

THE
POWER
OF
*Giving
Thanks*



JEFF DOLES

The Power of Thanksgiving

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Thanksgiving

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Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!

2 Corinthians 9.15

Thank is an Old English word, a noun that originally meant “thought.” It eventually carried the idea of thoughtfulness, then of having a favorable thought or good will toward someone. Finally, it developed into the idea of gratitude. *Thank* and *thanksgiving* are used to translate the Hebrew *yadah* in the Old Testament. *Yadah* means to acknowledge or to declare publicly. It is also often translated as “praise.”

In the New Testament, the Greek words which convey thankfulness are *charis* and *eucharistio*. *Charis* is the word we usually translate as “grace.” On God’s part, *charis*

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refers to the favor He shows us so freely. On our part, it refers to the gratitude we express back to Him. The verb *eucharistio* builds on the root word *charis* and expresses a full and free-flowing appreciation for God's kindness toward us.

With a wonderful turn of phrase, *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* calls thanksgiving "the expression of joy Godward," and reckons it to be a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5.22). Giving thanks to God is a joyful thing and brings many benefits:

Thanksgiving magnifies the Lord.

"I will praise the name of the LORD with a song, and will magnify Him with thanksgiving," (Psalm 69.30). When your problems appear too big for you, start declaring the praises of God, singing and giving thanks to Him for who He is, and you will begin to see that God is much bigger than your problems.

Thanksgiving leads us into the presence of the Lord.

"Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving; let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms" (Psalm 95.2). "Enter His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name" (Psalm 100.4). When you don't know where you are in your life, begin thanking and praising God and you will soon find yourself within His courts.

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Thanksgiving makes the Lord famous.

“Oh, give thanks to the LORD! Call upon His name; make known His deeds among the peoples! (Psalm 105.1). “Sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare His works with rejoicing” (Psalm 107.22). Giving thanks to the Lord declares to the world that our God is both mighty and merciful, full of wonderful works and powerful deeds.

Thanksgiving prepares the way for blessing.

One day Jesus had five thousand mouths to feed, but resources were slim—five loaves and two fishes. Five minutes earlier, He didn’t even have that. But it was no problem because He approached it with faith. Taking the loaves and fishes, He gave thanks to God, then distributed them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them out to the people. Expressing His faith through thanksgiving, Jesus was able to feed everyone there—not only was there enough to go around, but there were twelve baskets of leftovers (John 6.1-13).

Thanksgiving paves the way for answered prayer.

Look at the raising of Lazarus in John 11. Lazarus was sick when his sisters sent word to Jesus, and dead by the time He arrived. Jesus was intensely moved by the situation, groaning in the Spirit, gushing forth tears, and sighing over and over in His inner man (vv. 33,35,38). Then

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lifting His eyes, He said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard me" (v. 41). God received His prayers, the groanings which, I believe, were similar to what Paul describes in Romans 8.26, "The Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Even before the answer to His cries was made manifest, Jesus was giving thanks to the Father for it. In another place, Jesus said, "Whatever things you ask when you pray, believe you receive them, and you will have them" (Mark 11.24). Jesus believed He received the answer when He prayed, and so He gave thanks for it when He prayed. Then when He gave the word of command, "Lazarus, come forth!" the answer was made known to all.

Thanksgiving prepares the way for the peace of God.

Paul said, "Be anxious for nothing, 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 minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4.6,7). A heart filled with thanksgiving is a heart filled with God's peace and wholeness.

Thanksgiving sets things apart for the purposes of God.

In his letter to Timothy, Paul spoke of false teachers and deceiving spirits who were commanding people "to

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abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth" (1 Timothy 4.3). But "every creature of God is good," he reasoned, "and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified [set apart, made holy] by the word of God and prayer" (vv. 4,5). To the believers at Rome, who were dealing with a similar situation, Paul declared, "He who eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives God thanks; and he who does not eat, to the Lord he does not eat, and gives God thanks" (Romans 14.6).

