

# True Thanksgiving

Psalm 107, selected Scriptures

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## INTRODUCTION: DEFINING THANKSGIVING

True thanksgiving is not as simple as one might think.

This morning I want to thoroughly define Thanksgiving and then read a Bible passage that illustrates the definition.

## I. DEFINING THANKSGIVING

### A. WHAT THANKSGIVING IS NOT

Thanksgiving has always been a part of holy days, but it isn't something that should happen only on holidays.

#### **Ephesians 5:20a**

always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father.

Thanksgiving isn't only for when life is good, or a project is done.

#### **1 Thessalonians 5:18**

in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

It isn't merely good feelings about life or things that we have received, but it can happen in anticipation of good things not yet known nor received.

#### **Philippians 4:6**

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

Thanksgiving cannot happen alongside sin, vulgar speech, or grumbling.

#### **Ephesians 5:3, 4**

But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; and *there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.*

Thanksgiving cannot coincide with pride.

#### **Luke 18:11**

Thanksgiving cannot be experienced when it discourages someone else.

#### **1 Corinthians 14:7**

For you are giving thanks well enough, but the other person is not edified.

### B. WHAT THANKSGIVING IS IN THE BIBLE

I found 11 categories of Thanksgiving in the Bible.

#### 1. Formal Worship

##### **Jonah 2:9**

"But I will sacrifice to You With the voice of thanksgiving. That which I have vowed I will pay. Salvation is from the Lord."

#### 2. Congregational (as well as private)

##### **Psalm 35:18**

I will give You thanks in the great congregation; I will praise You among a mighty throng.

#### 3. Testimony/Evangelism

##### **1 Chronicles 16:8**

Give thanks to the Lord, call upon His name; Make His deeds known among the peoples.

#### 4. Goal or Consequence of Salvation

##### **1 Chronicles 16:35**

Then say, "Save us, O God of our salvation, And gather us and deliver us from the nations, To give thanks to Your holy name, And glory in Your praise."

## 5. Consequence of God's Character

**Psalm 136:1**  
Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, For His faithfulness is everlasting.

## 6. Consequence of God's Work or Provision

**Psalm 139:14**  
I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works, And my soul knows it very well.

## 7. Obedience or Repentance as Thanksgiving

**Psalm 50:23**  
"He who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving honors Me; And to him who orders *his way aright* I shall show the salvation of God."  
8. Consequence of Relationship

## 8. Consequence of Relationship

**Psalm 118:19**  
Open to me the gates of righteousness; I shall enter through them, I shall give thanks to the Lord.

## 9. Thanksgiving for God's Word (cf. 1 Thess. 2:13)

**Psalm 138:2**  
I will bow down toward Your holy temple And give thanks to Your name for Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word according to all Your name.

## 10. Grace (Before a Meal)

**1 Timothy 4:4, 5**  
For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude; for it is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer.

## 11. For Answered Prayer

**2 Corinthians 2:10b-11**  
And He will yet deliver us, you also joining in helping us through your prayers, so that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the favor bestowed on us through *the prayers of many*.

## C. THE WORDS THE BIBLE USES

*Toda*: Confession (either of sin or God's works)

In terms of worship, we confess the works of God in a spirit of praise.

## A. THE PROLOGUE

## II. AN ILLUSTRATION OF THANKSGIVING

Psalm 107

? Can you identify the different aspects of Thanksgiving within the psalm?

## E. HOW THANKSGIVING HAPPENS

1. I recognize my desperate need.

2. I recognize God's character and ability to help me in my desperate need.

Or I recognize that God has helped me in my desperate need and acknowledge His character in doing so.

3. I feel a sense of humility, indebtedness, joy, satisfaction, and peace.

## D. THANKSGIVING DEFINED

Thanksgiving is humble, joyful recognition of God's work on our behalf, whether directly or through others.

This joyful gratitude can be an obligation.

*Eucharistia*: an attitude of joyful gratitude

Luke 18:11). There is also joy (Psalm 95:2).

There is an inherent humility to thanksgiving (cp.

## B. THANKSGIVING FOR THE GOD WHO LEADS

1. Desperate Need, vv. 4, 5
2. Desperate Plea, v. 6
3. Deliverance, v. 7
4. Delightful Recognition of God's Work, vv. 8, 9

## C. THANKSGIVING TO THE GOD WHO INFLICTS PAIN AND DELIVERS

1. Desperate Need, vv. 10-12
- Here we see God's direct involvement in their desperate situation.
2. Desperate Plea, v. 13
  3. Deliverance, v. 14
  4. Delightful Recognition of God's Work, vv. 15, 16

## D. THANKSGIVING TO THE GOD WHO HUMBLIES AND HEALS

1. Desperate Need, vv. 17, 18
2. Desperate Plea, v. 19

3. Deliverance, v. 20
4. Delightful Recognition of God's Work, vv. 21, 22

## E. THANKSGIVING TO THE GOD WHO CONTROLS NATURE

1. Desperate Need, vv. 23-27
2. Desperate Plea, v. 28
3. Deliverance, v. 29
4. Delightful Recognition of God's Work, vv. 31-32

The second misconception is what we say to

## F. SUMMARY THANKSGIVING

1. God's sovereign providence in Man's Desperate Need, vv. 33-38
2. Man's Humble Situation That Leads to A Desperate Plea, V. 39
3. God's Deliverance as Justice for His People, V. 40
4. Delightful Recognition of God's Work, vv. 41-43

## CONCLUSION: PITFALLS FOR THE PERSECUTED

? Were you able to identify the different aspects of Thanksgiving in Psalm 107?

To be truly thankful is to recognize God behind everything that takes place, both the good and the bad, to experience joy and peace in the knowledge of Him; satisfaction, and gratitude to know that He has made and will make all things right in the end.

We can still have happy feelings. We can still feel joy. We might appreciate the way life is going. We can glimpse thanksgiving. True thanksgiving only comes from humbly realizing our desperate need, that we can do nothing ultimately to save ourselves.

In our need, we cry to the Lord for Deliverance.

When He saves us our joyful gratitude is directed to God and to all His works and the people He has used to bless us.

Of Course, all of this is seen most clearly in the

cross.

### **1 Corinthians 15:56, 57**

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

## APPLICATION:

May You experience a blessed holiday and may you achieve true thanksgiving!