



Of all the various Christian holidays, Thanksgiving is truly the most Biblical. Its roots extend all the way back to Israel in the Old Testament. God's people had their own annual Thanksgiving kind of celebration. It was called the *Feast of Ingathering* and was a time for Israel to thank God for His harvest provision and ongoing goodness. They did this whether the crop that year was a bumper or a bust. Over the years in terms of our own American history; pilgrims, presidents and people have all realized that giving thanks to God is of paramount importance. You see, gratitude towards the Lord grows the soul! Now as then, this is true whether the year has been terrific or tough. Today, we'll look at Psalm 136 - what many consider to be the most special Psalm of all - and be reminded of some key blessings that all of us can thank God for during Thanksgiving 2017.

## IS THANKSGIVING REALLY A BIG DEAL?

1. (1Thessalonians 5:18) It is a major part of ...
2. (James 1:17) It reminds us where the ...
3. (Hebrews 13:15) It is the difference between a real ...

## FOR WHAT DO WE GIVE GOD THANKS?

1. (v.1) He is graciously ...
2. (v.2) He is graciously ...
3. (v.3) He is graciously ...
4. (vv.4 - 9) He is graciously ...

5. (vv. 10-15) He is graciously ...
6. (vv. 16 – 20) He is graciously ...
7. (vv. 21-22) He is graciously ...
8. (v. 23) He is graciously ...
- 9 (v. 24) He is graciously ...
10. (v. 25) He is graciously ...
11. (v. 26) He is graciously ...

## SOME PERSONAL APPLICATION

This Thanksgiving, no matter the year you've had (good or bad) realize that ...

God is at ...

God is motivated by ...

God is worthy of your ...

God is here to hear the ...

## FOR THOUGHT & TALK

In your small group take 5-10 minutes to review the main points of PJ's message. Discuss the following questions, taking your time as the Spirit leads, realizing you don't have to cover them all.

1. Read aloud 1 Thessalonians 5:18. Giving thanks is clearly an important part of God's will for our lives as Jesus' followers ... and the goal of God's will for our lives is always to make us like God's Son in our lives. How does choosing to be thankful (even when times are tough) help us personally? How does a grateful spirit reflect Jesus to those around us?
2. Psalm 136 is the song Jesus sang with His disciples as they finished the Passover meal and entered the Garden of Gethsemane, which was the staging area for His arrest, subsequent trial & crucifixion. What do you suppose were Jesus' thoughts & feelings as He sang this song staring His final hours in the face? What's the lesson(s) here for us?
3. As you look at the Psalm 136 list of things for which we are to be grateful, what stands out to you about the list as a whole? Which one or two of the particular points of gratitude most resonated with you personally and why? As a small group, end your time praying down this list together.