

PRAYER

A Biblical Theology and Exposition of Prayer

DEFINITION

The Definition of Prayer

- Prayer is an act of spiritual communion in which the believer responds to the Triune God in ways that he accepts as revealed in his word.

THANKSGIVING

Thanksgiving

“Basically, thanksgiving is the act of expressing specific gratitude to God for blessings he has bestowed upon us. . . . Thanksgiving differs from praise in that praise focuses on *who* God is, whereas thanksgiving focuses on *what* God has specifically done *for us*.”

—Dick Eastman, *The Hour That Changes the World*, 87–8.

Thanksgiving

- The expression of gratitude especially to God.
- To express appreciation for benefits or blessings to the one who is the source of such gifts, in a humble spirit of dependency.

Thanksgiving

- Synonyms: “to bless,” “to appreciate,” “to acknowledge,” “to be content.”
- Thanksgiving is tightly intertwined with adoration/praise/worship.
- Thanksgiving permeates Scripture.

Thanksgiving

“Christian contentment is that sweet, inward, quiet, gracious frame of spirit, which freely submits to and delights in God’s wise and fatherly disposal in every condition.”

—*Jeremiah Burroughs, The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment, 19.*

Thanksgiving

“Thankfulness to God is a recognition that God in His goodness and faithfulness has provided for us and cared for us, both physically and spiritually. It is a recognition that we are totally dependent upon Him; that all that we are and have comes from God.”

—*Jerry Bridges*

Thanksgiving

Scriptural Examples of Thanksgiving

- Let's see what the Scriptures present on thanksgiving.
- What does thanksgiving look like?

“The LORD lives, and blessed be my rock;
And exalted be God, the rock of my salvation,
The God who executes vengeance for me,
And brings down peoples under me,
Who also brings me out from my enemies;
You even lift me above those who rise up against me;
You rescue me from the violent man.

“Therefore I will give thanks to You, O LORD, among the nations,
And I will sing praises to Your name.

“*He* is a tower of deliverance to His king,
And shows lovingkindness to His anointed,
To David and his descendants forever.”

Thanksgiving

“To You, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise,
For You have given me wisdom and power;
Even now You have made known to me what we requested of You,
For You have made known to us the king’s matter.”

– *Daniel 2:23*

Thanksgiving

“Now when Daniel knew that the document was signed, he entered his house (now in his roof chamber he had windows open toward Jerusalem); and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously.”

—*Daniel 6:10*

Thanksgiving

“I will give thanks to the LORD according to His
righteousness And will sing praise to the name of
the LORD Most High.”

—*Psalms 7:17*

Thanksgiving

“I will give thanks to the LORD with all my heart;
I will tell of all Your wonders.
I will be glad and exult in You; I will sing praise
to Your name, O Most High.”

—*Psalms 9:1–2*

Thanksgiving

“Therefore I will give thanks to You among the nations, O LORD,
And I will sing praises to Your name.”

—*Psalms 18:49*

Thanksgiving

“A Psalm; a Song at the Dedication of the House.

A Psalm of David.

I will extol You, O LORD, for You have lifted me up,

And have not let my enemies rejoice over me.

O LORD my God,

I cried to You for help, and You healed me.

O LORD, You have brought up my soul from Sheol;

You have kept me alive, that I would not go down to the pit.

Sing praise to the LORD, you His godly ones,

And give thanks to His holy name.”

—*Psalm 30:0–4*

Thanksgiving

“We give thanks to You, O God, we give thanks,
For Your name is near; Men declare Your
wondrous works.”

—*Psalms 75:1*

Thanksgiving

“It is good to give thanks to the LORD
And to sing praises to Your name, O Most High;
To declare Your lovingkindness in the morning
And Your faithfulness by night,
With the ten-stringed lute and with the harp,
With resounding music upon the lyre.”

—*Psalms 92:1–3*

Thanksgiving

“I shall give thanks to You, for You have answered me,
And You have become my salvation.”

“You are my God, and I give thanks to You;
You are my God, I extol You.
Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good;
For His lovingkindness is everlasting.”

—*Psalms 118:21, 28–29*

Thanksgiving

“From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force. For all the prophets and the Law prophesied until John. And if you are willing to accept *it*, John himself is Elijah who was to come. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

—*Matthew 11:12–15*

Thanksgiving

“But to what shall I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the market places, who call out to the other *children*, and say, ‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.’ For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon!’ The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.”

—*Matthew 11:16–19*

Thanksgiving

“Then He began to denounce the cities in which most of His miracles were done, because they did not repent. ‘Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. Nevertheless I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in *the* day of judgment than for you.’”

