

# It is Good to Give Thanks (Ps. 92:1-4)

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By  
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## At A Glance:

- I. Introduction
- II. Thankfulness Fuels Worship
- III. Thankfulness Benefits Us
- IV. Thankfulness Fuels Service
- V. Conclusion
- VI. Questions for Further Thought

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*These sermon study notes are designed to be a tool used after listening to the sermon. This resource is a guide to help deepen understanding regarding the Scriptures and ideas presented in the sermon. Those who use these study notes are encouraged to look up, read through, and think about Scripture references in this guide. There is more information in these notes than what is presented in the sermon. These study notes are designed to be used as an independent study tool to help the formation of Biblical convictions, character, and conduct.*

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# It is Good to Give Thanks

## I. Introduction

### A. Illustration: Season of Thankfulness

1. The last few weeks have been particularly sweet for me. God has provided me with several wonderful blessings that have encouraged and breathed life into my soul. While my list of blessings is much longer, I will only highlight three of them.
2. First, I was able to purchase a new to me car. It's the same year as my current vehicle (a 2008), but it is in much better condition with less than half the miles. I am so thankful for this car because I was able to get it before winter, and the low temperatures that come with it, which will hopefully remove stress and difficulty from our lives. My old car has a really hard time starting in low temperatures. Several solutions were attempted, but none of them worked well. In the winter, I never know if my car is going to start or not. If my car doesn't start, both of our vehicles become unusable due to our one stall garage and driveway. All these hassles should be removed, for which I am grateful.
3. Our church was provided with the opportunity to go to what is called BASICS training. After signing up for this training, the location moved from Indianapolis, IN to Menominee, WI which made our trip a lot shorter and more convenient. Our district office has given our church, at their expense, assistance that will greatly help our leadership teams as we move forward in creating a healthier church culture and a more spiritually fruitful environment. We will be able to be better leaders as a result. This training provided tools and direction that our leadership teams needed. I'm very excited to see us use this training and discover what it will lead to in our local context. Our potential for kingdom impact has greatly improved.
4. Lastly, after I returned from this training, I discovered a box in my office with, "Pastor, you earned this!" written on it. When I opened it, I realized how special a gift was given to me. One of my lifetime desires was to have a full-size replica Minnesota Vikings helmet—which I never thought I'd ever have. Not only was a Vikings helmet in the box, but the helmet was also signed by a brother in Jesus' spiritual family: Kirk Cousins. While in the big picture of life, this is not ultimately important. But, every now and then, God drops special add-ons into our lives because He is so good. While I was blown away by this generous gift, there is something even better attached to it. I know this gift was given to me by someone in this church because they care about me, and that is even more precious to me than the helmet itself. I have truly been so blessed in this most recent season of life.

- B. We all know that there are highs and lows in life. Sometimes, life is really great and everything can seem to be going our way. Other times, life can be a struggle and it can seem like nothing is going our way. There are good seasons and bad seasons of life—that is just the nature of living in this world. A world created good by God but was corrupted by us. These ups and downs,

ebbs and flows, are the natural consequence of the reality of the Bible's explanation of this world.

- C. Considering the nature of life in this world, an important life principle is found in Psalm 92:1-4. As I began to meditate and study the life principles found in this passage, I saw how it is connected to and fuels other areas of the Christian life as well. God tells us to, "always giving thanks for all things" (Eph. 5:20) for good reason. It is good to give thanks.

## II. Thankfulness Fuels Worship

- A. While most disciples realize they should give thanks to God and live with an attitude of thankfulness, not nearly as many understand why they should be doing this. As a result, giving thanks to God can be forced and feel like a chore rather than a genuine expression of their heart's condition. However, as we learn the value of being thankful and it becomes a natural part of our day to day experience, our internal attitude will look something like this:

<sup>1</sup> It is good to give thanks to the LORD And to sing praises to Your name, O Most High; <sup>2</sup> To declare Your lovingkindness in the morning And Your faithfulness by night, <sup>3</sup> With the ten-stringed lute and with the harp, With resounding music upon the lyre. <sup>4</sup> For You, O LORD, have made me glad by what You have done, I will sing for joy at the works of Your hands. (Ps. 92:1-4)

