

Give Thanks

The Call to Give Thanks

Leader:

It is good to give thanks to the LORD, to sing praises to your name, O Most High . . . (Psalm 92:1)

Men:

Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever! (Psalm 107:1)

Women:

Give thanks to the Lord of lords, for his steadfast love endures forever . . . (Psalm 136:3)

Men:

Give thanks to the God of gods, for his steadfast love endures forever. (Psalm 136:2)

Women:

Give thanks to the God of heaven, for his steadfast love endures forever. (Psalm 136:26)

All together:

Oh give thanks to the Lord; call upon His name; make known His deeds among the peoples! (1 Chron. 16:8)

A Psalm of Thanksgiving

Psalm 92

*It is good to give thanks to the LORD,
to sing praises to your name, O Most High;
to declare your steadfast love in the morning,
and your faithfulness by night,
to the music of the lute and the harp,
to the melody of the lyre.
For you, O LORD, have made me glad by your work;
at the works of your hands I sing for joy.
How great are your works, O LORD!
Your thoughts are very deep!
The stupid man cannot know;
the fool cannot understand this:
that though the wicked sprout like grass
and all evildoers flourish,
they are doomed to destruction forever;
but you, O LORD, are on high forever.
For behold, your enemies, O LORD,
for behold, your enemies shall perish;
all evildoers shall be scattered.
But you have exalted my horn like that of the wild ox;
you have poured over me fresh oil.
My eyes have seen the downfall of my enemies;
my ears have heard the doom of my evil assailants.
The righteous flourish like the palm tree
and grow like a cedar in Lebanon.
They are planted in the house of the LORD;
they flourish in the courts of our God.
They still bear fruit in old age;
they are ever full of sap and green,
to declare that the LORD is upright;
he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.*

I. The importance of thankfulness

1. Not optional

Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever! —Psalm 107:1

2. Lack of thankfulness leads to darkness.

For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. —Romans 1:21

II. The object and reason for our thanks

1. The object of our thanks is the Lord, not first our circumstances.

Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever! —Psalm 107:1

2. The reason is because this is God's will for us—not because everything is going our way.

See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. —1 Thessalonians 5:15–18

III. The challenges to thankfulness

1. We focus on unfairness: the “stupid” and “wicked” sometimes flourish.

2. We compare, compete, criticize, and complain.

a. Compare:

b. Compete:

c. Criticize:

d. Complain:

3. We fail to encourage each other.

See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. —Hebrews 3:12–13 (NIV)

Lack of thankfulness leads to a hard heart.

IV. The benefits of a thankful heart

1. A “healed” life

On the way to Jerusalem he was passing along between Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance and lifted up their voices, saying, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.” When he saw them he said to them, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went they were cleansed. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus’ feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus answered, “Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?” And he said to him, “Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well.”

—Luke 17:11–19

2. A positive outlook on life

*Though the fig tree should not blossom,
nor fruit be on the vines,
the produce of the olive fail
and the fields yield no food,
the flock be cut off from the fold
and there be no herd in the stalls,
yet I will rejoice in the LORD;
I will take joy in the God of my salvation.*

—Habakkuk 3:17–18

3. Witness and purpose in life

*They still bear fruit in old age;
they are ever full of sap and green,
to declare that the LORD is upright;
he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.*

—Psalm 92:14–15

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in His wonderful face,
and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace.¹*

1. *Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus*, Helen Howarth Lemmel (1863–1961)