THANKSGIVING 2026
Praise to the Creator
Take – a - Ways

Reasons to be Thankful

I Thessalonians 5:18 – always, in all ways
Psalm 107:1 – for His enduring love
Philippians 4:6 – pray with thanksgiving not anxiety
Colossians 3:17 – all thanks go to the Father
Psalm 100:4 – come into His presence with praise
I Corinthians 15:57 – be thankful for the gift of salvation
I Corinthians 1:4 – be thankful for fellow Christians

The Story Behind …"Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart"

This favorite Thanksgiving hymn was written in 1978 by Henry Smith Jr. in Williamsburg, Virginia. Smith was dealing with a degenerative eye condition that eventually led to legal blindness. He was fresh out of seminary, but struggled to find work and faced severe financial instability and discouragement. While attending his church in Williamsburg, Smith was deeply moved by a sermon referencing:

II **Corinthians 8:9**:

"***For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.***"

The pastor spoke about how Jesus made Himself poor so that others could be spiritually rich. Despite his physical and financial hardships, Smith felt overwhelmed by gratitude for Christ's sacrifice. He sat down and penned the words and melody. Smith and his wife, Cindy, initially sang the song at their local church in Virginia. A visiting U.S. military officer heard the song and brought it with him to Europe, spreading it internationally.

In 1986, Integrity Music recorded it on a Hosanna! Music cassette, initially crediting the writer as "unknown". Smith eventually reached out to Integrity Music to claim authorship, and they signed a publishing agreement with him. Today, it remains a staple in contemporary Christian worship.