- B. The first observation to make is the main topic at hand, "to give thanks to the LORD" (v. 1). Being thankful and giving thanks to God is a major theme throughout the entire Bible. It is found prominently in both the Old and New Testaments. Thankfulness is described as the normal and expected human reaction to encountering God. Thankfulness makes a lot of sense when we understand who God is.
- C. Closely connected to the topic of giving thanks is worship. Throughout this passage, we find elements of worship, "to sing praises" (v. 1), "the ten-stringed lute" (v. 3), "the harp" (v. 3), resounding music upon the lyre" (v. 3), and "I will sing for joy" (v. 4). This relationship between thankfulness and worship is a common one, and it is found many times outside of this passage as well. Here is the connection: thankfulness fuels worship. If a person wants to worship well, with passion and energy, they must first be thankful, and thankfulness comes from their view of God.
- D. Here is a core conviction that every individual disciple must adopt if their worship is ever going to please God: God is good, and He only gives what is good. Without being deeply convinced that this conviction is true, a person will not worship well and their Christian life will be stunted as a result. We will run through a quick, yet important, theology of thankfulness. A straightforward statement that is repeated throughout Scripture is: God is good. Here is just one example:

<sup>1</sup> Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good, For His lovingkindness is everlasting.  
(Ps. 107:1)

- E. Notice how "for He is good" is the reason to "give thanks". Having a knowledge of the goodness of God will increase our desire and ability to give thanks. It is a fact that God's character and nature is good. Goodness is who He is. Goodness defines God. God can't be separated from goodness any more than wetness can be separated from water.

- F. Not only is God good, because He is good, He can only do what is good in His actions.<sup>1</sup> God brings about good, and He only gives that which is good:

<sup>16</sup> Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. <sup>17</sup> Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow. (Jas. 1:16-17)

And again,

<sup>4</sup> For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude; (1 Tim. 4:4)

- G. We act out of who we are, and this is also true of God. Because God is good, He acts in ways that are good. God is the source of everything that is good, “Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above” (Jas. 1:17). If God is eliminated, so is everything good. This is good news. Not only is God the source of everything that is good, but He will never change, either. God will permanently and forever be the source of all good things.
- H. In addition, everything God does is also good, “For everything created by God is good” (1 Tim. 4:4). Everything good comes from God and everything God does is good. Notice how all-encompassing these truths are. Goodness and God are always found together.
- I. Another observation about giving thanks that will build our theology of thankfulness is that thankfulness is always a part of our lives. Notice how God’s presence and influence is found, “in the morning” (v. 2) and “by night” (v. 2). It doesn’t matter what time of day it is; this person is giving God thanks for His lovingkindness and faithfulness. The person is thankful and worshipping God at any time. Thankfulness is an attitude that permeates their life.
- J. In another passage that highlights the main life principle we are examining, another element of thankfulness is mentioned:
- <sup>9</sup> I will give You thanks forever, because You have done *it*, And I will wait on Your name, for *it is* good, in the presence of Your godly ones. (Ps. 52:9)
- K. The duration of thankfulness is, “I will give You thanks forever”. How is this possible? Because God is going to be on the throne of the universe as King forever (Ps. 92:8). He is good forever. Not only can disciples be thankful any time of day, but they can also be thankful anytime throughout their entire lives. Giving thanks to God is a permanent posture toward God.
- L. Any time of day and throughout our lives, disciples can give thanks to God in worship. There is no limit to thankfulness. When a person becomes persuaded of the conviction that God is good and only gives what is good, they will be in a good position to worship passionately. If someone is not really convinced God and His ways are good, it is easy to start going through the motions of worship. Worship can become a habit or routine that feels like an obligation. It is possible to go through a church service, including singing worship, without passion or energy. Worship can

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<sup>1</sup> Disciples can learn to be like God in this way (Pr. 11:23).

be approached as a task on a to do list. Understanding how good God is can overcome this type of scenario. It is the hope of the elders that our times of corporate worship together will be filled with life, excitement, and passion for God. In order to do this, each person must be convinced that God is good and only gives what is good.

