

Thanksgiving – A Key Element in Living a Victorious Life

We are all confronted with situations where we struggle to know the will of God.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

- *Our response in every situation is to be thanksgiving.*
- *God's will is for us to be thankful.*
- *Thankfulness will not necessarily provide us with the answers to what we need to do, but it will position us to be led by the Holy Spirit so that His will may be done in our lives.*
- *Thanksgiving changes the attitude of our hearts so that peace and joy can be cultivated and this in turn enables God to lead us.*
- *We must learn to see everything through the lens of thanksgiving.*
- *Until we learn to be thankful to God in every situation we will never have true peace, joy, or contentment in our lives.*
- *True peace, joy, and contentment are only experienced when our hearts are filled with thanksgiving toward God.*

SOME PURPOSES OF THANKFULNESS

- *1. Thankfulness gives God the correct place in our lives.*

Revelation 4:8–11 (NKJV)

⁸The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!"

⁹Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever,

¹⁰the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying:

¹¹"You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."

- *Thankfulness to God is always from the point of view of His greatness and perfection and not because our immediate wants are being fulfilled.*

- *Many Christians struggle with thanksgiving because they are trying to look to their circumstance as a source of thanksgiving instead of being thankful because God is good and He is worthy.*
- *2. Thankfulness helps us to constantly remember the good things God has done for us.*

Psalm 63:6–7 (NKJV)

⁶When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches.

⁷Because You have been my help, Therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice.

Psalm 9:1–2 (NKJV)

¹I will praise You, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will tell of all Your marvelous works.

²I will be glad and rejoice in You; I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High.

- *Sharing what God has done for us will help cultivate an attitude of thanksgiving in our hearts.*
- *3. Thankfulness to God helps us to crucify selfishness and a false sense of entitlement.*

Psalm 107:22 (NKJV)

²²Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, And declare His works with rejoicing.

Psalm 116:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷I will offer to You the sacrifice of thanksgiving, And will call upon the name of the LORD.

- *Thanksgiving is described as a sacrifice because sometimes we must be thankful even in difficult and painful circumstances.*
- *Something must be slaughtered or killed in order to make a sacrifice—the thing we must put to death is our selfishness.*
- *God will sometimes allow difficult circumstances in our lives so that we will have the opportunity to make that sacrifice of thanksgiving and crucify the flesh – our selfishness.*
- *4. Thankfulness to God is an act of our free will to express our love and gratitude to God.*

Leviticus 22:29 (NKJV)

²⁹And when you offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the LORD, offer it of your own free will.

- *As we choose to give thanks to God our will is strengthened to obey God and resist temptation.*
- *5. Thankfulness to God develops spontaneity in our relationship with Him.*

Leviticus 7:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵The flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offering for thanksgiving shall be eaten the same day it is offered. He shall not leave any of it until morning.

- *We must learn to always be aware of God's goodness and immediately respond with thanksgiving.*

Psalm 68:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹Blessed be the Lord, Who daily loads us with benefits, The God of our salvation! Selah

- *"Who daily loads us with benefits" Many times when God blesses us, we don't even take notice of all that He does for us.*
- *An attitude of thanksgiving awakens us to all that He does for us.*
- *6. Thankfulness to God protects us from legalism and judgmentalism.*

Romans 14:6 (NKJV)

⁶He who observes the day, observes it to the Lord; and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe it. He who eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives God thanks; and he who does not eat, to the Lord he does not eat, and gives God thanks.

- *What God is looking for in the hearts of His people is a heart of thankfulness and a desire to honour Him.*
- *We are not to judge others for how they serve God as long as they do so with a sincere heart of thanksgiving.*
- *This attitude of thanksgiving will protect us from looking down on others or judging them for how they are serving God.*
- *7. Thankfulness to God keeps us humble and conscious of our dependence upon Him.*

1 Corinthians 15:57 (NKJV)

⁵⁷But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

- *We are thankful because it is God who gives us the victory in our lives—through Jesus Christ and not because of our own strength.*

2 Corinthians 2:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.

- *God is the One who leads us to triumph in Christ and it is Christ in us who allows people to experience the fragrance of God through us as we live our lives daily.*

1 Corinthians 4:7 (NKJV)

⁷For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

- *However, if we stop being thankful to God for using us and empowering us we will soon become proud, thinking it is our own talents and works that are being manifest.*
- *8. Thankfulness to God is one of the keys to entering into Presence of God.*

Psalm 100:4 (NKJV)

⁴Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.

