***Psalm of Praise***

**Thanksgiving #1: Psalm 145:15-21 November 8, 2020**

***I will exalt you, my God the King;
I will praise your name for ever and ever.
Every day I will praise you and extol your name for ever and ever.*Psalm 145:1-2**

**Reading a Psalm of praise with Pastor Paul Schneider**

*I will extol you, my God and King; I will praise your name for ever and ever.
Every day I will praise you and extol your name for ever and ever . . . .*

*My mouth will speak in praise of the Lord. Let every creature praise his holy name for ever and ever.*

Psalm 145:1-2, 21

 1) Who (more than the what) is the proper object of our thanksgiving?

 2) What are we thankful for?

 3) When is the best time to give thanks?

**The mission of thanksgiving**

*Great is the Lord, and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom.
One generation will commend your works to another; they will tell of your mighty acts . . . .*

Psalm 145:3-4 (see Spurgeon’s sermon on the “Philosophy and Propriety of Abundant Praise”)

 1) Thanksgiving starts personally (see Romans 1:21 and the first and last verses of Psalm 145)

 2) Thanksgiving is a family affair

 3) Thanksgiving is kingdom big (see 145:10-13)

**How to get the most out of Thanksgiving**

1) Thank the Father for what Jesus thanked his Father

*21 At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure.”*

Luke 10:21-22 (see Nicholas Batzig’s blog at [*https://feedingonchrist.org/thankfulness-jesus/?utm\_source=rss&utm\_medium=rss&utm\_campaign=thankfulness-jesus*](https://feedingonchrist.org/thankfulness-jesus/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=thankfulness-jesus))

 2) Use Psalm 145 as a guide to watching thankfully what God is doing in your life, family and world

8. *The Lord is gracious and compassionate . . . .*9. *The Lord is good to all . . . .*13. *The Lord is faithful to all his promises . . . .*14. *The Lord upholds all those who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down . . . .*17. *The Lord is righteous in all his ways . . . .*18. *The Lord is near to all who call on him . . . .*19. *He fulfills the desires of those who fear him . . . .*
20. *The Lord watches over all who love him . . . .*

Psalm 145

3) Expand your paradigm: Guilt, Grace, Gratitude, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

7“Listen, my people, and I will speak; I will testify against you, Israel: I am God, your God.

 14“Sacrifice thank offerings to God,
 fulfill your vows to the Most High,

 15and call on me in the day of trouble;

 I will deliver you, and you will honor me.”

16But to the wicked person, God says . . . .

 22“Consider this, you who forget God,

 or I will tear you to pieces, with no one to rescue you:

 23Those who sacrifice thank offerings honor me,

 and to the blameless I will show my salvation.”

Psalm 50 (see Kevin de Young’s commentary on Psalm 50
at [*https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevin-deyoung/gratitude-to-gods-glory/*](https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevin-deyoung/gratitude-to-gods-glory/))

**Resources for further studies of Thanksgiving**

Nicholas Batzig’s blog on giving thanks like Jesus at [*https://feedingonchrist.org/thankfulness-jesus/?utm\_source=rss&utm\_medium=rss&utm\_campaign=thankfulness-jesus*](https://feedingonchrist.org/thankfulness-jesus/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=thankfulness-jesus)

Spurgeon’s message on Psalm 145 at [*https://www.ccel.org/ccel/spurgeon/sermons25.xxvii.html*](https://www.ccel.org/ccel/spurgeon/sermons25.xxvii.html)

Kim Riddlebarger’s sermon om Psalm 146 is good example of Reformed preaching (light on application, heavy on theology) on the psalms at [*http://kimriddlebarger.squarespace.com/sermons-on-the-psalms/A%20Sermon%20on%20Psalm%20146%20edited.pdf*](http://kimriddlebarger.squarespace.com/sermons-on-the-psalms/A%20Sermon%20on%20Psalm%20146%20edited.pdf)

Alexander Maclaren has a wonderful analysis of salvation in the Psalms in his study at [*http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/7925/pg7925.txt*](http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/7925/pg7925.txt)

The Bible Project has a wonderful intro to reading the Psalms (great for kids!) at [*https://bibleproject.com/explore/psalms/*](https://bibleproject.com/explore/psalms/)