God's covenant faithfulness

In the Bible, thanksgiving is directed primarily toward the Lord, so great is our God and so wonderful are His works. One theme of thanksgiving that echoes over and over in the Old Testament is God's covenant faithfulness. "Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever." The Hebrew word for "mercy" here is *hesed* and refers to the covenant promise God made to be merciful and kind to His people. This promise endures forever and is an emblem of God's goodness toward us.

In the Lord Jesus Christ, we have an even better covenant, established on better promises (Hebrews 8.6), and in the New Testament, thanksgiving reflects this. The apostle Paul gives us many excellent reasons for offering our thanks and praise to God:

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But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 15.57)

Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. (2 Corinthians 2.14)

Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. (Colossians 1.12)

For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God. (1 Thessalonians 2.13)

We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds towards each other. (2 Thessalonians 1.3)

But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. (2 Thessalonians 2.13)

And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry. (1 Timothy 1.12)

There is an old saying that a man is known by the company he keeps. We might say the same thing about

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thanksgiving. If you want to see what a difference a thankful heart can make, compare the company of the thankful with the company of the ungrateful.

The company of the ungrateful.

In Romans 1.18-32, Paul speaks of the ungodly, upon whom the wrath of God falls. These are corrupt people who, “although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, *nor were thankful*, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened” (v. 21).

To the Christians at Ephesus, Paul writes, “Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather *giving of thanks*” (Ephesians 5.4). Here are four things: filthiness, foolish talking, coarse jesting and thanksgiving. Which one does not belong with the other three? Only one of these, of course, is fit for the saints of God, who have so much to be thankful for.

Consider also Paul’s warning to Timothy about the last days. “But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come. For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, *unthankful*, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying its power” (2 Timothy 3.1-5). This is the company the ungrateful heart keeps.

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The company of the thankful.

The grateful heart moves in different circles. It keeps company with the righteous (Psalm 97.12; 140.13)—not the self-righteous, who are very often unthankful— but those who have received the righteousness of God in Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5.21). The grateful heart associates with goodness, for “it is good to give thanks to the LORD” (Psalm 92.1). It goes forth with rejoicing (Psalm 95.2; 97.12) and enjoys the presence of the Lord (Psalm 95.2).

The prophets place thanksgiving in very good and prosperous company, “For the LORD will comfort Zion, He will comfort all her waste places; He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness will be found in it, *thanksgiving* and the voice of melody” (Isaiah 51.3). “Then out of them shall proceed *thanksgiving*, and the voice of those who make merry; I will multiply them, and they shall not diminish; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small” (Jeremiah 30.19).

Thankfulness is at home with the Holy Spirit. “Be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, *giving thanks* always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God” (Ephesians 5.18-20).

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Our new way of life

For the Christian, the choice is simple: Thanksgiving is our new way of life.

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. (Philippians 4.6)

As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. (Colossians 2.6,7)

Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. (Colossians 3.17)

Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving. (Colossians 4.2)

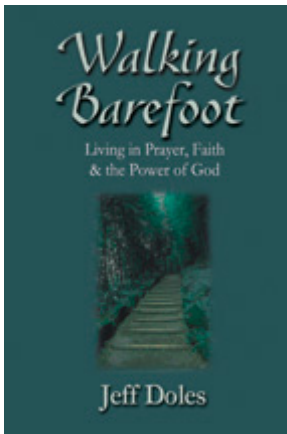
Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (1 Thessalonians 5.16-18)

Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, the we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. (1 Timothy 2.1,2)

Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name. (Hebrews 13.15)

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Giving thanks is a powerful thing. Working together with faith, prayer, joy and praise, thanksgiving honors and glorifies God, and prepares the way for His peace and blessing in our lives. It leads us through the gates of the Lord and into His courts. There in the presence of the Lord the thankful heart finds its home and expresses its joy Godward.



This chapter is adapted from

**Walking Barefoot: Living in Prayer,
Faith and the Power of God.**
by Jeff Doles

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The Sacrifice of Praise

Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name. (Hebrews 13.15)

Jesus is the only true sacrifice for our sins. None else will do. His blood, shed on the cross, has made us acceptable to God. Through faith in Him we are reconciled to our heavenly Father and made heirs to all the promises and blessings of God. “Therefore by Him,” said the author of Hebrews, “let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks unto His name.”

