

Grateful

Let Thankful Worship Reign

Psalm 100:4 "Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise; give thanks to Him and praise His name."

"What are you grateful for?" Let me answer that with a specific example: I am grateful for my right ear lobe. Sound strange? It would be to me too, until recently. I was walking outside, I stopped to stretch, and was "clocked" on the head. Out of the corner of my eye a hawk flew by. My right ear lobe painfully gushed blood where her talon tore it open... I had been attacked by a hawk. She then glared down at me from her resting branch near her nest 30 feet away.

Immediately I wondered the spiritual message to glean from this crazy earthly moment. I was thankful I wasn't injured worse. It reminded me to guard my heart and mind through Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:6-7). To put on the full armor of God in this case, especially the "*helmet of salvation, and stand victoriously*" (Ephesians 6:10-20). Spiritual predation happens to God's children, yet we already walk in Christ's victory because we have received Him as our personal Savior. This is something to be thankful for moment-by-moment! He has borne the penalty of every sin on the cross. Have you turned to Him to pay for the penalty of your sins which is death and eternal separation from Him (Romans 6:23)? This is the beginning of the deepest gratefulness you will ever know.

When life is filled with turmoil *and* when life is filled with joy, enter His gates (that is, prayerfully embrace His presence) with thanksgiving for His unconditional gifts of forgiveness and everlasting love. Have you walked through this open gate of His? If not, it's open to enter. That is why the song writer could pen the lyrics, "[It Is Well With My Soul](#)" (click & listen) when worshipping the Lord after experiencing severe loss in his life (Scarlet Fever took his only son, then he lost his life savings in the Great Chicago Fire, and years later finally penning the lyrics over all his daughters drowning in a shipwreck ([story link](#))). God will never leave you nor forsake you (Joshua 1:5; Hebrews 13:5). God is a promise keeper (Psalm 145:13).

Worshipping Him in prayer amidst failure, pain or fear includes confessing you need His peace that exceeds understanding to guard your heart and mind through Christ's death, resurrection and eternal gift. He loves you just as you are. The gate is open – Come to Him all heavy-laden (Matthew 11:28). Humbly, call upon Jesus out loud, by name (Isaiah 55:6, Jeremiah 33:3). Thank Him He is in control (Proverbs 19:21). Seek to know Him, the Planner, over knowing the plans because He ultimately has plans not to harm you but give you an eternal hope and a future (Jeremiah 29:11) as a child of God (knowing Christ as your personal Lord and Savior). Therefore, give Him thanks *in* all circumstances (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18). Notice it says *in*, not *for* all circumstances. I could have done without the "talon ear piercing."

I will be grateful when I see a hawk in the future. As a vet, I love God's creation! Admittedly, I did surrender to God the fear I felt the next day starting my walk – it was *not* going to crush my joy! Is it possible that my little ear scar will forever be a blessing? A stone of Gilgal – that is a remembrance of God's love and mercy (Joshua 4:1-9). The psalmist says in 100:4 to also *praise*

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God. Remember the walls of Jericho came down with just praise (Joshua 6:1-27)! Praise is a spiritual weapon. In thanksgiving, God's goodness and our relationship with Him happens, but in praise, our eyes shift to God's greatness and His attributes. Psalm 100:3 just told us this: Know God. Do you know God? Or just know *of* God? Louie Giglio's [sermon](#) on this is a good listen, including learning what laminin looks like. God is bigger than our problems. The song "[How Great Is Our God](#)" says it well. It's a spiritual shift to trust Him. Jesus trusted his Heavenly Father facing the plan of dying on the cross () proclaiming "...not my will but yours" (John 6:38, John 4:34). Even Psalm 22:3 (a Messianic psalm) points to this in the fullness of time as "a praise of Israel". Jesus upheld that His Heavenly Father is holy and does all things right. God dwells in the presence of His people's praise. Scripture describes individual believers as "the temple of the living God" where God's presence dwells (1 Corinthians 6:19; 2 Corinthians 6:16). Praise Him and experience His presence.

1. Every moment of every day will not be perfect, as we are still here on this fallen earth. Yet I encourage you to intentionally express gratitude to God, lifting up His name throughout the day in prayer to Him in the small stuff This means daily dependence on the Lord for His provision of your "daily bread" (Matthew 6:11). **Have you entered the gate with thanksgiving and praise? Psalm 100:3 primes us to enter by knowing God. Do you Know God? Or just know *of* God? Pause and play this song, "[Way Maker](#)," and reflect on knowing God beyond your circumstances. While you were still sinning, Christ died for you (Romans 5:8).**
2. **How can daily gratitude for the small things prepare you for big life challenges? How did Jesus model this during His time on earth?**
3. **How can you cultivate a deeper understanding of God's character and His plan for your life? Silence and solitude before the Lord? Prayer with fasting? Searching the Scriptures? Not quenching the prompting of the Holy Spirit but responding in action?**
4. **If you have time, find all the Scripture referenced, look them up, and discuss what stands out for you.**



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