Kevin de Young has a series of Thanksgiving blogs, including these:
[*https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevin-deyoung/stuffed-full-with-thankfulness/*](https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevin-deyoung/stuffed-full-with-thankfulness/)
[*https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevin-deyoung/gratitude-to-gods-glory/*](https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevin-deyoung/gratitude-to-gods-glory/)



# A Thanksgiving Jesus

[Nicholas T. Batzig](https://feedingonchrist.org/author/nbatzig/)

If you were hoping to read something about our Puritan-American heritage–based on the title of this post–you will be sorely disappointed. If you’re looking for fodder for the culture war that is raging against the Christian foundation of this country in some aspect of [the Plymouth plantation narrative](http://books.google.com/books?id=tYecOAN1cwwC&printsec=frontcover&dq=on+plymouth+plantation&hl=en&sa=X&ei=CQ12VO7xIYukNqClg4gK&ved=0CDIQ6AEwAg#v=onepage&q&f=false), you won’t find it here. If you, however, you are wanting to know what the Scriptures teach us about thanksgiving from the life and ministry of Jesus, then you’ve come to the right place. One of the things that we can be certain of–concerning all of the sinless perfections of incarnate Son of God–is that Jesus expressed full and unceasing gratitude to His Father for every provision, every kindness, every protection, every soul-strengthening support and every miraculous act that the Father worked through Him during His earthly ministry. Without doubt, Jesus is the most thankful person that ever walked the face of the earth; and yet, while we may safely be assured of this, there are only a few instances in which the Scriptures tell us about the thankfulness of Jesus. This should strike us as strange, given all that the Scriptures teach us about our own need to be thankful. Thankfulness–and the sinful lack of it–is one of the foremost teachings of Scripture. Though there are so many other passages, consider the teaching of Psalm 107, Luke 17:11-19 and 2 Timothy 3:2 in this regard. So, what are we to make of the fact that there are actually very few instances in which we are told of the thankfulness of Jesus? And, what can we then learn from the Scriptural record of the instances of His thankfulness?

In his sermon “[The First and Last Supper](http://mp3.sa-media.com/filearea/72712125023/72712125023.mp3),” Sinclair Ferguson points out that Jesus’ emotional life was not always evident to us because He did not “let His emotions all hang out.” He explained:

If you read through the Gospels you will learn a great deal from the Gospel testimony to the character and attractiveness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Occasionally, you will see His inner emotional life coming to expression. Occasionally, in a deep sense of truly righteous anger. On occasion, in the tears that flow from His eyes. And very rarely in the way our modest Lord Jesus Christ did not let His emotions all hang out.

While there is a reservedness on the part of Jesus in revealing all of His emotions, the Gospel writers have recorded several instances in which Jesus verbalized thanksgiving to His Father. They can be found in Matt. 11:25; 15:36; 26:27; Mark 8:8; 14:23; Luke 10:21; 22:17, 19; John 6:11, 23; 11:41 and I Corinthians 11:24. What is remarkable about these instances of thanksgiving is that they can all be placed into one of three categories; and, each of these three categories are bound up in or related to the work of redemption. In short, Jesus’ thankfulness teaches us to pour out our own hearts in thanksgiving to God–above all, for the redemption that He has freely given to us in the Son. Jesus’ prayers of thanksgiving fall into one of the following three categories:

**1) Thankfulness for the miracles that served the purposes of redemption.**

The Apostle John leaves us the record of Jesus offering thanks to God prior to performing two of His most noteworthy miracle–the miraculous feeding of the 5,000 (John 6:11), and the raising of Lazarus from the dead (John 11:41-42). With regard to the first, we might be tempted to conclude that Jesus merely gave thanks for the meal that He and His disciples, together with the multitude, were about to eat. However, the fact that it is the last thing we read before He performed the miracle, and the only other instance of Jesus giving thanks in John’s Gospel is immediately prior to raising Lazarus from the dead, shows that it is gratitude–not for the common provision of food–but for the miraculous sign pointing to His glory as the only Redeemer of men. In other words, Jesus gave thanks for the Father working the miracle through Him so that men would believe in Him. This becomes all the more clear as He exposits the true purpose of the feeding of the multitude–claiming that He was “the bread which came down from heaven to give life to the world.” The same is true with his giving thanks prior to raising Lazarus–a miracle that accompanied his declaration that He Himself is “the resurrection and the life.”

