

The Potter's Christian Life Center

SERMON NOTES
with Pastor Greg Formey



Thank You!

1 Thessalonians 5:18

Sunday, November 23, 2025

Some days make sense. Others are filled with confusion. God gives us a clear pathway through both. It is the path of thankfulness. Gratitude is not based on our situation but on our salvation. Thankfulness aligns us with God's will even when life does not make sense.

"Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

GIVE THANKS IN EVERY CIRCUMSTANCE

Paul commands, "give thanks in all circumstances." The Greek verb is a present command, meaning keep choosing gratitude. The focus is not on what is going on around you, but on the Savior. Gratitude anchors our hearts to Jesus when events try to pull us away from Him, and it invites us to be obedient even before feelings arrive.

Paul and Silas had absolutely no reason to be thankful after they had been mobbed, beaten and thrown into jail and chained. Because they knew they were in the will of God, they praised him in the middle of a terrible situation.

In making the most of their situation, they did the opposite of what they were feeling, - they sang hymns of worship and praise at midnight in a Philippian jail. God opened the doors. Their gratitude came before their rescue, and frankly, led to it.

So he could with great conviction say:

Philippians 4:6-7

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

"Do not be anxious" is a command to stop ongoing worry. He promises that He will guard like a soldier on duty around the clock. God's peace stands watch when we mix prayer with gratefulness.

In Israel, worshipers brought a thank offering called the "todah" to the temple. They also thanked and blessed the Lord at meals and everyday prayers. They trained their hearts to show gratitude not only in high moments but in ordinary life.

GRATITUDE ALIGNS US WITH GOD'S WILL

Our target is God's will. We do not do things God's way by chance. Gratitude is a deliberate attitude that declares in what we say and do, that we are in allegiance to Jesus and the Kingdom of God. It is the believer's oath of loyalty to King Jesus.

Corrie ten Boom was a Dutch Christian watchmaker who helped hide Jewish families during the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands. Her family built a secret room in their home to protect refugees. She was arrested in 1944 and sent to Ravensbrück concentration camp, where her sister Betsie died.

She learned to thank God for the smallest, most unusual things. Believe it or not she was grateful for fleas in a prison barracks. The pests kept guards away, allowing them to have uninterrupted prayer and Bible study.

Corrie survived and was released due to a clerical error. After the war she traveled worldwide sharing her message of forgiveness and hope in Christ. Her book *The Hiding Place* told her story and inspired many. She spent her final years in the United States, continuing to speak about God's love and grace.

Gratitude does not deny pain. It declares trust in God's wiser plan even in the midst of pain.

Psalm 107:1-2

Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he has redeemed from trouble." ESV

The Hebrew term reveals God's commitment to His children that does not quit. We give thanks because He is determined to keep holding on to us, even when the news around us is hard.

What daily practice will signal your allegiance to Jesus when life presses you hard?

Conclusion

Thankfulness in everything is not denial. It is discipleship. Because we know Jesus has our backs, we keep choosing gratitude. His peace then watches over us like a security guard. His steadfast love endures when feelings rise and fall.

Begin today. Pray your requests with thanksgiving. Boast about His goodness. Align your heart with His will.