

Give Thanks

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Date: 14 March 2010

[0:00] Psalm 136. I'll read from verses 1 to 9. Let's stand shall we as we read Psalm 136 verses 1 to 9.

! O give thanks unto the Lord for he is good, for his mercy endureth forever. O give thanks unto the God of gods for his mercy endureth forever. O give thanks to the Lord of lords for his mercy endureth forever. To him who alone doeth great wonders for his mercy endureth forever. To him that by wisdom made the heavens for his mercy endureth forever. To him that stretched out the earth above the waters for his mercy endureth forever. To him that made great lights for his mercy endureth forever. The sun to rule by day for his mercy endureth forever. The moon and stars to rule by night for his mercy endureth forever. I think we'll read the whole lot. Verse 10. To him that smote Egypt in their firstborn for his mercy endureth forever. Feel free to read the for his mercy endureth forever shall we? Together.

To him which divided the Red Sea into parts for his mercy endureth forever. And made Israel to pass through the midst of it for his mercy endureth forever.

But overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea for his mercy endureth forever. To him which led his people through the wilderness for his mercy endureth forever. To him which smote great kings for his mercy endureth forever. And slew famous kings for his mercy endureth forever.

Sihon king of the Amorites for his mercy endureth forever. To him which died of his mercy endureth forever. and gave their land for an heritage, for his mercy endureth forever, even an heritage unto Israel his servant, for his mercy endureth forever, who remembereth us in our low estate, for his mercy endureth forever, and hath redeemed us from our enemies, for his mercy endureth forever, who giveth food to all flesh, for his mercy endureth forever.

[2:49] O give thanks unto the God of heaven, for his mercy endureth forever. Amen. Please be seated. We could have done that for the whole lot there, couldn't we? But his mercy endureth forever.

Praise the Lord. And give thanks, it says, verse 1, O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth forever. Talking on the theme of giving thanks, of thanksgiving, of being thankful, and we have much, really, to be thankful for, so much.

In a world where many live in poverty and want, in many lands, we live in a land of abundance. In a world which many live in fear, we live in peace and security.

In a world where people still live on the edge of starvation, our greatest fear is not that we will not have enough, but that we will overindulge in the abundance that we have.

If you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof overhead, and a place to sleep, you are richer than 75% of the people of the world.

[4:08] We should be thankful, amen? We should be thankful. If you have money in the bank, cash in your wallet, and spare change in a dish somewhere, you are among the top 8% of the earth's wealthiest people.

If you woke up this morning with more health than illness, you are more fortunate than the million who will not survive this week. If you have never experienced the danger of battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or the pains of starvation, you are ahead of 500 million people in the world.

Be thankful. Be thankful. If you can attend this worship service, or another gathering, religious gathering, without fear of harassment, arrest, torture, or death, you are fortunate billions of people in the world cannot.

Be thankful today. Be thankful. Make a joyful noise unto the Lord. We're told in Psalm 100, Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise.

Be thankful unto Him, and bless His name. For the Lord is good, His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endureth to all generations.

[5:27] Someone has said that the poorest American, you could say Australian here, is still the envy of almost all the rest of the world. And this can be seen.

They put this four-question quiz out, and the understanding is, if you can answer three of these four questions with a yes, you are among the 10% wealthiest people who have ever lived on earth.

Four questions. If you can answer three of the four with a yes, you are among the 10% wealthiest people who have ever lived on all the earth.

Do you own more than one pair of shoes? Do you own more than one pair of underwear? Do you have a choice of what to eat for at least one meal out of three?

Do you have your own transportation? Give thanks unto God. Give thanks unto the Lord. He is due our thanksgiving. Now, they're things that we would think, they're just things that you would take for granted.

[6:35] They would be just the basics, wouldn't they? And yet, we take these very basic things for granted, and that others don't even have such things. Friends today, not even two pairs of shoes.