**2) Thankfulness for God’s sovereignty in the redemption of men.**

The next thing for which Jesus offered thanksgiving is recorded in Matthew 11:25 and Luke 10:21. Just before calling men to come to Him and find rest for their souls, Jesus thanked His Father for “hiding these things (i.e. the things of the Gospel) from the wise and prudent and revealing them to babes.” Jesus was thankful for God’s sovereign work in the redemption of men–in His sovereign regeneration and illumination of their minds and hearts in revealing Christ to them. Jesus was thankful that the Father hid the truth of the Gospel from men and women who thought that they were wise and who rejected His claims. Jesus thanked His Father for election and reprobation.

**3) Thankfulness for the fulfillment of redemption in His sufferings.**

Finally, Jesus thanked His father for His own sufferings. This might strike you as strange to hear, since we read of Jesus’ soul sufferings in the Garden of Gethsemane, hear His cry, “Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me” and listen in astonishment as He writhed in anguish, crying, “My God, My God, Why have You forsaken Me?” However, on the night of His betrayal, Jesus took bread and wine and–taking up each of these symbols of the sufferings that He was about to endure–He “gave thanks.” Jesus thanked His Father that His body would be broken and His blood would be shed. The writer of Hebrews tells us that Jesus, “for the joy set before Him, endured the cross.” Jesus knew that His sufferings were substitutionary and that they would bring many sons to glory. Jesus drank the bitter cup that was placed prospectively before Him in the Garden because, as John Maclaurin so astutely observed, “he had a still greater aversion to (His people having to drink it), than to drinking of it Himself.” Jesus thanked His Father for the hell that He would endure on the cross because He knew that it would result in the redemption of those that the Father had given to Him.

In short, the three things for which Jesus expressed thanksgiving were all bound up in the work of redemption. In this, Jesus teaches us that above all the things that we should be thankful for–not just on one day in November, but every day of our lives–is the redemption that we have in His blood, the forgiveness of our sins. The Apostle Paul and Peter surely understand this. When Paul opened his letter to the church in Ephesus he started with a declaration of thanksgiving to God for the redemption that we have in Christ: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ…” When the Apostle Peter opened his first epistle he led with the same proclamation of praise and thanksgiving: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to His abundant mercy, has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead…” May God give us grace to learn from our Lord Jesus and the example of the Apostles that for which we ought to continually express gratitude to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—145**

**EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: *PSALM 145 #2519***[***https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjZpKD0ke3sAhWqKDQIHSy6AJIQFjAAegQIAxAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.spurgeongems.org%2Fsermon%2Fchs2519.pdf&usg=AOvVaw2a8AiPNAb1yWJv7m5\_qz5K***](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjZpKD0ke3sAhWqKDQIHSy6AJIQFjAAegQIAxAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.spurgeongems.org%2Fsermon%2Fchs2519.pdf&usg=AOvVaw2a8AiPNAb1yWJv7m5_qz5K)

I am going to preach about prayer, so we will read “David’s Psalm of Praise.” Thus we shall have

two parts of true worship.

**Verses 1-2.** *I will extol thee, my God, O king; and I will bless thy name forever and ever. Every day*

*will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name forever and ever.*

Notice how long David expected to praise God. He was going to praise God forever, and then after

that, “forever and ever.” “‘Every day will I bless thee’ that is, when I do not seem to be partaking of any

choice temporal blessing, I will still bless you. When I sit like Job on the dunghill, ‘every day will I

bless thee; and I will praise thy name,’ your character, all that has to do with you, ‘forever and ever.’”

The first two verses are the preface of the Psalm. Now the Psalmist begins his music—

**3*.*** *Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised.*

He is great without bounds. Let Him be praised without end. There is no end to His greatness. Let

there be no end to our adoration.

**3-4.** *And his greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall*

*declare thy mighty acts.*

The fathers shall be the preachers to their sons and the sons shall be the preachers to their sons. The

flaming torch of JEHOVAH’s praise shall be passed from hand to hand all down the centuries. As long

as men shall live, God shall have the praise of the godly. “One generation shall praise your works to

another, and shall declare your mighty acts.”

