

## The Summer of Psalms

By Doug Hamilton

### 7) Thankfulness to God

We are nearing the end of summer and as a result ending the series *Summer of the Psalms*. Thus far in the seven part series we have covered six pertinent topics from the Book of Psalms that have application to the Christian life. We covered Praise to God, Protection from God, Service for God, Reverence of God, Guidance of God and Strength from God. All the songs of the sermons were chosen based on those topics of the lessons and from the book itself. In this last lesson we will cover another more prominent them called Thankfulness to God.

### Thankfulness to God

David says in *Psalms 7:17* *I will give thanks to the LORD according to His righteousness And will sing praise to the name of the LORD Most High*. In David's process of thanks he often connected his gratitude toward God to his singing. That is the theme of this morning's worship to God, a combination of thankfulness and song from the Psalmist's perspective. *Psalms 18:49* *Therefore I will give thanks to You among the nations, O LORD, And I will sing praises to Your name*. It is with our song we shall thank Him (*Ps 28:7*). *Psalms 30:4* *Sing praise to the LORD, you His godly ones, And give thanks to His holy name*.

### Thank You Lord

For all that You've done, I will thank you  
For all the You're going to do  
For all that You've promised  
And all that You are  
Is all that has carried me through  
Jesus I thank You

Thank You for loving and setting me free  
Thank You for giving Your life just for me  
Jesus, I thank You  
Gracefully thank You  
Jesus I thank You  
Thank You

*Psalms 92:1* "It is good to give thanks to the LORD And to sing praises to Your name, O Most High..." To this we can all say Amen!

### Four Types of Meditations to God

Paul suggests to Timothy in *1 Timothy 2:1* "...I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men..." Paul encouraged Timothy and the church to offer four types of meditations to the Father on the behalf of all men; they are as follows.

- 1) **Supplications:** deesis (deh'-ay-sis) a petition or request, something that can be addressed to God or man. If you believed that God was going to use someone else the carry out the supplying, then it was a supplication with both in mind.
- 2) **Prayers:** proseuche (pros-yoo-khay') basically the same as deesis, but something that is prayed to God alone, for no man could answer that. This was the type of provisional prayer that was offered when it seemed obvious that God alone would cause it to occur.

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- 3) **Intercession:** enteuxis (ent'-yook-sis) an interview or an intimate conversation with God. This was the type of meditation that was offered to draw nearer and typically a more conversational prayer of expression of the heart.
- 4) **Giving of thanks:** eucharistia (yoo-khar-is-tee'-ah) gratitude, thanksgiving. It is this prayer that we focus more on today and is where some religious groups have what is called the Eucharist. It was the taking of inventory of all that we have to be thankful for the Lord and what he brought into our lives.

Even though they were all meditations, they were often itemized separately to communicate what kind of meditation unto God. It is in the area of thanksgiving that this lesson will focus on.

Using the Psalms, I would like to explain why thankfulness is so key to the functionality of our relationship to God. There are four areas that we will focus on.

### 1) Thankfulness Communicates Contentment

- Psalm 97:12 Be glad in the LORD, you righteous ones, And give thanks to His holy name.
- Sometimes the Psalmist would be so enthralled with thanksgiving to God that he would experience an outpouring cluster of thanks unto God. Psalm 136:1-3 *Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good, For His lovingkindness is everlasting.* <sup>2</sup> *Give thanks to the God of gods, For His lovingkindness is everlasting.* <sup>3</sup> *Give thanks to the Lord of lords, For His lovingkindness is everlasting.* This sends the message of great contentment on his behalf. He is satisfied with God.
- When we as Christians are in a constant “Thanking Mode” unto God, it sends the message “I am content in whatever circumstances I am in.”
  - Colossians 4:2 “Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with *an attitude of thanksgiving...*”
  - Phil 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.
  - 2 Corinthians 9:10–12 Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness; <sup>11</sup> you will be enriched in everything for all liberality, which through us is producing thanksgiving to God. <sup>12</sup> For the ministry of this service is not only fully supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing through many thanksgivings to God.
- If we will simply count our many blessings and name them one by one then we will begin to see what God hath done. When thanking God for any and everything, we will end up in the “Land of Contentment”.

### 2) Thankfulness Communicates Creation

- Psalm 9:1 I will give thanks to the LORD with all my heart; I will tell of all Your wonders.
- When we are itemizing all the blessings that God has given to us, it is hard to not dwell on what a great Creator He is. When sitting down to a meal, we can thank God for the farmer that He made, for the ground that He made in which the plants grew, for the rain that He made that fell on the ground, for the sun that He made that shined on the plants, for the oil that was taken out of the earth that he made was processed by the men that He made with the brains in the men that He made, for the men He made whom picked,

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processed and delivered it. From our own selves to our children, from our pets to our health, from our digestion system to our respiratory system, everything that is in our life is the result of the creation of God. Thanking God for all these naturally confirms our trust that He did bring it into focus as the Master Creator that He is.

