

# *Thankful People*



Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good



# Thankful People

## Psalm 136

<sup>1</sup> Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good.

*His love endures forever.*

<sup>2</sup> Give thanks to the God of gods.

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<sup>3</sup> Give thanks to the Lord of lords:

*His love endures forever.*

- What are you most grateful for today?
- What are you least grateful for today?

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**2 Chron. 5:13** The trumpeters and musicians joined in unison to give praise and thanks to the LORD. Accompanied by trumpets, cymbals and other instruments, the singers raised their voices in praise to the LORD and sang:

“He is good;  
his love endures forever.”

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# *Thankful People*

**Col. 2:6-7** So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, <sup>7</sup> rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

**1 Tim 4:4-5** For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, <sup>5</sup> because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.

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**Col. 3:15-17** Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. <sup>16</sup> Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. <sup>17</sup> And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

**Phil. 4:6-7** Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.



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**Ps. 9:1** I will give thanks to you, LORD, with all my heart;  
I will tell of all your wonderful deeds.

## **Psalm 100:4-5**

Enter his gates with thanksgiving  
and his courts with praise;  
give thanks to him and praise his name for  
the LORD is good and his love endures  
forever; his faithfulness continues through all  
generations.

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- Psalm 69 – a lament that turns to praise
- Psalm 77 – tells us *how* to move to praise, by focusing on what he has done in the past, which generates hope.
- Luke 17:11-19 – story of the 10 lepers.
  - Only some are aware of God's favor
  - Did they deserve it? Were they entitled to their healing?

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# Thankful People

- Gratitude:
  - There are people who live a “good life”
  - What makes life worth living?
  - Generally universal virtues:
    - **Wisdom** (character traits - *curiosity, creativity and a love of learning*)
    - **Justice** (character traits - *fairness, teamwork, and leadership*)
    - **Love** (character traits - *connection with others, kindness and social intelligence* )
    - **Transcendence** - (character trait - *gratitude*)



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- Gratitude:
  - Connection with higher purpose and meaning
  - From a momentary response to a broader attitude towards life



# *Thankful People*

- Gratitude:

Those who cultivate an attitude and disposition of thankfulness have been shown to:

- experience positive emotions more often;
- enjoy greater satisfaction with life and more hope;
- tend to experience less depression, anxiety and envy;
- tend to be more empathic, forgiving and helpful;
- are less focused on materialistic pursuits;
- build personal and interpersonal resources for coping effectively with stress and adversity;
- provide protection against psychiatric disorders, as it reduces risk of internalizing (depression/anxiety) and externalizing (substance abuse)



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- Noticing and appreciating the good elements in life can improve well-being.
- People who are victims of profound tragedies who experience gratitude tend to be the ones who recover better.
- People suffering from natural disasters, disease, or human loss cope better when they can identify some benefit to their predicament.
- Those who practice gratitude in the context of faith tend to fare better with mental health issues.
- Grateful people tend to take a higher, less myopic view of life and world, and see themselves in perspective.

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## Character traits that make gratitude difficult:

- Perceptions of victimhood
- An inability to admit shortcomings
- A sense of entitlement
- Envy and resentment
- Over-emphasis on materialistic values
- Narcissism
  - erroneous belief they are deserving of special rights and privileges;
  - demanding and selfish;
  - exaggerated sense of self-importance that leads them to expect special favor;



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## The Practice of Gratitude

- Instill a weekly regimen of identifying at least 5 things you are grateful for in the past week, and express these to someone.
- Get in the habit of writing a letter or a note to someone to express your gratitude to them
- Write a monthly gratitude letter to God
- Regularly ask, “what I am grateful for in this situation?”
- The daily practice of offering thanks for each meal you eat
- Contemplate scriptures on thanksgiving
- Practice regular praise

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## Awareness Examine

- What are you most grateful for today?
- What are you least grateful for today?

God's leading through consolations and desolations – holding onto what brings us life

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## Practical Realities

- Are we just fooling ourselves about reality?
- What about those times in life that are really bad?
- Job – why is all this happening?
- Thankful people have more inner resources
- Thankful people are connected to higher levels of meaning and purpose
- Thankfulness cultivates trust in God

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