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**5.** *I will speak of the glorious honor of thy majesty.*

This is a beautiful expression, “I will speak of the glorious honor of thy majesty.” It is a heaped-up

expression. David was in an ecstasy of delight when he wrote it. He did not know how sufficiently to

express his adoration of God. Other men might praise God for themselves, but that was not enough for

David, he must take his own turn at the blessed business. “I will speak of the glorious honor of thy

majesty.”

**5-6.** *And of thy wondrous works. And men shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts: and I will*

*declare thy greatness.*

“And I will declare.” Yes, in comes David’s personal note again. He cannot leave the praises of God

alone, He must take his full share in this heavenly task. I wish that whenever there was work to do for

God, or prayer to be offered or praise to be given to the Lord, you and I would always interject this

personal pronoun, “and I.” You know, perhaps, dear friends, that you never find Bartholomew’s name

by itself in any of the Gospels, it is always somebody else “and *Bartholomew.”* It is well to be a good

helper of other people. And when others are praising the Lord, it is good to come in as David did with

the personal resolve and confession, “and I will declare thy greatness.”

**7*.*** *They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness.*

Mark every word in this choice expression, “They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great

goodness.” They shall see this goodness and they shall appreciate it as great goodness. They shall

remember it and so have the memory of God’s great goodness, and then they shall speak of it. “They

shall utter the memory of thy great goodness” and when they have done so, they shall do it again and

again. “They shall *abundantly* utter the memory of thy great goodness.”

**7-8*.*** *And shall sing of thy righteousness. The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion;*

He has no passion, but He is full of compassion. What a mercy that is for us! Sometimes we hear

persons say that God cannot do this or that—that He cannot feel and cannot suffer. That is not true, for

He can do anything that He likes. A god who has no feeling is a poor god, of no service whatever to us,

but *“the LORD* is gracious and full of compassion.”

**8.** *Slow to anger, and of great mercy.*

Oh, what a blessing it is for you and for me that He is slow to anger!

**9*.*** *The LORD is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.*

Whether you search for the far-distant with a telescope, or peer into the minute with the microscope,

the Lord’s tender mercies are found everywhere. Like the light, without which you see nothing, so is the

mercy of God, it enlightens everything. “His tender mercies are over all his works.”

**10.** *All thy works shall praise thee, O LORD; and thy saints shall bless thee*.

“Standing in the inner circle, ‘thy saints’ shall mingle their love with their praise and so ‘shall bless

thee.’ Theirs shall be a choicer, tenderer worship than that of all ‘thy works’ besides.” The works of God

are like a great organ, but it is man who puts his fingers upon the keys and brings forth all the music.

Man is the interpreter of the universe, he praises God as the inanimate creation can never do.

**11.** *They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power;*

I wish we did speak more of such subjects and talk more upon these sacred themes. I do not think

there is ever any deficiency of talk, but I am afraid there is a very great lack of such talk as this, “They

shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power.”

**12.** *To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.*

See how David keeps to the subject with which he began the Psalm, “I will extol thee, my God, my

king.” Yes, and he sings about the king all through this Psalm. His great object is to make us see that

there never was such a king as the infinitely-glorious JEHOVAH, who surpasses all the kings of the

earth.

**13.** *Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom.*

Other kingdoms come and go. They last during their little day and then they vanish away. Look, for

instance, at the kingdom of Alexander the Great, who only reigned for about twelve years and when he

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died left no successor. We talk of great earthly monarchs, they are but monarchs of an hour compared

with the kingdom of JEHOVAH. Well might David say to Him, “Thy kingdom is an everlasting

kingdom.”

**13.** *And thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.*

What kind of a King is this whose kingdom is everlasting and what are the acts that make Him

famous? Notice the first thing He is said to do.

**14.** *The LORD upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down.*

This is His glory. This is the majesty of the King of kings, that He takes notice of the poor and weak.

The compassion of God is to a great extent the glory of God. That He has such tender mercies toward

the unworthy is the subject of the loudest of our songs. “JEHOVAH upholdeth all that fall,” that is, such

as would fall were it not for His upholding. JEHOVAH lifts up all those who have fallen and raises up

those who are bowed down. Blessed be His holy name!