The Old Testament spoke of the “sacrifice of thanksgiving” (Leviticus 7.12). This was a form of “peace offering” (also

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known as “fellowship” or “covenant” offering). The peace offering conveyed the Hebrew *shalom*—wholeness and well-being. It was presented when someone was seeking blessing from the Lord or desired to give thanks for blessing received. It signified fellowship with God and an enjoyment of covenant with Him.

The Hebrew word for “thanksgiving” in Leviticus 7 is *towdah*. It expresses adoration and commitment. Literally, it refers to the extension of the hand, as in fellowship or worship. It is translated as “thanksgiving,” “praise,” “offering” and “confession.”

The author of Hebrews picked up on the latter term when he referred to “the fruit of our lips giving thanks.” The Greek word used here for “giving thanks” is *homologeō*. It literally means to say the “same word,” and is commonly translated as “confess.” This is how the *New International Version* renders it, “the fruit of lips that confess His name.” To confess something is to acknowledge and get into agreement with it.

In the sacrifice of praise, we confess the name of the Lord. As we do, we are getting into agreement with who He is and what He has done. In this way, we begin to understand our true identity and experience what we have in Him.

The first confession we need to make about Jesus is that He is Lord. Paul said, “If you confess with your mouth the

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Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans 10.9,10).

Notice how faith and confession go together. Faith is experienced in the heart, and is exercised by the mouth. The heart believes and the mouth confesses. Jesus said, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (Matthew 12.34).

In the Old Testament are many wonderful names used for God that expand our understanding of who He is and what He has done. These are compound names, built on the personal name of God, *Yahweh* (or *Jehovah*). They picture for us the redemptive work of Christ. As we confess these names with our lips and believe them with our hearts, they become praise and thanksgiving to God.

The LORD Will Provide

Yahweh Yireh

"And Abraham called the name of the place, The LORD Will Provide" (Genesis 22.14). The root word of *yireh* literally means "to see." God *sees* a need and moves to meet it. In Genesis 22, God saw the need for a sacrifice to be offered instead of Isaac, so He provided a ram, ultimately pointing toward the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ in our place.

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Jesus Himself is the provision of God who opens the way for us to receive every blessing and provision of God. Paul said, “My God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4.19).

The LORD Who Heals You

Yahweh Rapha

God declared to the children of Israel, “I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am The LORD Who Heals You” (Exodus 15.26). God does not bring sickness and disease to His people. He reveals Himself as the one who heals them.

Isaiah said, “Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows . . . and by His stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53.4,5). These “griefs” and “sorrows” are actually “infirmities” and “sicknesses.” That is how Matthew 8.16,17 quotes them, applying this passage to the healing ministry of Jesus, and observing that Jesus “healed *all* the sick” who came or were brought to Him.

The LORD is My Banner

Yahweh Nissi

“And Moses built an altar and called its name, The LORD is My Banner” (Exodus 17.15). Moses built this altar of thanksgiving after the Lord gave the victory to the children

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of Israel over the Amalekites. The altar was a banner, a rallying point.

When the Lord is our banner, victory is assured. Paul said, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8.31).

Jesus is our victory banner. Paul said, "In all these things, we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us" (Romans 8.37). And "Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 15.57).

The LORD Who Sanctifies You

Yahweh Qadesh

God said, "I am The LORD Who Sanctifies You" (Exodus 31.13). To be sanctified means to be cleansed and made holy, to be set apart for God's special purposes.

Jesus is the one who sanctifies us. The author of Hebrews said, "We have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Hebrews 10.10). Paul said that Jesus "gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works" (Titus 2.14). Through Jesus, God has sanctified us, set us apart to experience and show forth His goodness in our lives.

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The LORD is Peace

Yahweh Shalom

“So Gideon built an altar there to the LORD, and called it The LORD is Peace” (Judges 6.24). The *shalom*, or peace of God, is wholeness and well-being. Nothing is missing; nothing is broken.

Isaiah said of Jesus, “The chastisement of our peace was upon Him” (Isaiah 53.5). This shows a great exchange that has taken place. Jesus was chastised for us so that we might experience His peace and wholeness in our lives. Jesus said, “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to You” (John 14.27).

