon Israel. This was His judgment:

Behold, the days come, says the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. (Amos 8:11).

The fact that the Word is so available to us and we have so many sources from which we may receive His Word being taught to us, we should not take it for granted. We should pray for the free flow of truth to us and we should be thankful to God when we see our prayers answered.

**(2) We should be thankful for the gospel and the ministry of the Gospel that He has made effectual to us.** One of the most frequent reasons of thanksgiving that the Apostle Paul gave in his writings was at the news people were being saved through the gospel. He proclaimed salvation by God's grace; that is, salvation is the result of God's work, not our own. When people come to salvation, it is evidence of God's grace and mercy and power at work saving sinners. This is a marvellous thing and should cause us to thank God.

**Colossians 1:3.** "We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints, for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel..."

**Ephesians 1:15.** "Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers."

**1 Thessalonians 1:2.** "We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God."

If we become saved, it is because the Father has elected us to be saved. If we are saved, it is because the Son died to save us. If we are saved, it is because the Holy Spirit has regenerated us. Every aspect of our salvation is to be credited to God alone. To God alone be the glory; thus we are to thank Him for His distinguishing grace that He has chosen to bestow freely upon His people. We are to be as Paul in 1 Thessalonians 2:13, "*We are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.*"

#### **5. Thanksgiving is to be rendered to God by believers at all times.**

**a. We are to be thankful in times of physical and spiritual prosperity.** We are to be joyful, cheerful, and thankful; and when we life is going well. If people are not thankful in good times, how will they stand when things turn difficult? An unthankful person is a miserable person and one difficult to be around.

**b. We are to be thankful even in times of temptation.** God places a limit on temptation for His children and He gives a way of escape to them so they need not yield. God has not given us temptation above that we can endure; for this we are to be thankful. Thank God that He is available for you to approach. Thank God that He hears you. Thank God that He cares for you. Thank God that He is able to bring you out of your misery in His own time in His own way. Thank God that you have a merciful High Priest in the heavens interceding for you and your well being.

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. (Heb. 4:15).

Thank God that you are in this new covenant when such blessings are available to you. You have a High Priest Who is not indifferent, nor without influence as many high priests who sinned away their access to God. But we have One who has entered the heavens and Who ever lives to intercede for you, if you be His.

**c. We are also to be thankful in times of adversity.** Now we are to thank God *in* what we encounter as He leads us through life. Now I might be splitting hairs, but I think that we could say that God instructs us to give thanks to God “*in*” everything, not necessarily “*for*” everything. What is the difference? We will encounter evil in our days. But as believers we always have a basis of thanksgiving. We may always pray, “My God, I thank you that I have You to resort to for comfort and strength in these difficult days.” “Lord, I thank you that You have promised that this dark night of evil will come to its end, and that joy will come in the morning.” Or, “God, I thank you that you have given me this occasion to show my need for You and for this opportunity to show Yourself strong to me and to others about me.” Or this, “Lord, I thank You that in this difficulty You have shown me my weakness and my utter need for You.” Or, God, I know that in Your wisdom You have allowed even this to come to me, to purify me, to wean my heart from this world, to look to You alone for my help, and seek Your face.” The point is this, there is ample reason for us to express thanksgiving to God in everything that we encounter in this life.

**John Gill (18<sup>th</sup> c.)** wrote of giving God thanksgiving in times of trial and difficulty:

Job blessed God, or was thankful, when he was stripped of all; and the people of God have reason to be thankful under afflictions, when the Lord puts underneath his everlasting arms, and supports them under them; when he strengthens them on a bed of languishing, and makes their bed in their sickness; when he chooses them in the furnace of affliction, and knows their souls in adversity; when he manifests his love and favour; when he is with them passing through the fire and water, so that the one shall not kindle upon them, nor the other overflow them; in short, since he makes all things work together for their good here and hereafter, they should be thankful”

There was a puritan, **William Cooper**, lesser known than others, who wrote a sermon entitled, “How We in All Things Give Thanks.”<sup>5</sup> Cooper gave much attention to why Christians are to give thanks to God in their afflictions. He cited and expounded 8 reasons:

Answer 1. We must give thanks for good: afflictions are not evil, but good.

Answer 2. We must thank God for every token of Fatherly love.

Answer 3. The Lord by afflicting His people doth prevent sin, and purge it.

Answer 4. We must thank the Lord for afflicting us, and for laying the cross upon us, because it is so far below what we deserve at His hands.