—*Matthew 11:20–22*

Thanksgiving

“And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will descend to Hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day. Nevertheless I say to you that it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in *the* day of judgment, than for you.”

—*Matthew 11:22–24*

Thanksgiving

“At that time Jesus said, ‘I praise [Ἐξομολογοῦμαι] You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from *the* wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants. Yes, Father, for this way was well-pleasing in Your sight.’”

—*Matthew 11:25–26*

Thanksgiving

“First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world. For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the *preaching of the* gospel of His Son, is my witness *as to* how unceasingly I make mention of you, always in my prayers making request, if perhaps now at last by the will of God I may succeed in coming to you.”

—*Romans 1:8–10*

Thanksgiving

“I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, that in everything you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge, even as the testimony concerning Christ was confirmed in you, so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,”

—1 Corinthians 1:4–7

Thanksgiving

“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, do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention *of you* in my prayers;”

—*Ephesians 1:15–16*

Thanksgiving

“I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all, in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now. *For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.*”

—*Philippians 1:3–6*

Thanksgiving

“We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints; because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel which has come to you, just as in all the world also it is constantly bearing fruit and increasing, even as *it has been doing* in you also since the day you heard *of it* and understood the grace of God in truth;”

—*Colossians 1:3–6*

Thanksgiving

“We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention *of you* in our prayers; constantly bearing in mind your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father, knowing, brethren beloved by God, *His* choice of you; for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.”

—1 Thessalonians 1:2–5

Thanksgiving

The Objects of Thanksgiving

- **God's goodness and love:** 1 Chr 16:34, 41; 2 Chr 20:21; Ps 54:6; 106:1; 107:1, 8; 118:1, 28; 136:1–3, 26; 138:2; Jer 33:11
- **God's wonderful works:** Ps 9:1; 75:1, 15, 21, 31; 139:14; Isa 25:1.
- **God's protection and strength:** Ps 28:7.
- **God's Immanence:** Ps 75:1.

Thanksgiving

The Objects of Thanksgiving

- **God's response to prayer:** Ps 118:21; Dan 2:23; John 11:41.
- **God's word:** Ps 119:7, 62; 138:2–4.
- **God's provision:** Matt 15:36; Mark 8:6; John 6:23; Acts 27:35.
- **God's healing from disease:** Luke 17:15–19.
- **God's people:** Acts 28:15; Rom 1:8; Eph 1:16; Phil 1:3; Col 1:3; 1 Thess 1:2; 2:13; 2 Thess 2:13; 2 Tim 1:3; Phlm 4.

Thanksgiving

The Objects of Thanksgiving

- **God's deliverance from sin:** Rom 6:17; 7:25; 1 Cor 15:57.
- **God's grace:** 1 Cor 1:4; 2 Cor 9:15.
- **God's call to ministry:** 1 Tim 1:12.
- **God's reign:** Rev 11:17.
- **Everything:** Eph 5:20; 1 Thess 5:18.

Thanksgiving

The Failure to Give Thanks

- The failure to give thanks to God is a chief characteristic of the unregenerate man.
- The heart that is grateful finds no reason for complaint; the heart that is ungrateful finds no reason for thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving

“For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.”

—*Romans 1:20–21*

Thanksgiving

“But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these.”

—2 Timothy 3:1–5

Thanksgiving

“While He was on the way to Jerusalem, He was passing between Samaria and Galilee. As He entered a village, ten leprous men who stood at a distance met Him; and they raised their voices, saying, ‘Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!’ When He saw them, He said to them, ‘Go and show yourselves to the priests.’ And as they were going, they were cleansed. Now one of them, when he saw that he had been healed, turned back, glorifying God with a loud voice, and he fell on his face at His feet, giving thanks to Him. And he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus answered and said, ‘Were there not ten cleansed? But the nine — where are they? Was no one found who returned to give glory to God, except this foreigner?’ And He said to him, ‘Stand up and go; your faith has made you well.’”

—*Luke 17:11–19*

“If all be a gift, see the odious ingratitude of men who sin against their giver! God feeds them, and they fight against him; he gives them bread, and they give him affronts. How unworthy is this! Should we not cry shame of him who had a friend always feeding him with money, and yet he should betray and injure him? Thus ungratefully do sinners deal with God; they not only forget his mercies, but abuse them. ‘When I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery’ (Jer 5:7). Oh, how horrid is it to sin against a bountiful God!—to strike the hands that relieve us!”

