

# 24/7 Thanksgiving

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*Giving thanks ALWAYS for ALL things...* —Ephesians 5:20

This Thursday is Thanksgiving. Who doesn't like Thanksgiving? ***The Turkey***

➡ A "turkey" could refer to several different things...

- A large North American bird.
- A country in the Middle East.
- An inept person is sometimes referred to as "a turkey"
- A very bad movie, play, or theatrical production.
- An frank / straight-forward discussion (to the point)—"Lets talk turkey,"
- 3 consecutive strikes in bowling.

What does a turkey say? "Gobble, gobble, gobble," right? Not always!

- A dyslexic turkey says, "Boggle boggle boggle"
- A turkey in the shoe repair shop says, "Cobble cobble cobble"
- A turkey with a sore leg says, "Hobble hobble hobble."
- A turkey on a diet says, "Nibble, nibble nibble."
- A turkey who argues a lot says, "Squabble squabble squabble."
- A turkey on the internet says, "Google, Google, Google!"
- Then there was the dizzy turkey who just went: "Wobble wobble wobble!"

Thanksgiving is my favorite time of the year. But, I must confess, I have a slight problem with a special day called "Thanksgiving." It's as if, you can complain, and gripe 364 days of the year, but on the fourth Thursday of November, you need to put forth an extra effort to be "thankful."

Why set aside a special day to do what we should be doing all year long? Our text reminds us that **Thanksgiving is more than just a date on a calendar!**

➡ Ephesians 5:20 — **A FORMULA FOR THANKSGIVING:**

1. **WHOM** do we thank? "*Giving thanks always for all things UNTO GOD and the Father...*" Everything good thing we have comes to us from the gracious hand of God (James 1:17).
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One Thanksgiving a family was seated around their dinner table. From the oldest to the youngest, they expressed what they were thankful for. The 5-year-old began by being thankful for the turkey. He thanked his mother for cooking the turkey and his father for buying the turkey. But then he continued, "Thank You for the checker at the grocery store who checked out the turkey. I

thank You for the grocery store people who put it on the shelf. I thank You for the farmer who fed the turkey and made it fat. I thank You for those who delivered the turkey to the store."

When he was almost done his father asked, "Didn't you leave someone out?"

He thought for a moment. Finally his older sister said, "What about God who created the turkey?"

Indignantly the 5-year-old answered, "**I was about to get around to Him.**"

Isn't that what we ought to consider at Thanksgiving? **When we going to get around to God?**

2. **WHEN** are we to give thanks? *"Giving thanks ALWAYS..."*
  - Constantly throughout Paul's epistles he exhorts us to ALWAYS be thankful  
 ➤ 1 Thess 2:13—*"For this cause also **hank** we God WITHOUT CEASING..."*
  - We are to give thanks in the good times and the bad... when we feel good and when we feel sick... when things are going well and when things are not going so well.
  - We should be always conscious of the goodness of God. God is good all the time and in every way.
3. For **WHAT** are we to give thanks? *"Giving thanks always for ALL THINGS..."* Paul wrote, *"In EVERYTHING give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus..."* (1 Thess. 5:18).

For all the gifts that Thou dost send,  
 For every true and faithful friend,  
 For supplying my every need,  
 For all that is good in word or deed,  
 For gift of health along life's way,  
 For strength to work from day to day—  
 I give Thee humble thanks.

For Christ who came from heaven above,  
 For the cross and His redeeming love,  
 For His mighty power to seek and save,  
 For His glorious victory o'er the grave.  
 For promised mansions in the sky,  
 For His promised coming bye and bye—  
 I give Thee humble thanks.

We may not have all we want, but we can be thankful we don't get all we deserve!

**To be thankful in the little things is to be thankful in all things.**

➤ In this message I want us to consider thanksgiving in **the context of 3 tenses:**

**I. Thank God for what He has done in PAST.**

- A. His PROVISION of salvation. Providing a way for me to be saved. Thank God for the blood of Jesus! Thank God for the Gospel
- B. His PROTECTION. I'm thankful for God's mercy in letting me live long enough to trust Christ for salvation.
- C. His PARDON! I'm forgiven! My sinful past is under the blood. It's in the depths of the sea. My sins are cast as far as the east is from the west, never to be remembered against me again!  
 ➔ Thank God, my PAST is PAST! While I'm thankful for what God has done for me in the past, I don't have to live in the Past.

## II. Thank God for what He is doing in the PRESENT.

- Each new day should give cause for renewed thanksgiving. Jeremiah wrote, *"It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness... Wherefore do halting man complain..."* (Lam. 3:22-23, 39).
  - A. He LOVES us unconditionally.
  - B. He LISTENS and answers our prayers. His ears are open to our prayers
  - C. He LEADS us by His Word. This Bible is my "road map" through life.
  - D. He LIFTS our heavy burdens. Burdens are lifted at Calvary!
  - E. He LINKS us to good friends.
  - F. He LOADS us with daily benefits. Psalm 68:10—*"Blessed be the Lord, who daily loads us with benefits."*  
 ➔ Psalm 116:12—*"What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me?"* Answer: v. 17—*"I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving."*  
 ➔ Who wants to tell us something you are thankful for?

## III. Thank God for He will do in FUTURE.

- For the Christian, the future is bright—As bright as the promises of God.
  - A. Thank God for the promise of His IMMEDIATE COMING (1 Thess. 4:16-18).
  - B. Thank God for the promise of a NEW BODY (Philippians 3:20-21).
  - C. Thank God for His promise of a HEAVENLY HOME (John 14:1-3).

**SUMMATION:** Revelation 7:14 speaks of the inhabitants of heaven worshipping, and saying “*Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and THANKSGIVING, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God FOREVER and EVER. AMEN.*” If thanksgiving is going to be offered to God forever in heaven, we had better learn to give thanks ALWAYS here on earth.

*COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS*—Pastor Jack Hinton from New Bern, North Carolina shared this story in a publication of the International Mission Board several years back. While on a mission trip to the island of Tobago he led worship in a leper colony. Towards the end of the service they had time for one more song. So he asked if anyone wanted to request a song.

One lady lifted a fingerless hand in the air to request a song... Her nose and ears were entirely gone. The leprosy had eaten away her lips. She asked with joy, “Can we sing ‘*Count Your Blessings?*’”

She was ready to give thanks always for all things!