

Thankfulness to God

Christianity is to be filled with thanksgiving!

- 2 Cor 9:11 you will be enriched in everything for all liberality, which through us is producing thanksgiving to God.
- Phil 4:6-7 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
- Col 4:2 Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with {an attitude of} thanksgiving;
- Heb 13:15 Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.

With those verses in mind and the holiday of Thanksgiving being celebrated this week, let us discuss the topic of thanksgiving to God.

Thankfulness to God for our families

- Ps 127:3-5 Behold, children are a gift of the LORD; the fruit of the womb is a reward.”....“How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them...”
- Prov 5:18 Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth.
- Col 3:20 Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.

There is to be a high standing among the earthly family that God has chosen for you. We are to be thankful to God for our families, for it is the bedrock of the well-being for everyone.

- I am very thankful for my family. Jana has been a good wife and helpmeet for me. We have four wonderful children and two grandchildren and we are thankful to God for them. We were blessed to be able to be raised by parents and other family members that love us very much and for them we are also thankful to God. They are in a great part in defining our lives. We even thank God sometimes for our adopted members of the family called our pets, though not human, have brought much joy to our family. We try to thank God for all of them.

There are many that wrote me emails this week, telling me of their thankfulness to God for their families.

- **Jennifer Marrs** stated that she was very thankful to God for her husband Dave, their new daughter Catriona, her parents, yes...the in-laws and her extended family.
- **Alan Garner** wrote: “Sharon and I are thankful for our parents and grand parents who were Christians, for three Christian children, married to Christians. Our two oldest grandsons are Christians.

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Today before we began eating lunch, we went around the table mentioning things we were thankful for. When we came to Sam and Eva, I was pleased with what they said. Sam (4 1/2) said, "Grandparents." Eva (3) said, "Church."

- **Darren Crowden** made this the core of his thankfulness to God stating, "My faithful and wonderful wife of 27 years who has stood by me through some very difficult times, having a incredible daughter and son-in-law whose life and character shines like the stars in the universe (to borrow a Biblical phrase), Two grandsons who are being raised in a Godly, faith-filled and loving home.
- **Michael Green:** I'm thankful for my wonderful wife and my children. The Lord has truly blessed with me with a wonderful family.
- **Larry Mackey:** "For Cathy, for constant support and understanding; desire to live a quiet Christian life as a dedicated wife, mother and sister in Christ. I thank God for Ryan & Jason, for their commitment to Christ, despite my often less than admirable example and the joy that they've given both Cathy and me."
- **Dru Anivatarte** wrote that she was thankful for "my older children that are still in my life (my boys have always brought me great joy) , a husband of 36 years (he taught me patience!!)
- **Carrie Cantrell** ranked her family quite high on the list stating, "My God, family, friends, education, and reconciliation."
- **Doug Zimmerman:** "I'm thankful for married couples in the body and their faithfulness to God's word. I'm thankful for children. They are a blessing from God (most of the time!)"
- **Caycee Miller:** I am thankful for my dad because he keeps us safe and works all the time to get more money for the family. I am thankful for my sisters because I would be soo lonely without them. I am thankful for my mom because she does as much work as she can to take care of us when my dad isn't around.
- **Grant Deitch:** I'm thankful for the memory of my dad, we had a good relationship and a lot of fun times together, and that's what I wanted to create for my family. I always hoped that I have.

Are we thanking God for our families like we should? Take the time this week to thank Him for having blessed you with a family. Thank Him for your mother and father, thank Him for your children, your spouse, your aunts and uncles, your nieces and nephews. Thank Him for the whole family!

Thankfulness to God for our leadership

- 1 Tim 2:1-3 First of all, then, I urge that entreaties {and} prayers, petitions {and} thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, 2 for kings and all who are in authority, in order that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. 3 This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,

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- Heb 13:17 Obey your leaders, and submit {to them} for they keep watch over your souls, as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.

We are to be thankful to God for our leaders, whether they are in the church or out of the church. They do play a vital role in our lives.

- I am so thankful to God for our elders. We are so blessed to have seven godly men that are willing to stand before the congregation and guide us in the godly ways of the Bible. I am persuaded that we should thank God for these men and thank them personally. Take the time to do so. The same goes for the deacons of the church. They also have responsibilities just like the teachers of the congregation, both men and women. I thank God for you and I thank you for the fine job you are doing. I am also thankful to God and you for the many kind words of encouragement and thankfulness that you have extended to me your preacher, not only in the emails in preparation of this lesson, but also through the years serving here.
- **Tara Hopkins** wrote “I am especially thankful for Cole's teachers (as well as all the Bible class teachers) and that he has made Christian friends.”
- I felt real special as a preacher to hear the words of **Arlene Deitch** that she was thankful “for her family, church family and Doug Hamilton!” Thanks Arlene for the kind words.
- **Doug Zimmerman**: “I’m thankful for preachers that contend earnestly for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. I’m thankful for teachers and their willingness to use their knowledge of the scriptures to build up the body...I’m thankful for song leaders as they orchestrate the voices of the saints heavenward.”

Take the time to thank God for the many leaders that are before us and even more, go thank them personally. Let them know that you appreciate them and they will lead even better.

Thankfulness to God for our food, shelter and the other earthly blessings

- 1 Tim 4:4-5 For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, if it is received with gratitude; 5 for it is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer.
- 1Thes 5:16-18 Rejoice always; 17 pray without ceasing; 18 in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.
- 1 Tim 6:8 And if we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.

