

## Thankful for His Name

Melissa Nystrom

Today's text: [Psalm 69](#)

*I will praise the name of God with a song; I will magnify him with thanksgiving. This will please the Lord more than an ox or a bull with horns and hoofs. When the humble see it they will be glad; you who seek God, let your hearts revive. For the Lord hears the needy and does not despise his own people who are prisoners. [Psalm 69:30-33](#)*

Walk with me for a moment. It's late, I'm tired, and I just can't seem to muster up a prayer of thanks. I'm not thankful for the news I just received. I'm not thankful for my kids' behavior in the store today. I'm not thankful for the way I spoke to my Mom on the phone an hour ago. At this very moment, my soul feels dark, and if there was a ever a day to be thankful, this is not that day.

In your darkest days do you feel the longing? Do you see the need for Him to transform your attitudes, toward yourself, and others?

Then let's start here: Let's begin with a heart of thanksgiving. Being thankful through praise deals with who God is instead of what God has done. Thankfulness is like a supernatural key that unlocks your longing heart and plummets you into depths of intimacy that we were made for.

I will praise the *name* of God:

*Jehovah-Tsidkenu*: The Lord our Righteousness

*Jehovah-Jireh*: The Lord will provide

*Jehovah-Raah*: The Lord is my Shepherd

*Jehovah-Shalom*: The Lord is my Peace

*Jehovah-Nissi*: The Lord is my Banner

*Jehovah-Rophe*: The Lord who heals

*Jehovah-Shammah*: The Lord is there

*Jehovah-Sabaoth*: The Lord of hosts

These names reveal a particular aspect of God's character. Though I might not feel thankful for my day, I can be thankful for the names of God. Take time to memorize these names. Use them while you pray, even if that's all you have to be thankful for today. Be thankful for His character.

Sample Prayer:

*Jehovah-Nissi, I thank you for your character. That you have called me and predestined me to be with you regardless of how I feel or what my attitude says about me today. You are Jehovah-Raah. Lead me, to your still waters. Quench my thirsty soul.*

Prayer Prompts for the rest of your day:

1. Today when I am confused, *Jehovah-Shalom*, The Lord is my peace.
2. Today when I want to speak unkindly, *Jehovah-Shammah*, The Lord is there.
3. Today if I'm faced with crippling pain or see others in pain, *Jehovah-Rophe*, The Lord who heals.

Further Study: [Romans 8:28-30](#), [Psalm 9:1](#), [Psalm 107:8-9](#)

## Thanksgiving in the Fire

Josh Caldwell

Today's text: [Job 1](#) and [1 Thessalonians 5](#)

*And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." [Job 1:21](#)*

*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](#)*

On a cold November morning around 3 a.m., my wife, brother, and I were awakened by the ringing of a fire detector in our small home in Georgia. As soon as I ran out of my bed room I was confronted with fire rolling out of living room area of our home. As fast as we could, we all ran out the back door, and as we were stepping out the door, the windows blew out of the house.

I stood in the neighbor's yard in just my boxers watching everything I owned burn as the fire department gave a great effort to save anything they could. But all was lost.

A few hours later the fire department had left and it was just the three of us sitting on the tailgate of my brother's truck waiting for the rest of the world to wake up so we could figure out what to do next. I was stunned and mad determined to fix it all, but not sure why I should have to.

Then my brother started singing "He gives and takes away, and yet my heart will say, 'blessed be the name of the Lord'" I gave my brother one of meanest looks I ever have, and he said, "Josh we were seconds away from not getting out of that house. I am going to thank God, not be mad at Him" He went on to sing the rest of the whole song.

I broke down in tears, got in the cab of the truck, and in one of the most honest prayers of my life, I realized the truth that is in the scriptures above: There is no moment that is not worthy of thanking God for who He is. When we know, He is the Good Father and it is the will of God for us to have a loving relationship with Him, we will find prayers of thanksgiving in all circumstances.

The Sample Prayer below was the one I prayed in the cab of the truck that day. The amazing thing is, God restored everything and even gave in abundance what we had. And yet this does not even compare to the blessing of eternity with Him.