And, you know, maybe not even one pair of shoes. Let's face it. And he is due our thanksgiving this morning. You know, in Revelation 7, they cried out, Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving and honour and power and might be unto our God forever and ever. Amen.

Thanksgiving be unto our God.

Hebrews 13, 15 By him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually. That is the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name.

Continually praising and giving thanks to his name. Have we stopped giving him thanks? Have we stopped to give him thanks? Sometimes we neglect, don't we, to give him thanks even for our daily bread, for our daily meals, for our daily blessings, for the daily sunshine, for the daily breath that we breathe, for so much that we take for granted.

[7:51] Have we stopped to give him thanks? It's his command, and it's his will. For example, 1 Thessalonians 5, verse 18. 1 Thessalonians 5, 18.

One of the commands of Scripture, and the context there is rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing. Verse 18, In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

In everything give thanks. Not in some things, but in everything. And really there's always something, something we can give thanks for.

Even though our world might be filled with things that are not as exactly as we'd like them to be, not exactly as we would hope them to be, but there's always something we can thank him for.

[8:54] There's always something, and we should be on the lookout for that. Be on the lookout for the blessings that we take for granted. And the more you look for them, the more you'll discover them. Count your blessings, name them one by one, and it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.

Count your blessings, name them two by two, and it will surprise you what the Lord can do.

Someone has noted that it is better to lose count while naming your blessings than to lose your blessings counting your troubles.

So true, isn't it? Don't lose your blessings by counting your troubles. Count your blessings. Count your blessings and thank God for them. Ephesians 5 verse 20. Paul writes again to the church at Ephesus there.

Ephesians 5 verse 20. And the context there is of speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.

Verse 20. Giving thanks. Giving thanks. Always. Always. For all things. Unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[10:16] Giving thanks. Giving thanks. Always. Giving thanks always. In everything. Give thanks. I know there's folk that have written books that talk about praise and how we can see we may not always recognise things that we can thank Him for but in everything we can give thanks.

We can see things that He has blessed us with that go beyond the current challenge or testing or difficulty of the time or day. We can always give thanks.

We can find something to thank Him for. Thanks be unto God. It's our unique privilege brothers and sisters as children of God as God's people to look unto the Lord Jesus to see Him working behind the scenes in the everyday of life.

That He's working in us for us above us around us in front of us behind us and through us. He is working in the midst of whatever is about us and He is on your side.

If you're a believer today if you love the Lord Jesus He is on your side. Emma He is on your side. Stuart He is on your side. If God be for us who can be against us?

[11:31] 1 Corinthians 15 57 Jim it says but thanks be unto God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. We've got the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ and we can thank Him for that.

For that victory day by day moment by moment and yet have we neglected to thank Him? There's times when we neglect to isn't there? We don't always give thanks.

We don't in everything give thanks and we must we should. We command it to. It's not optional. It's not an option. It's a command. In Luke 17 we read of the account of the ten lepers who came to Christ.

Luke 17 there were ten lepers there and the Lord Jesus blessed them with healing and in verse 16 only one returned of the ten.

The other nine didn't bother. The other nine didn't care to return to our Saviour and give thanks.

And Luke 17 verse 16 it says of this man from verse 15 it says and one of them when he saw that he was healed turned back and with a loud voice glorified God with a loud voice he glorified God and it says he fell down on his face at Jesus' feet giving him thanks and he was a Samaritan.

[12:57] He fell down at the Lord Jesus' feet giving him thanks. Are we like that one maybe that ten percent who will bother to thank God who will bother to thank him who will care to give thanks to him?

