

## Jesus Giving Thanks (A Thanksgiving Sermon)

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Luke 10:21

The Bible abounds with examples of thanksgiving.

- The word “thanks” occurs 139 times. There are over 300 references to the word “praise” which is another form of giving thanks.

As we read the four gospels, we find the Lord Jesus Christ giving thanks. This is somewhat remarkable since He is God! Everything came from Him anyway so why be thankful?

One reason was to give us an example. Peter said Jesus left “*us an example, that ye should follow his steps*” (1 Pet. 2:21). 1 John 2:6 says we ought “*to walk, even as he walked.*”

Jesus is our example in our walk... our witnessing... our giving... our praying... and in giving thanks. We should give thanks for the same things He was thankful for. We must not only be thankful *FOR Him*, but also be thankful *LIKE Him*.

In this message I want to examine four occasions where Jesus gave thanks and note what He was being thankful for.

**First, we see Jesus was thankful for...**

**I. The PERCEPTION of spiritual truth by child-like faith (Luke 10:21; Mt. 11:25).**

- This prayer is the first recorded prayer of Jesus in the Bible.
  - This is the only reference in the Bible of Jesus rejoicing.
- A. God reveals spiritual truth to those who recognize who He is:
1. “*O Father...*” Do you have a family relationship with as your heavenly Father?
  2. “*Lord of heaven and earth...*” Do you recognize Him as the Ruler of the universe?
- B. God reveals His truth to those with child-like faith. I’m thankful you don’t have to be in “Who’s Who” to know what’s what!

Acts 4:13—*When they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were **unlearned and ignorant men**...* But they were smart enough to put their faith in Jesus!

1 Corinthians 1:19-21—*It is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. 20 Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? 21 For after that in the wisdom of God **the world by wisdom knew not God**, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe...*

- God hides the simple truth of the Gospel from those who are wise in their own conceits, so anyone who wants to be saved must believe with child-like faith. No one goes to heaven head first, they must go heart first (Rom 10:9).
- What kind of people did Jesus spend most of His time with? It was not the intelligentsia of His day.

C. God is not against education. However, if a person is not careful education has a way of making a person “puffed up” (1 Cor. 8:1).

1. That is why we are warned to avoid “*oppositions of science falsely so called*” (1 Tim. 6:20). Again, Colossians 2:8 says, “*Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.*”

- Geologists know all about rocks without knowing THE ROCK of ages.
- Botanists know all about flowers without knowing the ROSE OF SHARON or the LILY OF THE VALLEYS.
- Astronomers know all about stars but don’t know Christ, “*the bright and morning star.*”

2. Thank God He works through men like ordinary men like fishermen, carpenters, tax collectors, shepherds, farmers, and common laborers. That means God can use any of us.

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Not everyone can have a college degree... Not everyone can be intellectually brilliant... Not everyone understand physics,

chemistry, or advanced medical procedures. But everyone can believe on Christ in simple child-like faith (unless they are educated beyond their intelligence.)

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Next, we see Jesus was thankful for...

## II. The **PROVISION** of food to eat (John 6:5-11; Mk. 8:6).

➔ By giving thanks for what was common, He made what was ordinary, extraordinary!

### A. Meals are to be received with thanksgiving (1 Tim. 4:3-5).

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Recently I got a text message from my cousin Larry in North Carolina. He was invited to his son's house for dinner. Larry's son asked him to pray for the meal. Larry told me it was the first time he was ever asked to publicly pray before a meal. He said he did it and "God put it in my heart and it came out my mouth."

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### B. Think of all that encompassed the provision of those loaves and fishes.

1. The boy who gave them.
  2. The mother who prepared them.
  3. The loaves go back to the bakers who kneaded the flour.
  4. The flour went back to the miller who ground the wheat.
  5. The wheat came from the harvester who gathered the wheat.
  6. The farmers planted the wheat.
  7. But God sent the sun and rain to cause the wheat to grow!
- Likewise the fish came from fishermen who caught the fish in a stream or lake. And it was God who caused the lake.

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A Christian farmer visiting the city for a day entered a restaurant for lunch. When the food was served he quietly bowed his head and gave thanks. A young man at the next table, trying to embarrass him, called out in a loud voice. "Hey farm boy, does everyone do that out in the country where you live." The farmer smiled and calmly answered, "Nope, the pigs don't!"

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➡Americans take their food for granted. Let them visit some third world countries and they may realize how much they have to be thankful for!

Thirdly, we see Jesus was thankful for...

### III. The PRAYERS that have been answered (John 11:41-42).

- A. Here we see a joining of Jesus's humanity with His deity.
  - 1. As a man, Jesus wept at the grave of his friend (vs. 33-35).
  - 2. As God, He called forth Lazarus from the grave (vs. 43-44).
  - 3. BUT, between Christ's tears and His triumphant call, JESUS GAVE THANKS to His heavenly Father for always hearing His prayer (vs. 41-42).
- B. God listens when you pray!!! David said in Psalms 65:2, "***O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.***" Your prayers do not end up on the backside of some star in a far away galaxy. God hears everything you say to Him. And the Lord never tires hearing your voice. He WANTS to hear you speak to Him.
  - ➡Aren't you thankful that God hears you?
- C. God not only hears, He answers (Jer. 33:3).

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Some months after joining the Air Force a young man called his Christian wife's aunt who lived 1,000 miles away. He was not a Christian, but requested that his aunt-in-law pray for him. He told her, "I make my first jump tonight. I'm the #2 jumper. I'm scared, but I don't want to worry my wife. Will you pray for me? I jump at midnight."

The aunt promised to pray. As the clock neared midnight she got on her knees and began to pray. 1,000 miles to the south a bomber taxied down the runway and took off into the pitch black sky. As the plane reached the correct altitude, a red light flashed signaling the first paratrooper to jump. The first jumper turned to the #2 jumper and said, "I can't do it!"

Unafraid, the #2 jumper agreed to jump first. He jumped out the door of the plane. As soon as his parachute opened he heard

the plane explode above him. Every member of the crew were killed. He was the only survivor.

On furlough he attended a church in Wisconsin and told how his life was saved because God answered the prayers of his wife's aunt. He trusted Christ as His Savior and became a member of that church.<sup>1</sup>

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➡ **Are you thankful for a recent answer to prayer?**

**Finally, we see Jesus was thankful for...**

#### **IV. The PORTIONS of the Lord's Supper** (Luke 22:17-20; Mt. 26:27).

- ➡ The Lord's Supper pictured Christ's sacrifice on the cross. He knew full well what was coming and was thankful for it. He was thankful His body would be broken on the cross. He was thankful His blood would be shed.
- A. Jesus was thanking God that He could provide what was need to save your soul. His blood would given for the remission of sins (Col. 1:14).
- B. Some religions call the Lord's Supper *the Eucharist*— Latin for "Giving of Thanks". That's what the Lord's Supper is. How thankful are you for Christ's sacrifice on the cross for your soul?

**SUMMATION:** Be thankful for...

- the common things in life like a simple meal...
- for ordinary people who simply trust God with child-like faith...
- for God hearing you when you pray...
- and above all, for Christ's sacrifice on the cross so you could be saved from hell.

Follow Christ's example and be thankful.

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<sup>1</sup> Leslie B. Flynn, *Dare To Care Like Jesus*, Victor Books, 1982, p. 62