- Psalm 145:10 All Your works shall give thanks to You, O LORD, And Your godly ones shall bless You.
- 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.
- We cannot be truly thankful if we overlook that He is the Creator of all. It is from Him to Him and through Him. Being thankful to God will draw you closer to Him as the Creator of the cosmos.

### 3) Thankfulness Communicates Commandment

- Psalm 56:12 Your vows are *binding* upon me, O God; I will render thank offerings to You.
- When we are in “thanking mode” to God, a lot of thoughts might pass through our mind. One which always seems to linger in the background of the mind when itemizing the blessings of the Father is the fact that there is obligation with such abundance.
- What is the first thing a person usually thinks when a telemarketer calls and tells them they have won this incredible prize? We have all said it at one time or another, “What’s the catch?” There is always a catch when there is something of value being given away. It might be in the small print, the processing or some hidden fees. Many times people who win a prize find out later that there are certain taxes due. People naturally understand that for a great blessing there must be a price. The Psalmist did!
  - Psalm 140:13 Surely the righteous will give thanks to Your name; The upright will dwell in Your presence.
  - Psalm 119:62 At midnight I shall rise to give thanks to You Because of Your righteous ordinances.
  - Psalm 119:7 I shall give thanks to You with uprightness of heart, When I learn Your righteous judgments.
- Why is it any difference when it comes to blessings in the realm of heaven? Ephesians 2:8–10 reminds us that it is by the gift of grace from God that we are saved and also with the obligation to live a life of good works for Him. It was not an afterthought, but part of the plan. There is no greater blessing from God to be thankful for that the gift of eternal life. Being thankful to God concerning this also communicates commandments of God out of obligation for what He has done for us.
- The same is true when thanking God for all that we have. We connect it to the commands to be giving, loving, compassionate, honest, being faithful and all the other expectations from God. Thankfulness Communicates Commandment.

### 4) Thankfulness Communicates Comfort

- Psalm 118:28–29 You are my God, and I give thanks to You; *You are* my God, I extol You. <sup>29</sup> Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; For His lovingkindness is everlasting.
- In fact five times in Psalm 107 it states “Let them give thanks to the LORD for His lovingkindness...”

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- Psalm 45:17 I will cause Your name to be remembered in all generations; Therefore the peoples will give You thanks forever and ever.
- He is speaking as a man that is comfortable in his own skin; and why not, for he is grateful toward God. There is great comfort in the life of he who possesses an attitude of gratitude.
- The blessings that we have today can be taken away at any moment, but the right attitude toward God we can survive it. *1 Timothy 6:7–8 For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. <sup>8</sup> If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.* These are the only two earthly blessings that God temporarily guarantees His children in this life. They are really the only items we need to survive, food and clothing. Yet if we are not being thankful to God for that, then where does that place our heart? If our heart is like that, then expect not to be comfortable when it comes to the rest of the blessings. *Psalm 132:15 “I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy her needy with bread.*
- *Psalm 65:4 How blessed is the one whom You choose and bring near to You To dwell in Your courts. We will be satisfied with the goodness of Your house, Your holy temple.* It was in the Holy Temple of God that the Throne Seat of Mercy (the Ark of the Covenant) was located. This place was called the House of God and the Psalmist was acknowledging thankfulness in this life in light of a good afterlife.
- Paul summarizes it best in *Philippians 4:12–13 I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. <sup>13</sup> I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.* If you want true comfort with in your relationship with God, then consistently thank Him.

Thanking God communicates many messages with four of them being contentment, creation, commandment and comfort. Four concepts that I am persuaded can be found in the Psalms and sung as the fruit of our lips (Hebrews 13:15).

### Gratitude Lunch

Three times a month, Jermaine Washington and Michelle Stevens get together for what they call a “gratitude lunch.” You might ask “What is a gratitude lunch?” Washington donated a kidney to Stevens, whom he described as “just a friend.” They met at work where they used to have lunch together. One day Michelle wept as she spoke about waiting on a kidney donor list for 11 months. She was being sustained by kidney dialysis, but suffered chronic fatigue and blackouts and was plagued by joint pain. Because Washington couldn’t stand the thought of watching his friend die, he gave her one of his kidneys. It was with that in mind that they for regularly shared a “Gratitude Lunch”.

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