- *9. Thankfulness to God is key to being free from anxiety as we lay our burdens before the Lord.*

Philippians 4:6 (NKJV)

⁶Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

Colossians 3:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.

- *Thankfulness positions us for peace to rule in our hearts.*
- *10. Thankfulness to God enables us to receive from God all that He has for us.*
- *Thankfulness is like opening our arms wide to receive from Heaven all that He has for us.*

- *11. Thankfulness to God is the only way our service to Him is acceptable.*

Colossians 3:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

- *To serve God half-heartedly or grudgingly dishonours our Lord, because those around us assume it is a burden to serve God.*

2 Corinthians 9:7 (NKJV)

⁷So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

- *Even our giving is only pleasing to God when we do it with a heart of thanksgiving as a response to God's generosity to us.*
- *12. Thankfulness to God enables us to enjoy God's blessings in purity.*

1 Timothy 4:3–4 (NKJV)

³forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

⁴For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving;

- *Unthankfulness destroys marriages, families, lives and causes all sorts of excesses and perversions. Satisfaction and contentment are not found in the things we own, do, or experience, but in a heart that is thankful to God.*

Proverbs 10:22 (NKJV)

²²The blessing of the LORD makes one rich, And He adds no sorrow with it.

- *When we have thanksgiving in our hearts, God's blessings never cause us to be burdened or grow greedy and selfish.*

1 Timothy 6:6–9 (NKJV)

⁶Now godliness with contentment is great gain.

⁷For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

⁸And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.

⁹But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.

Philippians 4:11 (NKJV)

¹¹Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content:

- *We can learn to be fully content independent of circumstances.*
- *“Praise is the language of lovers.” C.S. Lewis*
- *“Praise completes the pleasure” Harvey Katz*
- *13. Thankfulness to God frees us from the prison of our failures.*

Jonah 2:9–10 (NKJV)

⁹But I will sacrifice to You With the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay what I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD.”

¹⁰So the LORD spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.

1 Timothy 1:12 (NKJV)

¹²And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry,

- *Paul had been a persecutor and destroyer of Christians, but when he came to Christ he did not live the rest of his life in the shadow of his former failures and evil deeds. He was free to serve God with thanksgiving.*
- *14. Thankfulness to God protects us from focusing so much on God’s blessings that we become sidetracked and take our focus away from Christ.*

2 Corinthians 11:3 (NKJV)

³But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

- *15. Thankfulness to God enables us to accept whatever situation God has placed before us.*

1 Corinthians 11:23–24 (NKJV)

²³For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;

²⁴and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.”

- *When Jesus was preparing to die the most horrible death possible so that He could save mankind, He gave thanks to His Father for all things.*

Daniel 6:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.

- *Nothing deterred Daniel from continuing to give thanks to God—not even the threat of death.*
- *16. Thankfulness to God leads to emotional and mental stability.*

Philippians 4:7–9 (NKJV)

⁷and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

⁸Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

⁹The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

- *Lasting and true peace, joy, and contentment are independent of circumstances and based on thankfulness to God.*
- *Temporal and fleeting peace, joy, and contentment are based on circumstances and do not provide lasting emotional stability.*
- *Until we cultivate a continual attitude of thanksgiving to God we will never experience the fullness of life that Christ intends for us.*
- *For those who have never received Christ as Lord and Saviour, today is an opportunity to accept Him and find for the first time genuine thanksgiving in your heart.*
- *For those Believers who have struggled with thanksgiving we can begin to develop an attitude of thanksgiving by starting now by asking for His grace to do so.*
- *For those who are developing thanksgiving we can rejoice in that experience and seek to be even more thankful for all that He has done—infinately beyond what we can comprehend.*