We are so privileged to live in a country that holds some of the highest blessings ever afforded to mankind. When much of the world is suffering hunger and malnutrition, we suffer from obesity. While many in the world lack clean drinking water, we drink it bottled and chilled. We are so blessed.

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- I am very grateful to God for a bed to sleep in at night and the food that we are able to enjoy at the table. I am so thankful to God that we have vehicles to drive and petrol to put in the tank so we do not have to walk many miles a day just to get around. I am very thankful to God for warmth in the cold of winter and clothing to cover myself. I have been to these poorer areas of the world and witnessed a lifestyle that would crush the ambitions of most Americans. I am so blessed.

There were many that addressed this in their emails concerning thankfulness to God. Here are but a few.

- **Jana** was thankful for her health and the health of the family, something that comes through much of the material blessings put before us.
- **Timothy Minser** stated “I am thankful for the quality of life that I, all too often, take for granted. The quality of life that allows everyone to have the opportunity to be employed, put food on the table, provide for your family, and live without fear of unjustly losing the necessities of life.”
- **Jennifer Marrs** detailed her blessings: “my health, food, clothing, my house, my two cars, my insane dogs, my yard, all my household appliances, my fish tank full of beautiful fish, the sun, the moon, the mountains, air, leaves, trees, Dave's job, furniture all of the toys and clothes from church members for Catriona, a comfortable bed...”
- **Faynelle** wrote: I am so-o-o thankful for my good health at my age. With the Lord's help I am still able to be "jack of all trades and master of none". He has been good to me for many years.

Are we thanking God like we should be for all the material blessings He has allowed us to have? If not, hopefully this has encouraged you to do it more often. Count your many blessings, name them one by one!

Thankfulness to God for the Church

- Eph 1:15-16 For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which {exists} among you, and your love for all the saints, 16 do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention {of you} in my prayers;
- Col 1:3 We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,
- Rom 16:3-4 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, 4 who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles;

Many times in the New Testament, we find Paul thanking God for the church family. The church as a whole often demonstrated their appreciation for each other whether it was in the selling of the personal property for the church or their prayers of faith offered up to God. We are to be thankful for the church family.

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- I am so thankful for my church family. I did not really have a close family of my own as I was growing up. I did not have that many friendships and the ones that I had were not lasting relationships. I always felt I was lacking something in my life and when I found Christ
- **Lori Deitch**: I am very thankful to God for our wonderful family. Growing up here in the North and not living near my physical family that lived in the south and saw one time a year, I truly looked at this congregation as my family. They made a big impact on my life and I am so thankful that my children have been able to grow up here with this church family. There are also very blessed to have great immediate family that has been a big impact on their lives as well especially being committed Christians. We are truly blessed in every way and I thank God for each and every Christian in our Camp Hill family!
- **Chris Fry** wrote me an email that really brightened my day. In mentioning his love for the church family, he said, “Over the past six years I’ve been blessed with several opportunities to spend time with the people of this congregation. At school, in worship, bible classes, LAN parties, softball, roadtrips and mountaintops. I’m actually at a loss for words. I wanted to link god’s love with my church family. I just don’t one where to begin. Hope you know what I’m trying to say.” Chris, I know what you are saying...yes, they are special aren’t they?
- An **anonymous brother** wrote: being raised in the church, with the church family, being encouraged and given the opportunity to attend a Christian university, having a place like Harding to prepare for my future AND grow spiritually/build life-long Christian friendships.
- **Barbi Dyche** stated “What we are most thankful for is the church family. No matter where we travel be it California or North Carolina we can find a sound Church with many wonderful brothers and sisters.”
- **Micah Lampson** wrote: “The things that we go through as Christians make our lives fuller and they remind us that we truly need other Christians for support. I am also thankful for all the support that Chris and I have gotten from the Church at Camp Hill. Even though we are far from home and often miss our families we have a Christian family that loves us and has welcomed us with open arms. That is very special to us and something that is often hard to find.”

We should be thanking God all the time of the blessing of having the church family. We also need to be letting the church family know that we are also thankful for them being in our lives. I shutter to contemplate what it would be like if we did not have each other.

Thankfulness to God for Salvation

- 1 Cor 15:57 but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 2 Cor 2:14 But thanks be to God, who always leads us in His triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place.

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- 2 Cor 9:15 Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!
- Rom 6:17-18 But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, 18 and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

There is nothing greater to be thankful for in this life than salvation from God which leads to eternal life.

- This is something that I have always been thankful to God for in my life. I often think back to the time that I was baptized, making a commitment to God and taking Him up on the offer to be washed of my sins. I thank God that I am a first generation Christian, married to a believing wife and having believing children. I am thankful that my children are and are intending to marry Christian spouses and raise children in a Christian home. I am very thankful for salvation.
- This was also mentioned numerous times by many individuals, too many to list them.
- They were happy that God wanted them in His family.
- They were thrilled to know that God has forgiven them.
- They were blessed to know that they will be spared on that Day of Judgment and will be presented before God as spotless and blameless.
- They were excited that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son so that we might believe and trust Him for salvation.

Are we thanking Him for this on a daily basis? Do we thank God everyday that His love for us never diminishes, but draws us closer to Him? Do we thank God for that glorious day that awesome and powerful message that He spoke through the benevolent actions of His Son on the cross? Take the time to thank Him today, right now!

Be Thankful to God! He is the true author of Thanksgiving!