

*Giving Thanks in a Terrible,  
Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Year*

November 22, 2020 | Wonderful Mercy Church

# *Give Thanks? In 2020? Really?*

“2020 would seem to be a crazy year for a Thanksgiving Offering, wouldn't it? 11.1 million Americans have contracted Covid-19 and more than 246,000 have died. Social unrest has framed our national life as protests, riots, and cries for justice have dominated the landscape. Our presidential election cycle was rife with ugliness, division, and anger. And we propose to receive a Thanksgiving offering? In this terrible, horrible, no good, very bad year? Really?” [11-11-20 email to congregation]





# *Biblical Thinking About Thanking*

- **Colossians 4:2** NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION  
“Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.”
- **1 Thessalonians 5:18** THE VOICE TRANSLATION  
“Give thanks to God no matter what circumstances you find yourself in. (This is God’s will for all of you in Jesus the Anointed.)”

# *Science Tells Us Thankfulness Results In...*

- protection from the destructive impulses of envy and greed
- increased well-being by reducing resentment, regret, and other states harmful to long-term happiness
- higher levels of positive emotions—happiness, vitality, optimism, and hope—and greater satisfaction with life

[—Robert Emmons, [https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/why\\_gratitude\\_is\\_good](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/why_gratitude_is_good), November 16, 2010]



## *Philippians 4:6-7* NEW LIVING TRANSLATION

“Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. <sup>7</sup> Then you will experience God’s peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.”

## *Philippians 4:7b* NEW LIVING TRANSLATION

- “His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.”
- The word Paul uses (PHROUREIN) is military word for standing on guard; the peace Paul describes is a vigilant peace, a peace that will aggressively defend the heart from everything that would seek to discourage or defeat it









# *The Truth About Thankfulness*

There is no spiritual gift of thankfulness, there is only the practice of it.



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