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Theme: “Thankful Hearts Please God”

Ashram Community · 4 October 2026

KEY VERSE

Luke 17:15 – “One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice.”

READINGS

Old Testament: Deuteronomy 16:9–15; Psalm: Psalm 107:1–10; Epistle: 1 Thessalonians 5:12–22; Gospel: Luke 17:11–19

Sunday – 4 October 2026

Today, the Word of God brings before us a very simple but powerful message: “Thankful Hearts Please God.” We all know how to ask God for things. When we have a problem, we pray. When there is sickness, we pray. When there is financial difficulty, we pray. When our children are facing examinations, we pray. When we need a job, a house, healing or some other blessing, we pray. There is nothing wrong with asking God. Jesus Himself taught us to pray and bring our needs before God. But there is another important part of prayer that we sometimes forget - thanksgiving. We should not come to God only with our requests. We must also come with grateful hearts and say, “Lord, thank You for what You have already done for me.” The four Scripture portions given to us today teach us about this attitude of thanksgiving. Let us reflect on four simple truths.

1. Remember God’s Blessings and Give Thanks

In Deuteronomy 16, Moses instructs the people of Israel to celebrate the Feast of Weeks. They were to rejoice before the Lord and remember the blessings God had given them. They were not to come before God empty-handed. They were to bring an offering according to the blessing they had received. This is a beautiful principle. Thanksgiving begins when we remember. Sometimes we remember our problems very easily, but we forget our blessings. We remember what we do not have, but forget what God has already given us. Think about your own life. You may not have everything you want, but God has given you many things. He has given you life. He has given you family. He has given you food. He has given you people who love you. He has brought you through difficulties. He has protected you from dangers that you never even knew about. Psalm 107 begins with these words: “Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.” The psalm repeatedly reminds God’s people to remember what God has done for them. They were once in trouble, but God delivered them. They cried to the Lord, and He answered them. Therefore, brothers and sisters, count your blessings before you count your problems. When we remember God’s goodness, complaining begins to decrease and thanksgiving begins to increase.

2. Give Thanks in Every Circumstance

Paul gives us a very challenging instruction in 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18: “Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” Notice that Paul does not say, “Give thanks because everything is good.” He says, “Give thanks in all circumstances.” There is a difference. We may not be thankful for sickness, suffering, poverty or

difficulties. But even in difficult circumstances, we can remain thankful because God is with us. A farmer may lose his crop, but he can still say, “Lord, thank You for giving me another season.” A family may experience sickness, but they can still say, “Lord, thank You that You have not abandoned us.” A person may lose a job, but can still say, “Lord, You are my provider.” Thanksgiving does not mean that we deny our problems. Thanksgiving means that our problems do not become greater than our God. Paul also says, “Pray continually.” Prayer and thanksgiving belong together. When we pray, we place our problems in God’s hands. When we give thanks, we recognise that our lives are also in God’s hands. Philippians 4:6 says, “In every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” So, when you pray, do not begin only with “Lord, give me.” Sometimes begin with, “Lord, thank You.”

3. A Thankful Heart Recognises God’s Grace

The Gospel reading in Luke 17 gives us one of the most beautiful lessons about thanksgiving. Jesus was travelling towards Jerusalem when ten men suffering from leprosy met Him. They stood at a distance and cried out, “Jesus, Master, have pity on us!” Jesus told them to go and show themselves to the priests. As they went, they were cleansed. Ten people received the miracle. But then something remarkable happened. Only one came back to Jesus to give thanks. Luke tells us that when he saw that he was healed, he returned, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked Him. Jesus then asked, “Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine?” What happened to the other nine? They received the blessing, but they forgot the One who blessed them. This is a danger in our own lives. We may pray passionately when we need a miracle. But after receiving the blessing, we may become busy with our lives and forget God. We pray when we are sick, and when we become healthy, we forget to thank God. We pray for a job, and when we get the job, we become too busy to pray. We pray for our children’s future, and when they succeed, we may take all the credit. The tenth leper teaches us something very important: Do not allow God’s blessings to make you forget God Himself. The greatest blessing is not merely what God gives us. The greatest blessing is God Himself. The man who returned received more than physical healing. Jesus said to him, “Rise and go; your faith has made you well.” A thankful heart recognises grace.

4. A Thankful Heart Becomes a Life of Worship and Service

Thanksgiving should not end with words. A genuinely thankful heart produces a changed life. Deuteronomy 16 says that the people were to rejoice before God and include others in their celebration. Their thanksgiving was not merely private. It included their families, servants, foreigners, widows and orphans. This teaches us that true thanksgiving becomes generosity and service. If God has blessed us, we should become a blessing to others. If God has given us food, let us remember the hungry. If God has given us strength, let us help the weak. If God has comforted us, let us comfort those who are suffering. If God has forgiven us, let us learn to forgive others. If God has shown mercy to us, let us show mercy to others. Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 5, “Encourage one another and build each other up.” He also says, “Always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else.” Therefore, thanksgiving is not simply saying, “Thank You, Lord.” Thanksgiving means saying, “Lord, because You have blessed me, make me a blessing to somebody else.” A thankful heart becomes a generous heart. A thankful heart becomes a forgiving heart. A thankful heart becomes a serving heart. A thankful heart becomes a worshipping heart.

Conclusion

Dear brothers and sisters, today God’s Word gives us a simple message. Remember God’s blessings. Give thanks in every circumstance. Recognise God’s grace. And allow thanksgiving to become a life of worship and service. The world teaches us to say, “I want more.” The Gospel teaches us to say, “Thank You, Lord.” The world looks at what is missing. Faith looks at what God has already done. Perhaps today you are facing many problems. Perhaps your family has difficulties. Perhaps you have financial burdens, sickness, loneliness or uncertainty about the future. Bring all these things to God in prayer. But after asking God for what you need, pause for a moment and say: “Lord, thank You for bringing me this far.” You are still alive because of His grace. You are still standing because of His grace. You have hope because of His grace. And above everything else, God has given us His greatest gift - Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Therefore, let us not be like the nine who received the blessing and went away. Let us be like the one who came back, fell at the feet of Jesus, and gave thanks. Psalm 107:1 reminds us: “Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.” May our homes become thankful homes. May our churches become thankful churches. May our families become thankful families. And may our lives continually say, “Thank You, Lord.” Because thankful hearts please God.

Concluding Prayer

Gracious and loving Heavenly Father, We thank You for Your goodness and mercy towards us. We thank You for the gift of life, for our families, for our homes, for the food You provide, for the protection You give us, and for every blessing we have received from Your hands. Forgive us, Lord, for the times when we have remembered our problems but forgotten Your blessings. Forgive us when we have asked You for many things but failed to return to You with thanksgiving. Give us the heart of the one leper who returned to Jesus and said, “Thank You.” Teach us to give thanks not only when everything is going well, but also in difficult circumstances. Give us faith to believe that You are with us even when we cannot understand our situation. Make our hearts thankful, our words encouraging, our hands generous and our lives useful to others. Help us to remember the poor, the sick, the lonely and those who are suffering. Since You have blessed us, make us a blessing to others. Above all, we thank You for Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Thank You for His love, His sacrifice, His forgiveness and the hope of eternal life. May our lives become a continuous offering of thanksgiving and praise. In the precious name of Jesus Christ our Lord, we pray. Amen.