The LORD is My Shepherd

Yahweh Rohe

David declared, “The LORD is my Shepherd; I shall not want” (Psalm 23.1). The shepherd takes care of the sheep, providing for every need. He satisfies their hunger in fresh, green pastures. He quenches their thirst and refreshes them beside calm, cooling waters. He restores them to wholeness. He guides and protects them, and leads them safely through the shadowlands.

Jesus said, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep” (John 10.11). The devil is a false shepherd, a thief who comes to steal, kill and destroy

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the sheep. But “I have come,” Jesus said, “that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly” (John 10.10).

The book of Hebrews closes with this benediction, “Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen” (Hebrew 13.20,21).

The LORD Our Righteousness

Yahweh Tsidkenu

“Behold, the days are coming,” says the LORD, “That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; a king shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell in safety; now this is His name by which He will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness” (Jeremiah 23.5,6).

The Hebrew word for righteousness, *tsedeq*, speaks of that which is altogether right and just. It also refers to prosperity. Righteousness is God’s way of doing and being right. It is His “rightness.” When we walk in this rightness, we experience His blessing and prosperity. Psalm 112 describes at length the blessing and prosperity of those who are righteous.

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Jesus is the Branch of David, the King who reigns and prospers. He is our righteousness. “For He [God] made Him [Jesus] who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5.21). Paul described a righteousness “which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith” (Philippians 3.9). When we receive His righteousness, we receive His blessing and prosperity.

The LORD is There

Yahweh Shammah

Looking toward a time of healing and restoration, the book of Ezekiel ends with these words, “And the name of the city from that day on shall be: The LORD is There” (Ezekiel 48.35). This is the presence of the Lord, who is the source of all healing and restoration.

Jesus brings the presence of God close to us. “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God is with us” (Matthew 1.23). Jesus said, “He who has seen Me has seen the Father” (John 14.9). Paul said, “For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (Colossians 2.9).

Jesus promised us His presence. “For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst

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of them” (Matthew 18.20). His final words to the disciples were, “Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matthew 28.20).

Many names have been used in Scripture to introduce us to the multi-faceted glory of God. Take time to meditate on these names. Let them fill your heart to overflowing. Then open your lips and speak out of the abundance of your heart. It will be a sacrifice of praise. Let it be a continual offering to the Lord, daily giving thanks to His name, and gratefully recognizing who He is and what He has done for us.

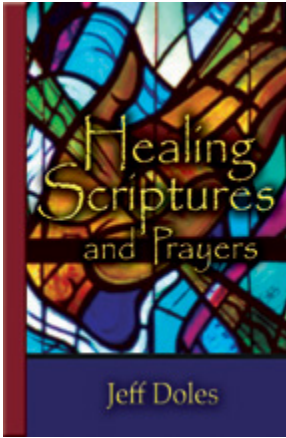
Dear Lord,

I bring you the sacrifice of praise. You are my Provider, taking care of all my needs according to the riches of Your glory. You are my Healer, taking away my sicknesses and pains, healing me—spirit, soul and body. You are my Banner, giving me the victory in all things. You are my Sanctifier, cleansing me and setting me apart for sweet fellowship with You. You are my Peace, trading my brokenness and strife for Your wholeness and well-being. You are my Shepherd, leading and protecting me, feeding my hunger, quenching my thirst, restoring my soul. You are my Righteousness, taking away my sin and giving me all the blessings of heaven. You are the The Lord Who is There, and I will never be alone, without a helper, without a friend, for You are always with me.

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Jesus, You are my Lord. I love You and give myself to You. I open my lips to offer you thanks and praise. I worship and adore and confess Your sweet name—Jesus.

Amen.



You can learn more about these and other Biblical names for God, and how they can become pathways for healing in

Healing Scriptures and Prayers
by Jeff Doles

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Powerful Prayers of Thanksgiving

The New Testament apostles pioneered many different prayers for us, as we discover in their letters. They are powerful prayers because they express, not only the heart of the apostles, but the heart of God. They show His desire to light the world with the Gospel, to bless and strengthen His people, and bring them to completeness in Christ.