Sample Prayer:

*God I am hurting and my heart is telling me to be thankful, but my mind is telling me I have lost so much. God I need you to help me be thankful and praise you. I can't do this on my own. I know you have my family in your hands, and I know that you saved our lives, but now I need you*

*to open my eyes to your provisions. Thank you, Lord, for loving me and never leaving me. I love you Lord.*

Prayer Prompts for the rest of the day:

1. Today when you are hurting or see others hurting, be thankful for who God is.
2. Today when you see sickness in your life or others, be thankful for who God is.
3. Today when you see great loss or others' great loss, be thankful for who God is.

Further Study:

[Philippians 4:4-9](#), [Psalm 34](#)

## **Thankful in the Chaos**

Mike Walk

Key Passage: [Philippians 4:6-7](#)

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

I don't know if you are like me, but when I think about Thanksgiving and being thankful to God, my first inclination is to look at all that is going good in my life. On one hand that seems like it would make sense. Thanking God for the good things in our lives. I can look around and see so many blessings. I've been blessed with an amazing wife, three phenomenal children, a significant vocation that brings me a ton of fulfillment, and the list could go on and on. If I take this list and run through it before the Lord, that would be very appropriate.

The passage in Philippians, though, brings about something that at first glance feels very inappropriate. The verse is talking about situations that bring us anxiety. We are called to bring our anxieties to the Lord. It adds a condition to our petitions and prayer requests spurred on by trials: to do this with *thanksgiving*. That implies that even in the most concerning and difficult situations, God is calling me to find positives.

I am currently working from home because I've been put on quarters. I'm feeling miserable and naturally am praying that God would heal me ASAP. But as I sit here in this condition, if I try real hard, I can find some things to be grateful for. Though some of my systems are down, I've got dozens that I'm assuming are running great. As difficult as some situations might be, I've lived long enough to know others who have or have had much worse situations.

Choosing to flip over the stones in our lives and find things to be thankful for causes us to in turn, by faith, look for ways that God is faithful and trustworthy. Sometimes our difficulties can cloud our faith and make us, as someone has said, to doubt in the dark what we've come to know to be true in the light. This week as you look for ways to incorporate an attitude of thanksgiving in your prayer life, look in the not so familiar realms of trials and difficulties. Remind yourself of God's character and view your trials through the grid of who He is this week.

Sample Prayer:

*Jesus give me the strength to see you and feel your presence during this trial. It's very difficult for me to find something to be thankful about, help me. Give me eyes to see your hand in this*

*situation and find ways to see how you are working this out for my good.*

Prayer Prompts for the rest of the day:

- Lord, this week show me what you are up to in this area that I might point others to you.
- Jesus, help me to view this difficulty in a way that shows my trust and dependence on you.
- While I'm in this valley, Lord, help me to find joy and reasons to praise your name.

Further Study: [James 1:2-4](#); [Romans 8:28](#)

## **Mind Your Manners**

Michael Walk

**Today's Text:** [Luke 17:11-19](#)

*Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice.*  
Luke 17:15

I've been a parent now for over nine years. Daily I'm amazed that God would allow me to be the daddy to three amazing kids. It's a sobering responsibility when you think about it. I know at some point they will be formed and influenced by others like coaches or professors, but for now it's my job to instill in them desires, attitudes and habits that honor God. One basic area is in the realm of gratitude.

The daily grind doesn't really offer us opportunities for children to ponder the great sacrifice their mom and dad have made for their basic needs. Sometimes they will ask for a snack or something and I will gladly fetch something for them. Once I hand them the requested munchie, I'm surprised at how much I long for and many times demand a show of gratitude, a simple "thank you." It's a basic response when talking about manners but one that can easily be brushed aside for my kids.

Like most of their "growth areas" I see the exact parallel in my walk with God. He has done so much for me, and if I really took a moment to ponder all that He has done, I wouldn't have time to do anything else...ever again! His blessings, His provisions, His sustainment have gone before me for almost 44 years now. Unfortunately, it's easy for me to respond like my distracted kids sometimes do, with no response at all. They assume, and rightfully so, that their parents will provide for them regardless of their actions. God's character in a more perfect way shows me the same thing. I server a good, good, Father! He gives good gifts to His children. He will never leave me nor forsake me.

Like my children though things like gratitude and having a thankful heart are profoundly important. Those qualities taint how we view the world. They are the lenses through which we see every situation we find ourselves in good or bad.

