**BETTER TOGETHER** in 2022

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**THANKS**&**GIVING**

**Giving Thanks Beyond Thanksgiving**



**In this series, we have looked at …**

The pathway to gratitude starts with your attitude.

Giving is the natural response gratitude because giving without thankfulness is conscription.

November is National Gratitude Month.

But for a follower of Jesus Christ, Thanksgiving is not just a holiday to bring people together to focus on all that we are thankful for. For the follower of Jesus, it is a reminder, that our Father is the giver of every good and perfect gift. As James, the brother Jesus, wrote …

Every day is Thanksgiving when you live a **life** of giving **thanks** to God.

***Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above****, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.* James 1:17

*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing,* ***give thanks in all circumstances****; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.* 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18

But how do you do that, when do you do that, what do you do that for?

Give thanks to God in the face of **opposition**.

Daniel gives thanks in spite of the risks.

*When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem.* ***He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously.***Daniel 6:10

Daniel chose **gratitude** … despite the risk.

Give thanks to God when **hard** circumstances bring good **repentance**.

When you come to your senses and recognize the mess you have made.

*But I with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice to you; what I have vowed I will pay. Salvation belongs to the Lord!”* Jonah 2:9

Like Jonah, may we offer gratitude to God for hard consequences that bring good repentance.

*Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that* ***God’s kindness is meant to lead you to repentance****?* Romans 2:4

Give thanks to God when you are **in** the **storm**.

Like Paul, may we offer gratitude to God, not after, but in the midst of the storm.

Since they had been without food for a long time, Paul stood up among them and said, “Men, you should have listened to me and not have set sail from Crete and incurred this injury and loss. Yet now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. For this very night there stood before me an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I worship, and he said, ‘Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar. And behold, **God has granted you all those who sail with you**.’ So take heart, men, **for I have faith in God that it will be exactly as I have been told.** Acts 27:21–25

Give thanks to God for the **need** yet to be **met**.

Like Jesus, may we offer gratitude to God before He supplies our need.

*Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass, and taking the five loaves and the two fish,* ***he looked up to heaven and said a blessing****. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.* Matthew 14:19–21

Give thanks to God for **showing** you His mercy even in **suffering**.

Like Christ, may we offer gratitude to God even when following His will means suffering. 

*And he said to them, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” And he took a cup, and* ***when he had given thanks*** *he said, “Take this, and divide it among yourselves. For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” And he took bread, and* ***when he had given thanks****, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “****This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.***Luke 22:15–20

God’s mercy does not keep you **from** suffering … it keeps you **in** suffering.

*The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases;* ***his mercies never come to an end****;* ***they are new every morning****; great is your faithfulness.* Lamentations 3:22–23

*“Thus says the Lord: In this place of which you say, ‘It is a waste without man or beast,’ in the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem that are desolate, without man or inhabitant or beast, there shall be heard again the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voices of those who sing, as they bring thank offerings to the house of the Lord: ‘****Give thanks to the Lord of hosts, for the Lord is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!****’ For I will restore the fortunes of the land as at first, says the Lord.* Jeremiah 33:10-11

Like **Daniel**, may we offer gratitude to God no matter what we face.

Like **Jonah**, may we offer gratitude to God for hard consequences that bring good repentance.

Like **Paul**, may we offer gratitude to God, not after, but in the midst of the storm.

Like **Jesus**, may we offer gratitude to God before He supplies our need.

Like **Christ**, may we offer gratitude to God even when following His will means suffering.

***I will thank you forever****, because you have done it. I will wait for your name, for it is good, in the presence of the godly.* Psalm 52:9