These prayers flow easily from the pens of the apostles, often spontaneously and with great passion. They arise out of an intimate relationship with the Father and a constant reliance upon the Holy Spirit. They have five main focuses: evangelistic, pastoral, benediction, doxology and thanksgiving.

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Evangelistic prayers are ground-breaking prayers. They prepare the fields, and the laborers, for sowing the Gospel and for laying the foundations of local Christian fellowships.

Pastoral prayers are watering prayers. They help establish Christians in the faith, both as individuals and as congregations, to grow in grace and in intimate relationship with God, and become a servant community in partnership with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Benedictions are also watering prayers, pouring forth with the authority of heaven to bless and minister the promises of God to His people.

Doxologies are prayers that declare the praiseworthiness of God and give Him glory. The apostolic purpose is all about God from beginning to end, for He is both the One who sends and the One who gives the increase. Therefore, He deserves all glory, honor and praise.

Finally, there are the prayers of thanksgiving. These are prayers that return praise to the “Lord of the Harvest” for what He is doing in and through His people. Prayers of thanksgiving are unique to Paul among the New Testament epistles. They are often found at the beginning of his letters, expressing gratitude for the work of God in the churches, especially in their examples of faith and love. Paul was profusely thankful. For him, the giving of thanks was an important spiritual issue:

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- “Be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your hearts to the Lord, always giving thanks to God for everything” (Ephesians 5.18-20). Thankfulness is a vital expression of the Spirit-filled life and a joy-filled heart.
- “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God” (Philippians 4.6). Thankfulness is an antidote to anxiety, expressing faith rather than fear.
- “Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him” (Colossians 3.17). Thankfulness is never out of place, but belongs with all we say and do in Jesus’ name.
- “Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful” (Colossians 4.2). Thankfulness helps us stay spiritually alert. It is the oil that lubricates prayer, as we declare the goodness and trustworthiness of the Lord. Thankfulness creates a divine expectation about what God is doing.
- “Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus” (1 Thessalonians 5.16-18). Thankfulness is always appropriate, and it empowers us in every situation.

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- “I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness” (1 Timothy 2.1,2). Thankfulness for everyone contributes to a peaceful, godly and holy life.

Prayers of thanksgiving flow from an attitude of gratefulness, but they are specific in nature. They detail the particular aspects of God’s gracious ways and acts of kindness. In this way, they become a testimony, to ourselves as well as to others, of what God is doing.

Paul offered many prayers of thanksgiving in his epistles. Here are three of them, each followed by a “prayer action” to help you personalize and pray them back to the Lord.

Thanks for World-Changing Faith

I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world. God, whom I serve with my whole heart in preaching the Gospel of His Son, is my witness how constantly I remember you in my prayers at all times; and I pray that now at last by God’s will the way may be opened for me to come to you.
(Romans 1.8-10)

When whole households of citizens and slaves at Rome came to faith in Jesus Christ, news of it spread quickly to

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churches throughout the Empire. Paul received this testimony and desired to visit the church at Rome, even though he had not been directly associated with it. "I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong—that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith" (vv. 11,12). He wanted to share in a vital relationship with them centered around the fellowship of the Gospel. He was already committed to a different mission, however, and it would be some time before he would be able to join them. Until then he would consistently remember them with thanksgiving and prayer.

PRAYER ACTION: Give thanks for the testimony of all those who have received the Lord Jesus Christ, and for the opportunity to fellowship with them in the mutual encouragement of faith.

Thanks for Being Greatly Enriched and Fully Equipped

I always thank God for you because of His grace given you in Christ Jesus. For in Him you have been enriched in every way—in all your speaking and in all your knowledge—because our testimony about Christ was confirmed in you.

Therefore you do not lack anpowerful prayers of thanksgivingy spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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God, who has called you into fellowship with His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful. (1 Corinthians 1.4-9)

The Christians at Corinth had a lot of problems—attitudes needing adjustment, situations requiring instruction, abuses calling for rebuke and correction—and yet, there was much about them for which Paul was thankful. From this position of thankfulness, he was able to bring about positive change in their lives. The Lord had given them a good start, and because Paul was thankful, he was able to trust God to bring them through to maturity.