### III. Thankfulness Benefits Us

- A. So far, we have been leading up to the main life principle found in Psalm 92:1-4. Now that we know how thankfulness fuels one of the central activities of the Christian life, we can realize the principle itself: “it is good to give thanks” (v. 2). Giving thanks to God has desirable and positive qualities. Giving thanks benefits not only God, but the person who is offering the thanks. When disciples truly get ahold of the truth of this principle, it can have a large impact on their life.
- B. Our approaches to being thankful and expressing thanks to God will be deepened and improved if we realize giving thanks benefits us. It is to our personal advantage to develop a habit of giving thanks to God. While the fact of giving thanks being good is mentioned in our main text, the ways giving thanks is good are explained in another:

<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD! For it is good to sing praises to our God; For it is pleasant *and* praise is becoming. (Ps. 147:1)

- C. First, we are told, “For it is pleasant”. Giving thanks to God gives us pleasure.<sup>2</sup> There is something in the act of expressing thankfulness to God that deeply satisfies our soul. This isn’t a physical pleasure; it is a soul pleasure. Usually connected to this type of pleasure is a knowledge of being acceptable to God and receiving His favor.<sup>3</sup> These acknowledgements go hand in hand with giving Him thanks. Giving thanks to God is a way of bringing deeply satisfying pleasure into our lives.
- D. Second, giving thanks “is becoming”. Possessing an attitude of thankfulness toward God and expressing that attitude to Him is suitable, right, and appropriate for those who love God.<sup>4</sup> Those who live upright lives and are righteous will praise God (Ps. 33:1). It is what they do as an overflow of who they are. Jesus made this point after healing the lepers (Lk. 17:11-19). Individuals who have faith in God will return to Him for the purpose of giving thanks when God gives them something good. Giving thanks is the response of faith to God. It is the natural and expected response.
- E. How does giving thanks being good for us work? Giving thanks to God comes as a result of being close to God. Remember, God is the source of everything good. Therefore, the closer we draw to God, the better off we will be. This doesn’t mean the external situation of our lives will improve, but the internal quality of our souls improves. As our internal life becomes healthier, our overall joy and satisfaction increases, no matter what our circumstances are. Here is how it is presented in Scripture:

<sup>28</sup> But as for me, the nearness of God is my good; I have made the Lord God my refuge, That I may tell of all Your works. (Ps. 73:28)

<sup>2</sup> Logos 10 Bible Study Software Exegetical Guide on Ps. 147:1 “pleasant”

<sup>3</sup> Logos 10 Bible Study Software Exegetical Guide on Ps. 147:1 “pleasant”

<sup>4</sup> Logos 10 Bible Study Software Exegetical Guide on Ps. 147:1 “becoming”

- F. Our best interest is described as, “the nearness of God is my good”. If disciples would draw near to God and stay there, they would put themselves in the best possible position in life. However, what normally happens is that we become content living a life distant from God. Then, when difficulties or troubles come, we pursue God with greater energy and fervency. We draw close to Him for a time, in order to receive help and comfort. Then, when the difficulties are removed, we tend to drift back to where we were before. We can ride this roller coaster for much of our lives.
- G. If we realize how good and beneficial it is to be near God, we will want to live our lives in as close of proximity to God as we can. This will drive our desire to remove sin out of our lives and a course of persistent obedience. If we understand how good it is to be close to God, we will have energy to consistently participate in spiritual habits that feed our soul.
- H. If we live a life of closeness with God, there will be two effects on us. As we jump back to our original text in Psalm 92, we discover positive outcomes of giving thanks. Giving thanks will naturally lead to, “You, O LORD, have made me glad” (v. 4) and “for joy” (v. 4). Getting in the habit of regularly giving thanks will have a positive impact on our emotions. As we focus on the blessings of God to us, it will make us happy and give us a sense or state of great happiness and pleasure.<sup>5</sup> This joy is so strong that we can’t help but cry out to God in gratitude and appreciation.<sup>6</sup>
- I. The second major positive effect of regularly giving thanks to God impacts the mind and our perspective, “I will sing for joy at the works of Your hands” (v. 4). The Psalmist is voicing their delight in what God has done for them. While it is beneficial to focus our mental energy on the goodness of God in general and the actions He has performed in the past, it is also possible to rejoice in the same manner as an individual. God does specific good works for us personally and we can pay attention to those particular actions of God on our behalf. As we give thanks to God, our perspective of God and His role in our lives is positively impacted. We understand God’s goodness in greater detail, and we recognize God’s direct care for us. This transforms our view of God. The fact is that God is good to everyone (Lk. 6:35)—including you. We only need to develop eyes to see God’s goodness to us. When we do, our perspective on God and life will be changed for the better.
- J. Many people go through life thinking God hasn’t done anything good for them. It is common for people to think God does them harm. This comes because of spiritual blindness and ignorance. Jesus says God is good to everyone, even the wicked and ungrateful. It can be as simple as providing enough food to eat for the day or the physical ability to earn the money they need to survive. Everyone has had enjoyable experiences at some point in time in their life due to God’s goodness to them. Are you convinced God is good to you personally? Does this cause you to live near God? If you have the habit of drawing near to God only when life is challenging, how might you change this? Disciples can be fully convinced of the fact that nearness to God is good. The best internal quality of life is found in God.

