

The Power 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)*

- I. **Giving glory and thanksgiving to God is the first response of a person who truly believes in Jesus as Lord and Savior (Romans 1:18-23).**
 - A. Whoever doesn’t glorify and give thanks to God becomes futile in their thinking, and their hearts become darkened (Romans 1:21).
 - B. After we receive Jesus, our whole lives should be simply one big “Thank you!” in response. This is very different from being a “religious” person (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 express appreciation.**
 - A. The sacrifices of the Old Testament forecast the atoning death of Jesus, terminating 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 offering. In later Judaism the thanksgiving offering came to be valued as the highest type of sacrifice (Rick Harrison, Tyndale Old Testament Commentary).
 - 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 5:16-21). “Do not quench the Spirit.”**

- IV. **Thanksgiving is 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 (verses 14, 15, and 23).
 - D. Worship, prayer, and thanksgiving are a beautiful recipe for the presence of God and breakthrough in your life (Philippians 4:4-9). Paul must have been remembering how he got out of jail in his first journey to Philippi (Acts 16:25-31).