

## THANKSGIVING Part 2

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Allow me to continue the message I began in Part 1. This message is designed to impart insight on the power of thanksgiving. If you didn't see part 1, I recommend you read that first.

As I said, I'm truly grateful to live in a country where we actually set aside a special day for the purpose of giving thanks to God. The significance of this is found in the power we find in the practice of thanksgiving. I shared about the fact that when we offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving, our prayer is answered, and God is glorified.

### LESSONS FROM A DISOBEDIENT PROPHET

You know what got the prophet Jonah delivered from the inside of the big fish?

**Jonah 2:8** *They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.*

In other words, you look at your lack, your insufficiency, your sickness, your despair, you'll miss the mercy that God wants to freely express to you! But watch to the next verse...

**Jonah 2:9** *But (despite previously observing lying vanities) I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD. (10) And the LORD spoke unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.*

God was able to deliver Jonah, in part because of thanksgiving. I know the idea of being "whale vomit" isn't exactly appealing — but it sure beats being whale food! Sure, this wasn't Jonah's choice of transportation, but using a whale as your sailing vessel is better than drowning, right?

Just like Jonah, God's always looking out for us! (often doing the best He can with what He's given to work with). He's not going to let you go down. He's not going to let you fail. In order for you to fail, actually you'd have to work HARD against His mercy, love and grace!

### THE POWER OF YOUR WORDS

I've done a lot of study on the power of words, and what I've found is that, in your redemption is ALL THINGS you'll ever need or want. One of the scriptures that tells us that is found in **2 Corinthians 4:15...**

*For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.*

The implication of this verse is — *Thank God for things not even seen or manifest yet!*

One of the reasons God blesses you is found in **2 Corinthians 9:11...**

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*Being enriched in everything to all bountifulness, which causes through us thanksgiving to God.*

God has made you rich, and that leads to thanksgiving. One of the most powerful things in the whole of scripture is thanksgiving. You probably know some things about the scriptural rules of prayer. You're probably familiar with Philippians chapter 4...

**Philippians 4:6-7** *Be careful for nothing* (or literally, “don't be anxious about anything); *but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. (7) And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

Someone might say, “Well I prayed and prayed about a situation, but still didn't have peace.” But I want you to notice the condition: not just prayer, but prayer with thanksgiving. Have you honestly thanked God — just thanked Him period, for what He's done for you and how great He is, but also, thanked Him advance for the answer? (That's the pathway to manifest peace.)

### **THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS**

When you read about the miracle of the loaves and fishes in the gospels, you find that the miracle happened AFTER Jesus had given thanks. Thanksgiving produces miracles of multiplication.

At the last supper, Jesus gave thanks for the bread. He said, “*This is My body broken for you*” (1 Corinthians 11:24). He gave Himself, and what happened? The miracle of the new birth! That meant that the body of Christ was no longer confined to one person. Now the Body of Christ included *whosoever will*. Remember that Jesus spoke of Himself when He said that unless a corn of wheat — a seed — falls into the ground and dies, it will abide alone, or live all by itself — but if it dies, it brings forth MUCH FRUIT (see John 12:24).

Jesus multiplied HIMSELF after He died. The bread was broken, but first, there was the giving of thanks.

Let's not forget that part. That applies to you and me. When you sow your seed — your finances, your time, your prayers for others, your love — *thank the Lord*. Never give grudgingly, or because you think you have to. Sow your seed KNOWING that you're making a difference with your gift, and *thank God for the opportunity*. As that gift becomes dead to you, just like the bread is broken and just like Jesus laid His life down, as you thank God, He will multiply your seed. That's what the word tells us in **2 Corinthians 9:10...**

*Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness.*

By the way, did you know that when you pray in the Spirit, that you are giving thanks to God? We find that out from 1 Corinthians 14:16 & 17. Since God the Holy Spirit is the

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One Who gives us the utterance when we pray in the spirit, and praying in the spirit is praying the perfect will of God (Romans 8:26-27) and it edifies us (1 Corinthians 14:4), then we know that it's vitally important that we thank God. It's vital to our spiritual life, it's vital to *mental health*, it's vital for the will of God coming to pass in our lives.

In Ephesians 2, the apostle Paul is instructing believers about *what not to do, and what to do*.

**Ephesians 5:2-4** *And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. (3) But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; (4) Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but (this is where he switches back from saying what NOT to do and saying what we ARE to do) rather (not do good works, not witness, not go to church) but rather giving of thanks.*

Now why is that? Because in the giving of thanks is the release of all things the Father has for us. In fact, the giving of thanks causes us to do what is right.

In verse 20 of the same chapter, says...

**Ephesians 5:20** *Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Again, this isn't just giving thanks when the all things are manifest — but *giving thanks NOW* because in Christ, you already have it! *But there's more...*

**Colossians 1:12** *Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.*

**Colossians 3:17** *And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.*

**1 Thessalonians 5:16-18** *Rejoice evermore. (17) Pray without ceasing. (18) In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*

**Hebrews 13:15** says that *the sacrifice of praise to God IS the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name!*

Let me close with this — Paul said in **2 Corinthians 9:15...**

*Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!*

*Hey, if you do that, you'll be in the will of God, you'll feel better, and you'll see your prayers answered! After all, the answer to your prayers prayed in faith is nothing more than the will of God expressed on the earth so they can be brought to pass!*

