

## Reasons To Be Thankful

### Psalm 103:1-5

*“Bless the LORD, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. Bless the LORD, my soul, and forget not all his benefits— who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.”* Psalm 103:1-5

The Bible speaks very clearly about the importance of a grateful spirit. The word "thanks" appears over 150 times in the Old and New Testament. The command to give thanks appears 33 times in the Bible. Thanksgiving is also a duty according to the Scriptures. The Bible commands us to give thanksgiving to the Lord.

Psalm 100:4 says, *"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise; be thankful unto him, and bless his name."*

Psalm 105:1 says, *"O give thanks unto the Lord; call upon his name; make known his deeds among the peoples."*

1 Thessalonians 5:18 says, *"Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus."*

Ephesians 5:20 says, *"Always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

All over the Bible you will find this command to give thanks unto the Lord. It's in the Old Testament and the New Testament. It is a duty to give thanksgiving unto the Lord. The Bible very carefully links the spirit of gratitude with victory in the Christian experience.

- Gratitude and triumph are connected.

In 2 Corinthians 2:14 we read *"Thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ."*

In 1 Corinthians 15:57 Paul says, *"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Gratitude is one of the evidences that God is in us and that He is working in us. In our lives there are so many reasons to be ungrateful. We can find a reason almost every hour to complain or be ungrateful.

Thanksgiving is not situational. It is not circumstantial. It is not something that is in us because of that which is going on around us. Some of those things are there, and we give thanks for them. But thanksgiving is a spiritual attitude that God gives us when we become Christians. When we allow that attitude to grow and develop, we can even be grateful for what God does for us when we're going through difficult times.

Paul said *"In all these things, we are more than conquerors."* Romans 8:37

Will Bowen wrote the best selling book "A Complaint-Free World." He said, "Think of your mind as a manufacturer and your mouth as the customer. The manufacturer produces negative thoughts that are purchased by the customer when they are expressed as complaints. It goes like this. The manufacturer, your brain, produces a negative, unthankful thought which the consumer, your mouth, purchases by complaining or expressing ingratitude. If the customer will stop buying what the manufacturer produces, the manufacturer will have to retool. When you stop complaining about what you perceive to be wrong, and begin to speak about what you are thankful for, you force your manufacturer brain to develop a whole new product line."

All those negative thoughts that are in your head, you buy them from the manufacturer. And then you're the customer and you give this speech. Thanksgiving is a practical response to what God has done for us, but it's a discipline of life, isn't it? If we're not careful along the way, we allow our mind to keep producing these products of ingratitude. We think always about the things that aren't good instead of the things that are. And you know what? It's a choice that we make. It's a choice that you and I make. You wanna break the hold of ingratitude in your life, you have to go before the Lord and ask him to forgive you for an ungrateful life, an ungrateful heart. And then begin to do today what the Scripture says, "Express your gratitude to God and to others who, when you minister to them," the Bible says, "you're ministering to God himself, to Jesus Christ".

### **1. Be Thankful For His Person.**

*"Bless the LORD, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name."* Psalm 103:1

The word "bless" means "to kneel before another in praise and adoration." It is a call for the soul to give adoration, praise, and worship to a worthy God. His holy name means everything that God is. There are some low views of God today. How big is your God?

Do we love the Lord because of the things He does for us, or do we just love the Lord because of who He is? That's where thanksgiving begins. It begins by being thankful to God, for who He is, thankful for His person.

Sometimes it helps us to just go into the presence of the Lord and just be near the Lord, not to ask Him for anything but just to thank Him for who He is. We begin our Thanksgiving season by thanking the Lord for who He is, thankful for His person.

### **2. Be Thankful For His Provision.**

David says that we are to be thankful not only for whom the Lord is, but for what the Lord does. We are thankful for His provision.

*"Praise the Lord, my soul, and forget not all his benefits."* Psalm 103:2

The word "forget" refers to "A lapse of memory that can cause one to wander, to lose your way." When we forget what we have in Jesus and who we are in Jesus, there is the danger that might wander away from Him. We lose our way. Praise keeps us clean and close! We have a tendency to forget sometimes. God says, "Don't forget all I have done for you."

There is a series of pictures here that explain what it means to be lost and what it means to be saved, what it means to be in bondage and what it means to be free, what sin does to you and what God does for you.

Benefits is the word for camel. They carry great burdens over long distance through harsh terrain. They can survive for long periods of time with little food and water. They are essential to travelers as they cross the burning sands of the deserts and arrive safely at their desired destination. Like camels, the benefits of God are able to carry us across the vast barren deserts of this life to our home in glory.

#### He Saves Us.

The first picture is that sin turns you into a prisoner.