The passage for today is one that most of us have never dealt with. 10 lepers were healed by Jesus. We have no idea what it's like to be a social pariah to the extent that they did. Having leprosy ostracized them from family, friends and even enemies. No one wanted social and heaven forbid physical contact with a leper -- except Jesus.

The passage tells us that all 10 left in joy to be reunited with society. Only one returned to the source of their healing and pleasure, the man Jesus. In their defense, I'm sure they were overjoyed to experience their newfound freedom from the shackles of that horrible disease. This joy overruled basic manners but still there was one that in his joy did the right thing, he returned to Jesus. We don't know what the rest of the life of this former leper entailed, but he stood at the threshold of that life with the proper mindset: gratitude and thankfulness.

**Sample Prayer:**

*Jesus, thank you for all that you've done for me. As I look around and see your provision, your sustenance, your involvement, I'm humbled and overwhelmed. Give me eyes to see what you are up to and help me to have the heart attitude as that one leper who came back to the source of his true joy, you.*

**Prayer Prompts for the rest of your day:**

- Jesus forgive me for the countless ways I take your involvement in my life for granted.
- Help me to see all that you've done for me and to respond appropriately.
- May I point others to your goodness and involvement through my grateful demeanor and attitude.

**Further Study:**

[Psalm 103](#), [1 Thessalonians 5:18](#), [Colossians 3:17](#)

## What to Do in the Center of God's Will

Michael Walk

**Today's Text:** [1 Thessalonians 5:18](#)

*Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*

Have you ever struggled with wanting to know God's Will? I have. So many small and large decisions come across our paths each day and every season of our lives. When I was in the Army, the secret to career progression and success in the military was often summarized to me in this simple phrase, "Be in the right place, at the right time, in the right uniform and you will go far." That obviously is an oversimplification of a career, but it was to prove a point. Be where you are supposed to be when you are supposed to be there and have the right equipment with you. If you strove to do those three things, you could easily separate yourself from your peers and find yourself moving ahead in career progression.

In the same way, we all desire to be moving ahead in our walk with Jesus. On a more practical level we just long to be where God wants us to be. If we were to be honest we would long for a heads up of what's around the bend or even 10 years out. If we were to be frank, that desire might not be so that we are "spiritually" prepared, but rather so that we know what our future looks like. In God's sovereign wisdom, He often plays those cards close to His chest. He does, though, reveal some things that we can be thoroughly prepared for.

Our text for today is short, but profound. Friends, the author of this book, Paul, tells us flat out what God's will is for us. In absolutely every situation we ever face there is a posture, a demeanor that is totally expected: having a grateful heart. There is never a time where we should vacillate between the two options of ungratefulness and gratefulness. We already know God's answer. If I slide towards a posture of ungratefulness, the reality is I'm sliding outside of God's will.

Whether it means the choices are one duty station over the other, and you don't like either of them, it doesn't matter. Pick one and find something to be grateful and thankful for. For someone else that might mean another year in a house that no longer has the joy they wished it had and wondering should they stay or go. There aren't two options of what God would want for them that they must choose from. Stay and find areas to be grateful.

The right answer will always be to plant our feet firmly in whatever situation and look for the good around us. Sure we might have to get creative or proclaim things by faith, but there is only one posture to have in everything: *gratefulness*. Friends this simplifies so much for all of us.

If you are like me you might spend hours upon hours stressing over decisions that are on our mind because we want to get out of situations rather than persevere. If we are called to find things to be grateful for in every situation, maybe even the most difficult ones are no longer to be run from, but embraced.

**Sample Prayer:**

*Lord, I know you are good. I know you are a good, good Father. Grant me eyes to see your goodness around me. This situation is so difficult right now. Please show me what you are up to. Thank you for not giving up on me. Thank you for the character building you are doing.*

**Prayer Prompts for the rest of your day:**

- Pick the most difficult situation you are facing and find three things God would say are blessings in them.
- Talk to God about your attitude and if there needs to be an adjustment. Ask Him to give you what you need to make that adjustment.
- Ask the Lord to convict you in areas that you haven't been grateful for so that you can begin today to honor Him in every situation.

**Further Study:**

[Philippians 4:6-7](#); [Colossians 3:15](#); [Psalm 105:1-2](#)