**15.** *The eyes of all wait upon thee.*

What a King is this who must feed all His subjects and who must have all His subjects depend upon

Him alone! “The eyes of all wait upon thee.”

**15.** *And thou givest them their meat in due season.*

It is an act of grace, not of debt, “Thou *givest* them their meat.” Did you ever think of the vast

variety of the separate sorts of food that the Lord provides for each of His creatures He has formed? The

meat that feeds an elephant would not feed a lion. That which feeds a lion would not feed a sparrow.

That which feeds a sparrow would not satisfy the fish of the sea. To every creature God gives its own

food. “Thou givest them their meat in due season.”

The fruits of the earth do not ripen all at once, but the various harvests succeed each other. Notice

how each of the many flowers is full of honey just at the time when the particular insect which is to

come down into the flower-bell is needing that nectar to feed upon. It is marvelous to see how God has

timed creation to the ticking of a watch, and when the flower is ready, then comes the fly, the bee, the

butterfly, or the moth that shall be fed thereby. “You give them their meat in due season.”

**16.** *Thou openest thine hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.*

As men feed doves in their courtyard, carrying down to them their little handful of food and opening

the hand to pour it out, so does God feed all living creatures readily and easily enough by the simple

opening of His hand. But He does it. He satisfies the desire of every living thing and He will satisfy your

desire, dear soul, if you take it to Him. You say, perhaps, that you are very poor. Well, then, cry to Him.

He has never failed His creatures yet, and He will not fail you. He hears the young ravens when they cry

and He will hear you, a man created in the image of God, when you cry to Him.

**17-18.** *The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. The LORD is nigh unto all*

*them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.*

As the omnipresent deity, the Lord is not far from any of us, but there is a peculiar nearness of God

to His people—a nearness of knowledge, a nearness of affection, a nearness of heart by which He looks

upon them as His own special portion, His own peculiar heritage. “JEHOVAH is nigh unto all them that

call upon him.” That is the name of His people, they are a calling people, they are a praying people, and

they pray to Him “in truth.” There are some who offer the mockery of pretended prayer, but God is not

near to them in the special sense in which He “is nigh unto all them that call upon him in truth.”

**19.** *He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him.*

“He will fulfill”—He will *fill full*—“the desire of them that fear him.” If you fear Him, you need not

fear any lack, indeed, you have nothing at all that you need to fear.

**19-20.** *He also will hear their cry, and will save them. The LORD preserveth all them that love him:*

*but all the wicked will he destroy.*

These two things always go together, as surely as the Lord does the one, He will do the other. While

He preserves His saints, He will certainly destroy the wicked.

**21.** *My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD:*

God move us, each one to do this! Then with the Psalmist we may fitly say,

**21.** *And let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.*

Conclusion of Spurgeon’s sermon on Psalm 145 at [*https://www.ccel.org/ccel/spurgeon/sermons25.xxvii.html*](https://www.ccel.org/ccel/spurgeon/sermons25.xxvii.html)

II. In the second place, we shall very briefly note THE MOTIVES FOR THIS ABUNDANT UTTERANCE.

 These are right at our fingertips. The first is because we cannot help it. The goodness of God demands that we should speak of it. If the Lord Jesus, Himself, should charge His people to be silent as to His goodness, they would scarcely be able to obey the command. They would, like the man that was healed, blaze abroad the mighty work that He had done. But, bless His name, He has not told us to be quiet—He allows us to abundantly utter the memory of His great goodness! The stones of the street would cry out as we went along if we did not speak of His love!

Some of you good people seldom speak of the goodness of God! Why is this? I wonder how you can be so coldly quiet. "Oh," said one in his first love, "I must speak or I shall burst" and we have sometimes felt the same when the restrained testimony was as fire within our bones! Is it not a sacred instinct to tell what we feel within? The news is too good to keep! Indulge to the fullest the holy propensity of your renewed nature! Your soul says, "Speak," and if etiquette says, "Hush, they will think you a fanatic," regard it not, but speak aloud and let them think you are a fanatic if they please! Sir, play the organ very softly when the subject is your own praise, but when you come to the praises of God, pull out all the stops—thunders of music are all too little for His infinite goodness!