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<sup>5</sup> Logos 10 Bible Study Software Exegetical Guide on Ps. 92:4 “glad” and “joy”

<sup>6</sup> Logos 10 Bible Study Software Exegetical Guide on Ps. 92:4 “sing for joy”

#### IV. Thankfulness Fuels Service

- A. Another important factor connected to the main life principle, it is good to give thanks to God, is that thankfulness fuels not only our worship, but our service to God as well. This connection is found in the following passage:

<sup>21</sup> Let them give thanks to the LORD for His lovingkindness, And for His wonders to the sons of men! <sup>22</sup> Let them also offer sacrifices of thanksgiving, And tell of His works with joyful singing. (Ps. 107:21-22)

- B. Those who “give thanks” will, “also offer sacrifices of thanksgiving” (v. 22).<sup>7</sup> Thankfulness leads to sacrificial service in its various forms. In the Old Testament context, this meant literal sacrifices, whether that be an animal, bread, wafers, cakes, a vow, or a monetary sacrifice at the temple in Jerusalem.<sup>8</sup> For us, it can be as simple as words of praise (Heb. 13:15). The options to sacrificially give back to God for the benefits and goodness He extends to us are endless. A sacrifice of thankfulness can be making a phone call to encourage someone else, changing a light bulb in the church building, giving money to help someone get a bill paid, spending time studying the Bible to teach a class, working hard at organizing an event or ministry, giving up time on the weekend to build a relationship with a neighbor who doesn’t know Jesus, etc. A sacrifice of thanksgiving is anything we offer to God in response to His goodness.
- C. A disciple can’t help but respond in some capacity when they recognize and understand God’s goodness towards them. Like the leper who received a life changing gift from Jesus, our seemingly inadequate sacrifice of thanksgiving may be to return to Him for the purpose of saying, “thank you”. No matter how big or small the sacrifice is, the significant point is that disciples, as an act of trust in Jesus, will respond positively to God’s goodness. This is a distinction between those who genuinely believe in Jesus and those who do not. Those who are not part of God’s spiritual family will not be thankful towards God for His goodness towards them—they may not even be able to see it.

#### V. Conclusion

- A. Disciples who are following Jesus will become absolutely convinced that God is good and only gives what is good. God is safe and a refuge for those who trust Him. They know the closer they get to God, the better off they are. They will strive to live a life of consistent close intimacy with God.
- B. It is good to give thanks. We greatly benefit from us including a passionate worship posture and joyful service. The question disciples will be frequently asking themselves as they give thanks to God is, “<sup>12</sup> What shall I render to the LORD For all His benefits toward me?” (Ps. 116:12).

<sup>7</sup> These can be motivated by deliverance from distress, death, or sickness (Ps. 50:23, 56:12-13, 107:21-22), answered prayer (Ps. 66:13-14), or times of religious renewal (2 Chr. 29:31, 33:15-16, Jer. 17:26, 33:11). Martin H. Manser, [Dictionary of Bible Themes: The Accessible and Comprehensive Tool for Topical Studies](#) (London: Martin Manser, 2009).

<sup>8</sup> Lev. 7:11-36, 29-30

**VI. Questions for Further Thought**

- A. What are a few of the most meaningful ways you have experienced the goodness of God in your life?
- B. How did Jesus convince the disciples to pray with the perspective that God is good (Mt. 7:7-11)? What might it look like to pray in this way?
- C. What is your overall view of God. Do you think He is good? Are there any ways that you doubt God's goodness?
- D. What types of everyday experiences might contribute to someone developing a view of God that denies His goodness?
- E. How might you personally "give thanks" to God?