

With Grateful Hearts Part 2
Wednesday Bible Study - November 18, 2020
“Give Thanks In Every Situation”

Focus Series Scripture:

Psalm 136:1 New International Version

1 Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good. His love endures forever.

1. Giving Thanks Is A Chosen Attitude, Not A Temporary Emotion

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 New International Version

16 Rejoice always,

17 pray continually,

18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.

We often think gratitude is purely a feeling or a reaction to something that is occurring outside of us. That makes “**Give Thanks In Every Situation**” puzzling because some situations do not trigger positive feelings. Robert Emmons wrote, *“It is vital to make a distinction between feeling grateful and being grateful. Being grateful is a choice, a prevailing attitude that endures and is relatively immune to the gains and losses that flow in and out of our lives.”*

Choosing to be a grateful person does not mean you become blind to the bad things in life, or the sad or angry feelings you may have about them. It does mean, however, that we also choose not to let the bad things blind us to the things for which we are grateful. William Barclay wrote, *“There is always something for which to give thanks; even on the darkest day there are blessings to count. We must remember that if we face the sun the shadows will fall behind us but if we turn our backs on the sun all the shadows will be in front.”*

2. Give Thanks When Facing Depressing Circumstances

Psalm 42 New International Version

1 As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God.

2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?

3 My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me all day long, “Where is your God?”

4 These things I remember as I pour out my soul: how I used to go to the house of God under the protection of the Mighty One with shouts of joy and praise among the festive throng.

5 Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

6 My soul is downcast within me; therefore, I will remember you from the land of the Jordan, the heights of Hermon—from Mount Mizar.

7 Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me.

8 By day the LORD directs his love, at night his song is with me—a prayer to the God of my life.

9 I say to God my Rock, “Why have you forgotten me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?”

10 My bones suffer mortal agony as my foes taunt me, saying to me all day long, “Where is your God?”

11 Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

Psalm 43 New International Version

- 1 Vindicate me, my God, and plead my cause against an unfaithful nation. Rescue me from those who are deceitful and wicked.**
- 2 You are God my stronghold. Why have you rejected me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?**
- 3 Send me your light and your faithful care, let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy mountain, to the place where you dwell.**
- 4 Then I will go to the altar of God, to God, my joy and my delight. I will praise you with the lyre, O God, my God.**
- 5 Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.**

Psalms 42 and 43 are literarily connected as they share an exact verse on three occasions (42:5, 11; 43:5). This exact verse divides the prayer for help into three sections, all of which include the psalmist's deep desire to experience God's presence. This prayer gives us a model for carrying our hurts to God while maintaining an intentional stance of gratitude and praise. These Psalms remind us that no matter what we are facing externally, gratefulness can be the chosen attitude of our spirit and we truly can **"Give Thanks In Every Situation."**

3. Jesus, Our Example, Gave Thanks In Every Situation

Psalm 118 was the last hymn of praise Hebrews sang at Passover as they recalled God freeing Israel from slavery in Egypt.

Psalm 118:5-6 New International Version

- 5 When hard pressed, I cried to the LORD; he brought me into a spacious place.**
- 6 The LORD is with me; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?**
- 28 You are my God, and I will praise you; you are my God, and I will exalt you.**
- 29 Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.**

Mark 14:26 strongly suggested that Jesus, just before his arrest and crucifixion, sang from the Psalm.

Mark 14:22-26 New International Version

- 22 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take it; this is my body."**
- 23 Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank from it.**
- 24 "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many," he said to them.**
- 25 "Truly I tell you, I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."**
- 26 When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.**

Cultivating an attitude of gratitude is tough, but it can be achieved because it is a chosen attitude.