Or will we be like the nine who just take for granted the many blessings that God gives to us without thought without thinking without caring without acknowledging our Lord at work and even in adverse circumstances even if we only got one pair of shoes or no pair of shoes we can still thank him we can still find something to thank him for it's not based on our affluence or our possessions or those tangible things that are about us and even our health if you may not have good health you can still thank him you can still thank him for breath today you can still thank him for another sunrise you've seen today you can still thank him for the stars at night that you can praise him for you can still thank him for the green grass or the dry grass whatever you can thank him for the birds in the trees that wake you up in the morning or the rooster next door you can thank him amen you can find something to thank him for you can be like this one who fell down at his feet fell down on his face before the Saviour bother to give thanks even in adverse circumstances we can be at peace in God no matter what all things work together for good for them that love the Lord that called according to his purpose all things all things work together for good for you that love him and we can look for the good even in the midst of the bad even in the midst of a life or a challenging testing time a challenging phase of our life we can still find something to say thank you God thank you God for life today thank you God for breath to breathe for my ability to praise you let everything that have breath praise the Lord there was a missionary held captive in Lebanon he was in prison under miserable conditions miserable conditions in this dingy dark and dreadful place dreadful conditions for 16 months 16 months and they interviewed him on his release as the missionary stepped out of this place of captivity and as he was released they asked him how did you spend your time how did you deal with the boredom with the despair and his answer stunned the reporters he said I counted my blessings I was busy counting my blessings blessings they responded yes he explained some days I got to take a shower sometimes there were some vegetables in my food and I could always be thankful for the love of my family you can be thankful today even though maybe you're in a in a despairing situation those things not as you would like them to be and really for any of us we can always find something to complain about if we thought long enough about it can't we and yet do we stop to think or something to thank him for maybe write a list of the things that you could thank God for the things that you might take for granted your daily bread your daily blessings that you don't always think or ponder about there was a preacher called

Alexander White of Edinburgh he was a famous preacher and he was known for his pulpit prayers and he always found something to thank God for even in bad times and there was one stormy morning it was a terrible day you know a terrible stormy windy day everybody was cold and

miserable as they came to church that day and this person in the congregation thought to himself the preacher will have nothing to thank God for today on this wretched morning like it is but White began his prayer we thank thee oh God that it is not always like this we can thank him can't we that even when it's a bad day we can thank him it's not always like this and even if you can't see any good coming out of the difficulty you can at least thank God that you do not have to face that difficulty all the time and furthermore it's never so bad with us but that it might be worse so we can thank

God that it's not worse than it is so the next time you face a difficult circumstance why not try to see the positive side of it to see the positive side of the experience to thank God for it to thank God for that which is not exactly how you'd like it to be you can express your appreciation to the Lord write a list and thank God for those things on the list and that God is always with you he is with you who can be against you that heaven's glory will outshine any of the darkness and dullness of earth and that as we read that I have not seen nor had the ear heard neither have entered into the heart of man the things that God have prepared for them that love him isn't that a wonder isn't that glory isn't that a blessing that a light affliction which is but for a moment is in contrast to that extremely heavy weight that load of glory that heavenly glory that is just around the corner and you can thank the [18:56] Lord this morning especially as the word tells us thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift we read of salvation what a gift undeserved if anything you absolutely do not deserve it but he grants it he extends it freely to each one if they'll but reach out and receive it by faith and you can trust him today the one who died on Calvary's cross the one who bled his life's blood for you that precious holy blood for our sinful state he bled his pure blood his spotless sinless blood that we can have life everlasting if we trust him for his work and thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift I trust each one will know what it receive it this very instant by faith as you trust him as you trust his working on that rugged cross his death for your sin let us pray we love you

Lord and praise you and thank you today Lord that we can rejoice evermore we can in everything give thanks we can always thank you for all things Lord the daily blessings the daily burdens things that help us be resolute and steadfast and persevering Lord for the challenges for the tragedies Lord that you might help us to see beyond to that greater blessing to see that way of heavenly glory Lord we love you and praise you this morning help us Lord to count our blessings and to praise you in each day as you give us grace to live one more day Lord let it be a day filled with thanksgiving a day filled with thankfulness unto you in Jesus name Amen