—*Thomas Watson*

“An unthankful and complaining spirit is an abiding sin against God, and a cause of almost continual unhappiness; and yet how common such a spirit is. How prone we seem to be to forget the good that life knows, and remember and brood over its evil—to forget its joys, and think only of its sorrows—to forget thankfulness, and remember only to complain.”

—*John Broadus*

“A thankful heart is one of the primary identifying characteristics of a believer. It stands in stark contrast to pride, selfishness, and worry. And it helps fortify the believer’s trust in the Lord and reliance of His provision, even in the toughest times. No matter how choppy the seas become, a believer’s heart is buoyed by constant praise and gratefulness to the Lord.”

—*John MacArthur*

“Gratitude is the return justly required from the objects of His beneficence; yet it is often withheld from our great Benefactor simply because His goodness is so constant and so abundant. It is lightly esteemed because it is exercised toward us in the common course of events. It is not felt because we daily experience it.”

—*A. W. Pink*

Thanksgiving

“And as they were going, they were cleansed. Now one of them, when he saw that he had been healed, turned back, glorifying God with a loud voice, and he fell on his face at His feet, giving thanks to Him. And he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus answered and said, ‘Were there not ten cleansed? But the nine — where are they? Was no one found who returned to give glory to God, except this foreigner?’”

—*Luke 17:14b–19*

Thanksgiving

“For all things *are* for your sakes, so that the grace which is spreading to more and more people may cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of God. Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.”

—2 Corinthians 4:15–16

Thanksgiving

“I will praise the name of God with song
And magnify Him with thanksgiving.”

—*Psalms 69:30*

Thanksgiving

“in [ἐν] everything give thanks; for this is God’s
will for you in Christ Jesus.”

—1 *Thessalonians* 5:18

Thanksgiving

“And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for [ὑπὲρ] all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;”

—*Ephesians 5:18–20*

Thanksgiving

What Are The Benefits of Thanksgiving?

- Thanksgiving evidences the Spirit's filling.
 - **Ephesians 5:18-20**
- Thanksgiving chokes out anxiety.
 - **Philippians 4:16** – “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”
- Thanksgiving cultivates contentment.
 - **Philippians 4:12** – “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.”

“If anyone would tell you the shortest, surest way to all happiness and all perfection, he must tell you to make a rule to yourself to thank and praise God for everything that happens to you”

—*William Law*

“Gratitude is a handmaiden of contentment. An ever-growing attitude of gratitude will certainly make us more content since we will be focusing more on what we do have, both spiritually and materially, than on what we do not have. But contentment is more than focusing on what we have. It is focusing on the fact that all we do have; we have by the grace of God. We do not deserve anything we have, materially or spiritually. It is all by His grace.”

—*Jerry Bridges*

Thanksgiving

What Are The Benefits of Thanksgiving?

- Thanksgiving mortifies self-sufficiency.
 - **Psalm 28:7** – “The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in Him, and I am helped; therefore my heart exults, and with my song I shall thank Him.”
 - **John Hannah:** “Preoccupied with ourselves, we have lost the grace of being thankful. It is sad to live in a world where there is no one to thank because we have ourselves become the cause and source of all good things.”
- Thanksgiving purifies speech.
 - **Ephesians 5:4** – “and *there must be no* filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.”

Thanksgiving

Why Do We Give Thanks Before Meals?

- First, Jesus taught us to pray for daily bread.
- **Matthew 6:11** – “Give us this day our daily bread.”

Thanksgiving

Why Do We Give Thanks Before Meals?

- Second, Jesus gave thanks before meals.
 - **Matthew 14:19** – “Ordering the people to sit down on the grass, He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up toward heaven, He blessed *the food*, and breaking the loaves He gave them to the disciples, and the disciples *gave them* to the crowds.”
 - **Matthew 15:36** – “and He took the seven loaves and the fish; and giving thanks, He broke them and started giving them to the disciples, and the disciples *gave them* to the people.”
 - **Luke 22:17, 19** – “And when He had taken a cup and given thanks. . . . And when He had taken *some* bread *and* given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them.”

Thanksgiving

Why Do We Give Thanks Before Meals?

- Third, the apostles gave thanks before meals.
 - **Acts 27:35** – “Having said this, he took bread and gave thanks to God in the presence of all, and he broke it and began to eat.”
 - **1 Corinthians 10:29b-31** – “Why is my freedom judged by another’s conscience. If I partake with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of that for which I give thanks? So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”
- Fourth, the apostles taught us to give thanks for all that God has made for us.
 - **1 Timothy 4-5** – “For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude; for it is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer.”