*"Who forgives all your sins."* Psalm 103:3

The word "sins" means "*bent or crookedness.*" It refers to the evil bent in our nature that pulls us toward sin.

Those sins and that sin nature turn us into a prisoner. The word “forgive” means to “pick up and to put somewhere else.” That is exactly what God did 2,000 years ago on the cross. God picked up all of our sins and put them on the Lord Jesus Christ. God picked us up out of our sin and put us into His family.

*“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the worst...”* 1 Timothy 1:15

Have you thanked God for your salvation lately? Have you thanked God that though you were a prisoner of sin, Jesus Christ has set you free by His precious blood?

“Forgives” is in the *present tense*. Not only has He cleansed me in the past, but He also continually cleanses me in the present. He will continue to cleanse me into the future, until the day when my sin nature will forever be left behind and I will stand perfected in His presence in glory!

It was December of 1914, and Thomas Edison's great laboratories in West Orange, New Jersey, were almost entirely destroyed by fire. In one night, Edison lost \$2 million worth of equipment, and the record of much of his life's work. Edison's son Charles ran around frantically, trying to find his father, and finally found him standing near the fire, his face in the glow, and his white hair blown by the winter winds. He said, “My heart ached for my dad. He was no longer young, and everything he was doing was being destroyed. Then he spotted me and said to me, ‘Where's your mother? Find her. Bring her here. She has never seen anything like this, and she's never gonna see anything like this again as long as she lives.’” The next morning, walking around the charred embers of so many of his hopes and dreams, Thomas Edison mused, “There's great value in disaster. All our mistakes are burned up. Thank God we can start all over again.” What a great perspective on life. For many of us, to be thankful in the midst of such a tragedy would seem almost impossible. We know for sure it's unnatural, but for Edison, thankfulness was how he gained victory over the disaster in his life.

He burns up all our mistakes. He gives us a fresh new beginning.

- He Soothes Us.

The second picture is that life turns us into patients.

*“...and heals all your diseases.”* Psalm 103:3

We know that Jesus heals physically. I believe in physical healing. He heals the body. We know He heals us spiritually. There are diseases of the soul.

Some people are just eaten up with the lust disease. Some people have a disease of anger. Think about hate. What a disease of the soul is hate. Think about racial prejudice and hatred of races. Greed is a disease. It gets hold of people and just eats away like a cancer in their soul. What about guilt? Is there anyone here who is battling guilt? Doubt is a disease of the soul.

Thanks be unto God. He takes those of us who are patients and He heals us from all of our diseases. Isn't it great to be healed? I'm thankful.

- He Settles Us.

The third picture David paints is of a pauper.

*“Who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion.”* Psalm 103:4

Life can put us in the pit. Jesus puts us in the palace. He crowns you. He turns you from a pauper into a prince.

If you are saved, you are a child of the King. You are a prince. You are an heir with God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ. That's something to be thankful for.

□ **He Satisfies Us.**

*“Who satisfies your desires with good things.”* Psalm 103:5

He fills up your mouth with good things. What do you like for your Thanksgiving meal? Turkey, ham, dressing with gravy, cranberry sauce, sweet potato pie? He satisfies. He fills your mouth with good things. More than just food, you can thank the Lord for a lot of things.

*“He satisfies the longing soul, and the hungry soul he fills with good things.”* Psalm 107:9

The world can deliver only death, pain, and heartache. The Father gives life, peace and blessing. The world cannot satisfy, but God abundantly satisfies the heart of man. He does this by being who He is!

One person said, “If you can't be satisfied with what you have received, be thankful for what you have escaped.” Another person said, “Compare what you want with what you have and you'll be unhappy. Compare what you deserve with what you have and you'll be happy.”

□ **He Strengthens Us.**

*“so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.”* Psalm 103:5

God gives us His strength to run the race, fight the fight, and live the life.

*“But they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.”* Isaiah 40:31

*“I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.”* Psalm 34:1

*“And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long.”* Psalm 35:28

*“The angel of the Lord encamps round about him that fear him, and delivers them.”* Psalm 34:7

*“Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?”* Hebrews 1:14

We need a grateful heart that will be filled to overflowing with thanksgiving, a heart that will not cease to express thanks to God and to others all through the year.

**3. Be Thankful For His Power.**

*“The Lord works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed.”* Psalm 103:6

*“The Lord has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all.”* Psalm 103:19

Sometimes when you are worried about world affairs, or worried about what is going on in this world of ours, turn to the book of the Revelation. In chapters 4, 5, and 7 you will notice 17 times that, in the midst of the problems that they were having, John says he saw, “The throne.” He is trying to say, “It doesn't matter what is going on down here on earth God is still on His throne.”