God had given the Corinthians grace in Jesus Christ, so that they were now enriched in every way. This manifested in their speaking (“all utterance” *NKJV*) and knowledge. This was speech and knowledge given to them by the Holy Spirit—it did not come from them, but flowed through them. In this way the Gospel of Jesus Christ was confirmed in them, because it was evident that they did not lack any spiritual gift. Although these gifts were being misused, and this needed to be addressed in 1 Corinthians 12-14, Paul was confident that God would keep the Corinthians strong to the end, and they would be blameless before the Lord Jesus Christ at His return.

PRAYER ACTION: Give thanks that you have been given grace in Jesus Christ, so that you are now enriched in every way. That the testimony of Jesus is confirmed in you,

POWERFUL PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING

and you do not lack in any spiritual gift. That the same Holy Spirit who flowed through the Corinthians with all utterance and knowledge, will also do the same for you. That God is faithful, and will keep you strong so that you will make it to the finish line. For He has called you into the fellowship of the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be found blameless before Him at His return.

Thanks for Victory Through Jesus

Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 15.57)

God gives us victory over death through the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory. Where O death, is your victory? Where, O death is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 15.53-57)

This victory is not just over death, but also over sin and the law of God. The law condemned us because of sin, for sin is the sting that leads to death, but Christ has fulfilled the law (Matthew 5.17) and carried our sins in His own body to the cross (2 Corinthians 5.21; 1 Peter 2.24).

THE POWER OF GIVING THANKS

This victory is also over the devil, for the Bible says that Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3.8). This has already been done by the power of God, “which He exerted in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion. . . . And God placed all things under His feet” (Ephesians 1.20-22). “All things” includes the devil and his works. They are placed under our feet as well, for we are seated with Christ in the heavenlies (Ephesians 2.6). This is not a future hope but a present reality which we can experience now. The devil no longer has any power over us. All that is left is for us to learn how to walk in the victory Jesus has given us. It is a walk of faith. The Bible says, “This is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith” (1 John 5.4).

PRAYER ACTION: Give thanks that God always gives you the victory through Jesus Christ. “Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain” (1 Corinthians 15.58).

THERE ARE AT LEAST A DOZEN MORE PRAYERS OF thanksgiving found in the New Testament epistles. You will find each one to be of great benefit to you in cultivating a life of gratitude and a deeper fellowship with the Lord.

POWERFUL PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING

- Give thanks for our triumphal procession in Jesus (2 Corinthians 2:14)
- Give thanks for God's indescribable gift (2 Corinthians 9:15)
- Give thanks for faith in Jesus and love for his people (Ephesians 1:15-16)
- Give thanks for partnership in the Gospel (Philippians 1:3-6)
- Give thanks for faith and love springing from hope (Colossians 1:3-5)
- Give thanks for active faith, diligent love, enduring hope (1 Thessalonians 1:2-3)
- Give thanks for receptivity to the Holy Spirit (1 Thessalonians 2:13)
- Give thanks for joy in the harvest (1 Thessalonians 3:9)
- Give thanks for growing in faith and increasing in love (2 Thessalonians 1:3)
- Give thanks for being loved, chosen, sanctified and called (2 Thessalonians 2:13-14)
- Give thanks for the abundance of God's grace (1 Timothy 1:12-14)
- Give thanks for godly relationships and a godly inheritance (2 Timothy 1:3-4)

This chapter is adapted from

**Praying With Fire:
Learning to Pray With Apostolic Power**



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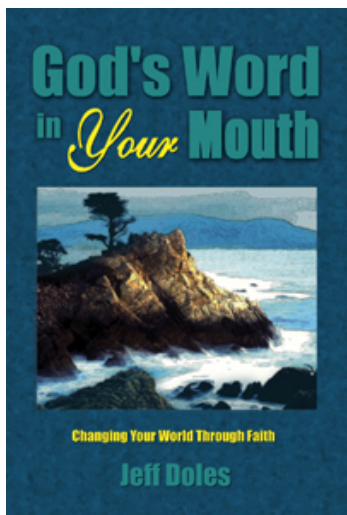
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To do the works of Jesus."

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