Answer 5. We may give thanks in every thing, even in and for afflictions, under the rod and cross, because thereby the Lord doth discipline us, and learns us much which else we never would have learned.

Answer 6. Give thanks in and for afflictions because hereby the Lord fits us for heavenly glory.

Answer 7. It is a very high privilege for a Christian to be conformed to Christ.

Answer 8. The crown in a Christian’s banner, his honour, and the special favour of the Lord towards him.

**d. We are to be thankful in times of persecution.** The Lord Jesus encourages His disciples to take heart in these things.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you. (Matt. 5:10-12)

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<sup>5</sup> In *Puritan Sermons*, 1659-1689, Vol. 1, pp. 415-433.

Although here He does not specifically say to give thanks, He does describe such ones as “Blessed” which implies they should be thankful.

Now we have considered **the duty that is pressed upon us**. Let us now give regard to...

**B. The reason attached to the duty: “for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”**

We should not need to present the benefits for rendering thanksgiving to God in order to motivate us to do so. The reason stated here should be fully sufficient for every true child of God. Why should you as a Christian “give thanks in every thing”? Because “this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” Your God would have you do so, therefore you should do so. There will be many benefits to you for doing so, but you should obey this command because it is your Lord’s will to do so.

The question, therefore, that we should be asking ourselves is this: *How shall I as a Christian bring my heart into this holy and heavenly frame, so as in everything give thanks?* This is the question that **William Cooper**, who was cited above, posed in his sermon. Here are his answers to which he said, “Hearken to these few directions, and lay them up in your hearts, and draw them out in your constant practise.”

1. Pray earnestly for the Spirit of God.

“Without that Spirit thou canst never pray or praise God duly, because not spirituality; none can sanctify the Lord God in his heart (which is the first principle of this work), but he whose heart the Lord hath sanctified. The Holy Spirit breathing in a man, makes him a living organ, tuned to and sounding out his praise. “Praise is comely for the upright” (Psa. 33:1), but as uncomely in a carnal mouth as a jewel in a swine’s snout... For indeed, without the Spirit of God in men, they neither can nor will remember the Lord’s mercies, nor consider them, nor value them, nor be affected with them, nor blaze the praise of them. “The dead”, says David, “do not praise Thee;” dead hearts produce dead works; it is the Spirit that quickens (makes alive).<sup>6</sup>

2. Labour to get a continual quick sight and sense of sin. This will sensitize us to seeing His mercies that He freely grants to us in Jesus Christ. This in turn will lead us to give thanks to Him. “A humble, broken heart is the most thankful heart.”

3. Behold every mercy coming to thee in the stream of Christ’s blood, and through the covenant of grace. God shows common mercies to all, but to those who are in covenant with Him, they are “special mercies.” We regard mercies that accrue to us through the sufferings of Christ, by us as rich mercies, from which spring much thanksgiving.

4. Look on thy mercies as answers to thy prayers, and bless the Lord for them on that account. When mercies come in answer to a prayer, it is a double mercy, the mercy itself, and the answer to prayer from a gracious God. “So all our mercies we get by prayer should be the more solemnly dedicated to the Lord by thanksgiving; and such a frame of a thankful heart is a spiritual frame.”

5. When any of God’s dealings do either draw us, or drive us, nearer to God, this is a special mercy. “Mercies are drawing-cords, afflictions are whipping-cords to drive us; by both we are brought nearer to God: thank him. If the chief Shepherd hunt us together, and keep us from straggling, and bring us under command, this is a mercy to Christ’s sheep.” “The storm that sinks and splits some ships, drives others faster into the haven; so do troubles of this world make a true Christian’s voyage toward heaven the speedier.”

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<sup>6</sup> *Puritan Sermons*, 1659-1689, Vol. 1, pp. 427f.

6. That soul that is truly and spiritually thankful, will so order his whole conversation, that God may have the glory of it.

7. If we would offer thanks to the Lord acceptably, let us do it “in the name of the Lord Jesus.” As the Scripture instructs us: “Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name” (Heb. 13:15).

**In conclusion**, let me say that the thanksgiving we render is an *adorning* grace, that is, there is something very appealing (even attractive), delightful, encouraging, and strengthening, about a person who is grateful and expresses that gratefulness in thanksgiving. On the other hand, there is something very unattractive, disheartening, discouraging, sad and even depressing about an unthankful person. You parents know it well. A thankful child is delightful child. An ungrateful child is a cause of great grief.