Another motive for abundantly uttering the praises of God is that other voices are clamorous to drown it. What a noisy world this is with its conflicting and discordant cries. "Lo here," cries one. "Lo there," shouts another. This uproar would drown the notes of God's praise unless His people uttered it again and again! The more there is said against our God, the more should we speak for Him. Whenever you hear a man curse, it would be wise to say aloud, "Bless the Lord." Say it seven times for every time he curses and make him hear it. Perhaps he will want to know what you are doing and you will then have an opportunity of asking what he is doing—and he will have more difficulty in explaining himself than you will in explaining yourself.

Try, if you can, to make up for the injuries done to the dear and sacred name of God by multiplying your praises in proportion as you hear Him spoken ill of. I say unless you give forth abundant utterance, God's praise will be buried under heaps of error, blasphemy, ribaldry, nonsense and idle talk! Abundantly utter it so that some of it, at least, may be heard! Praise the Lord abundantly because it will benefit you to do so. How bright the past looks when we begin to praise God for it. We say, "I am the man that has seen affliction," and we are to fill the cup of memory with gall and wormwood—but when we see the goodness of God in it all, we turn the kerchief with which we wiped our tears into a flag of victory—and with holy praise, in the name of our God, we wave the banner!

As for the present, if you think of God's mercies, how different it seems. A man comes to his dinner table and does not enjoy what is there because he misses an expected dainty. But if he were as poor as some people, he would not turn his nose up, but would bless the goodness which has given him so much more than he deserves! Some I know, even among Christians, are growlers in general and always finding fault. The best things in the world are not good enough for them. Ah, my Brother, abundantly utter the memory of God's goodness and you will find nothing to grumble about—nothing to complain about—but everything to rejoice in! As for the future, if we remember God's goodness, how joyfully we shall march into it. There is the same goodness for tomorrow as for yesterday and the same goodness for old age as for youth—the same God to bless me when I grow gray as when I was a babe upon my mother's breast. Therefore, forward to the future without hesitation or suspicion, abundantly uttering the loving kindness of the Lord.

Again, I think we ought to do this because of the good it does to other people. If you abundantly talk of God's goodness you are sure to benefit your neighbors. Many are comforted when they hear of God's goodness to their friends. Draw a long face and lament the trials of the way—sit down with somber brethren and enjoy a little comfortable misery and see whether crowds will ask to share your vinegar.—

"While here our various needs we mourn, United groans ascend on high,"

says Dr. Watts, and I am afraid he speaks the truth, but very few will be led in this way to resolve—"We will go with these people, for we perceive that God is with them." Is it good reasoning if men say, "These people are so miserable that they must be on the way to Heaven"? We may hope they are, for they evidently need some better place to live, but then it may be questioned if such folks would not be wretched even in Heaven!

You smile, dear Friends, as if you said you would not be much attracted by sanctimonious misery, nor do I think you would. Therefore do not try it yourselves, but, on the contrary, talk much of the goodness of the Lord! Wear a smiling face! Let your eyes sparkle and go through the world as if you are not slaves under the lash, or prisoners in bonds, but the Lord's free men! We have glorious reasons for being happy—let us be so and soon we shall hear persons asking, "What is this? Is this religion? I always thought religious people felt bound to be down in the dumps and to go mourning and sighing all their days." When they see your joy they will be tempted to come to Christ! There is a blessed seductiveness in a holy, happy life. Praise, then, His name! Praise His name forevermore! Abundantly utter the memory of His great goodness and you will bring many to Christ!

Such happy utterance will help, also, to comfort your own Christian friends and fellow sufferers. There is a deal of misery in the world—just now more than usual. Many are sorrowing from various causes. Therefore, my dear Friends, be happier than you ever were. That venerable man of God, now in Heaven, our dear old father Dransfield, when it was a very foggy morning in November, used to always come into the vestry before the sermon and say, "It is a dreary morning, dear Pastor. We must rejoice in the Lord more than usual. Things around us are dark, but within and above all is bright. I hope we shall have a very happy service today." He would shake hands with me and smile till he seemed to carry us all into the middle of summer. What if it is bad weather? Bless the Lord that it is not worse than it is! We are not altogether in Egyptian darkness—the sun does shine now and then—and we are sure it is not blown out.