This matter of giving thanks to God in everything is a good evidence of conversion. A godly man is a thankful man. We will close with some final words from **Thomas Watson**:

If this is the sign of a godly man, then the number of the godly appears to be very small. Few are in the work of praise. Sinners (*i.e* the unsaved) cut God short of his thank offering: *‘Where are the nine?’* (Luke 17:17). Of ten lepers healed there was but one who returned to give praise. Most of the world are sepulchres to bury God’s praise. You will hear some swearing and cursing but few who bless God. Praise is the yearly rent that men owe, but most are behindhand with their rent. God gave King Hezekiah a marvellous deliverance, *‘but Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him’* (2 Chron. 32:25). That ‘but’ was a blot on his escutcheon. Some, instead of being thankful to God, *‘render evil for good’*. They are the worse for mercy: *‘Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise?’* (Deut. 32:6). This is like the toad that turns the most wholesome herb to poison. Where shall we find a grateful Christian? We read of the saints *‘having harps in their hands’* (Rev. 5:8), which is the emblem of praise. Many have tears in their eyes and complaints in their mouths, but few have harps in their hand and are blessing and praising the name of God.

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Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to God our Savior, Who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen. (Jude 24f)

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## Some verses that address the subject of **Thanksgiving**

Hebrews 12:28, "Therefore let us be *grateful* for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe."

Colossians 4:2, "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with *thanksgiving*;"

Colossians 2:7, "Rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with *thanksgiving*."

Philippians 4:6, "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with *thanksgiving* let your requests be made known unto God."

2 Corinthians 4:15, "For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the *thanksgiving* of many redound to the glory of God."

Jonah 2:9, "But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of *thanksgiving*; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord."

Isaiah 51:3, "For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, *thanksgiving*, and the voice of melody."

Psalms 147:7, "Sing unto the Lord with *thanksgiving*; sing praise upon the harp unto our God:"

Psalms 116:17, "I will offer to thee the sacrifice of *thanksgiving*, and will call upon the name of the Lord."

Psalms 107:22, "And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of *thanksgiving*, and declare his works with rejoicing."

Psalms 100:4, "Enter into his gates with *thanksgiving*, and into his courts with praise: be *thankful* unto him, and bless his name."

Psalms 95:2, "Let us come before his presence with *thanksgiving*, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms."

Psalms 69:30, "I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with *thanksgiving*."

Psalms 50:14, "Offer unto God *thanksgiving*; and pay thy vows unto the most High:"

Psalms 26:7, "That I may publish with the voice of *thanksgiving*, and tell of all thy wondrous works."

Nehemiah 12:46, "For in the days of David and Asaph of old there were chief of the singers, and songs of praise and *thanksgiving* unto God."

Leviticus 22:29, "And when you offer a sacrifice of *thanksgiving* unto the Lord, offer it at your own will."

Leviticus 7:12, "If he offer it for a *thanksgiving*, then he shall offer with the sacrifice of *thanksgiving* unleavened cakes mingled with oil, and unleavened wafers anointed with oil, and cakes mingled with oil, of fine flour, fried."

2 Samuel 22:50, “Therefore I will give *thanks* unto thee, O Lord, among the heathen, and I will sing praises unto thy name.”

1 Chronicles 16:8, “Give *thanks* unto the Lord, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people.”

1 Chronicles 16:34, “O give *thanks* unto the Lord; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.”

1 Chronicles 16:35, “And say ye, Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give *thanks* to thy holy name, and glory in thy praise.”

Psalms 18:49, “Therefore will I give *thanks* unto thee, O Lord, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name.”

Psalms 30:4, “Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give *thanks* at the remembrance of his holiness.”

Psalms 35:18, “I will give thee *thanks* in the great congregation: I will praise thee among much people.”

Psalms 75:1, “To the chief Musician, Altaschith, A Psalm or Song of Asaph.\* Unto thee, O God, do we give *thanks*, unto thee do we give *thanks*: for that thy name is near thy wondrous works declare.”

2 Corinthians 9:15, “*Thanks* be unto God for his unspeakable gift.”

Ephesians 5:20, “Giving *thanks* always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Colossians 1:12, “Giving *thanks* unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:”

Colossians 3:17, “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 Thessalonians 1:2, “We give *thanks* to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers.”

1 Thessalonians 5:18, “In every thing give *thanks*: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”

2 Thessalonians 2:13, “But we are bound to give *thanks* alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.”

Hebrews 13:15, “By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving *thanks* to his name.”