So, when we are sick and ill, let us thank God that we shall not be ill forever, for there is a place where the inhabitants are no more sick. And now, today, if your harps have been hanging on the willows, take them down! If you have not praised the Lord as you should, begin to do so! Wash your months and get rid of the sour flavor of murmuring about bad trade and bad weather! Sweeten your lips with the pleasant confection of praise. I will tell you this, Brothers and Sisters, if any of you shall confess to me that you have sinned by going too far in blessing God, I will, for once, become a priest and give you absolution! I never tried my hand at that business, before, but I think I can manage as much. Praise God extravagantly if you can. Try it! I wish you would say within yourself, "I will go beyond all boundaries in this matter," for there are no boundaries to the deserving of an ever-blessed God!

Lastly, let us praise and bless God because it is the way in which He is glorified. We cannot add to His Glory, for it is infinite in itself—but we can make it to be more widely known by simply stating the truth about Him. Don't you want to give honor to God? Would you not lay down your life that the whole earth might be filled with His Glory? Well, if you cannot cover the earth with His praises as the waters cover the sea, you can at least contribute your portion to the flood! Oh, keep not back your praises, but bless and magnify His name from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same!

It will lift earth upward and heavenward if we can all unite in praise—we shall see it rising as it were beneath our feet—and ourselves rising with it until we shall stand as upon the top of some lofty Alp that has pierced the vault of Heaven! And we shall be among the angels, feeling as they feel, doing as they do and losing ourselves as they lose themselves in the eternal hallelujah of, "Glory, and honor, and majesty, and power, and dominion, and might be unto Him that sits upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever."

Kevin de Young’s blog at [*https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevin-deyoung/gratitude-to-gods-glory/*](https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevin-deyoung/gratitude-to-gods-glory/)

For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God. ([*2 Corinthians 4:15*](https://www.esv.org/2%20Corinthians%204%3A15/))

The Heidelberg Catechism is famous for its threefold outline of Christian theology: guilt, grace, and gratitude. We are guilty sinners before God. God saves us from guilt by his grace. We respond to this grace with heartfelt gratitude. You could add a fourth strand-glory. When we respond to grace with gratitude, God gets glory.

[Psalm 50:23](https://www.esv.org/Psalm%2050%3A23/) says, “The one who offers thanksgiving as his sacrifice glorifies me.”  We often think of thanksgiving as a family holiday, or something we give perfunctorily before meals, or something our mother commanded of us when we were in a rotten mood. But being thankful goes deeper, or, I should say, it goes higher. Gratitude makes much of God because it shows (1) that God is the author of all that is good and (2) that we love the Giver more than the gifts.

Paul explained that he ministered for the sake of the Corinthians so that more people might receive grace, so that more people might be thankful, so that more glory might go to God. What marvelous, gospel-proclaiming, God-glorifying logic! When we minister faithfully, God gets glory every step of the way.

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him.
Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.]

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely
on my account.

Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven,
for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

*Matthew 5:1-12*

Sovereign God,
we worship You
and we acknowledge that You know all of those
who suffer in Your name.

We remember those who are imprisoned for their faith
and ask that they would join with the Apostle Paul
to see that even though they remain captive,
their chains have furthered the gospel,
not frustrated it.

May they inspire and embolden their fellow believers
to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly.

God of all comfort,
for those who are tortured both in body and mind,
give them the grace to endure
and to see their suffering as part of following in Christ’s footsteps.

Merciful God,
for those asked to pay the ultimate price;
who are martyred because of their love for You,
may they truly know Christ
and the power of His resurrection
and the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings,
becoming like Him in His death.

Father God,
for those who are widowed and orphaned
may they know the comfort that comes from Your promised presence
even when they walk through the valley.

May they be strengthened by Your Spirit,
enabling them to rejoice with the psalmist
as they proclaim that the Lord will not abandon them in death.

Heavenly Father,
we ask that You would make us ever mindful of our brothers and sisters around the world
who need us to stand with them
as they suffer in Your name.

Teach us what it means
to overcome by the blood of the Lamb
and by the word of our testimony;
we pray that we would not love our lives so much as to shrink from death.
O Lord, hear our prayer.

From The Gospel Coalition
at [*https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/trevin-wax/a-prayer-for-persecuted-christians/*](https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/trevin-wax/a-prayer-for-persecuted-christians/)