

Praying with Thankful Hearts (1 Chronicles 16:7-36, Philippians 1:1-11 and 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10)

18-Jan-26

1 Chronicles 16:7-36

7 That day David first appointed Asaph and his associates to give praise to the Lord in this manner:

8 Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name;
make known among the nations what he has done.

9 Sing to him, sing praise to him;
tell of all his wonderful acts.

10 Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.

11 Look to the Lord and his strength;
seek his face always.

12 Remember the wonders he has done,
his miracles, and the judgments he pronounced,

13 you his servants, the descendants of Israel,
his chosen ones, the children of Jacob.

14 He is the Lord our God;
his judgments are in all the earth.

15 He remembers his covenant forever,
the promise he made, for a thousand generations,

16 the covenant he made with Abraham,
the oath he swore to Isaac.

17 He confirmed it to Jacob as a decree,
to Israel as an everlasting covenant:

18 “To you I will give the land of Canaan
as the portion you will inherit.”

19 When they were but few in number,
few indeed, and strangers in it,

20 they wandered from nation to nation,
from one kingdom to another.

21 He allowed no one to oppress them;
for their sake he rebuked kings:

22 “Do not touch my anointed ones;
do my prophets no harm.”

23 Sing to the Lord, all the earth;
proclaim his salvation day after day.

24 Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvellous deeds among all peoples.

25 For great is the Lord and most worthy of praise;
he is to be feared above all gods.

26 For all the gods of the nations are idols,
but the Lord made the heavens.

27 Splendour and majesty are before him;
strength and joy are in his dwelling place.

28 Ascribe to the Lord, all you families of nations,
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

29 Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;
bring an offering and come before him.
Worship the Lord in the splendour of his holiness.

30 Tremble before him, all the earth!
The world is firmly established; it cannot be moved.

31 Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad;
let them say among the nations, “The Lord reigns!”

32 Let the sea resound, and all that is in it;
let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them!

33 Let the trees of the forest sing,
let them sing for joy before the Lord,
for he comes to judge the earth.

34 Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his love endures forever.

35 Cry out, “Save us, God our Savior;
gather us and deliver us from the nations,
that we may give thanks to your holy name,
and glory in your praise.”

36 Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel,
from everlasting to everlasting.

Then all the people said “Amen” and “Praise the Lord.”

Philippians 1:1-11

1 Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus,
To all God's holy people in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers
and deacons:

2 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thanksgiving and Prayer

3 I thank my God every time I remember you. 4 In all my prayers for all of you, I
always pray with joy 5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first
day until now, 6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you
will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

7 It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart
and, whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you
share in God's grace with me. 8 God can testify how I long for all of you with the
affection of Christ Jesus.

9 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in
knowledge and depth of insight, 10 so that you may be able to discern what is
best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, 11 filled with the fruit
of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of
God.

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

1 Paul, Silas and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:
Grace and peace to you.

Thanksgiving for the Thessalonians' Faith

2 We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our
prayers. 3 We remember before our God and Father your work produced by
faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our
Lord Jesus Christ.

4 For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you, 5
because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power,
with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for
your sake. 6 You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the
message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. 7
And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. 8 The
Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith
in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say

anything about it, 9 for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, 10 and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

It would be good to have your Bibles opened up at 1 Chronicles 16 - Philippians 1 and 1 Thessalonians 1 – we will be flicking back and forth through these passages.

There's a **sermon outline** for you to take **notes**.

Let me **pray** first. Let's pray...

Intro

We are continuing with Part 3 of our 4-part series on prayer

We defined prayer as...

[Slide-Prayer]

Pouring out our hearts to God, bringing every need and thanksgiving to Him, as we draw near in trust and confidence through Christ.

[Slide-Part 1]

In Part 1 - we said as friends of God - **we should build an altar for God** - and as friends of God we should pray to God in **adoration** and **pray for others**

[Slide-Part 2]

In Part 2 - we said we **must pray and confess our sins** (like King David in psalm 51) **so we are forgiven and have a pure and contrite heart**

[Slide-Thankful]

This week we are looking at **praying with thankful hearts**

One of the things I've noticed about our society and our culture in general is that many **people neglect to say 'thank you'** and it can be the same with our prayers - we can tend to only spend time in prayer when we want God's help - and we neglect to thank Him for who He is and what He's done!

A minister was dining in a crowded restaurant. Just as he was about to begin his meal, a man approached and asked if he could join him. The minister invited the man to have a seat. Then, as was his custom, the minister bowed his head in prayer. When he opened his eyes, the other man asked, "Do you have a headache?" The minister replied, "No, I don't." The other man asked, "Well, is there something wrong with your food?" The minister replied, "No, I was simply thanking God for providing the food, as I always do before I eat." The man said, "Oh, you're one of those, are you? Well, I want you to know I never give thanks. I earn my money by the sweat of my brow and I don't have to give thanks to anybody when I eat. I've provided the food so I just start eating!"

The minister says "Yes, you're just like my dog. That's what he does too!"

I have **3 headings** – this morning - which might help us to frame our prayers of thanks

[Slide-Headings]

1. Give thanks to God **for what He has done in the past** – **Looking back!**

2. Give thanks to God **for what He is doing now** - **Looking around!**

3. Give thanks to God for what **He will do in the future – Looking forward!**

We are going to look at a **prayer from the OT** - from **1 Chronicles 16**

(**traditionally the author is Ezra**)

And

Then **2 prayers from the Apostle Paul from the NT** - **Philippians 1:1-11** and **1**

Thessalonians 1:1-10

Hopefully we can learn some tips on thanking God in prayer...

[Slide-1st Heading]

1st then – Give thanks to God -for what He has done in the past – Look Back!

Give thanks to God for what He has done in the past

Please turn to - OT Reading - 1 Chronicles 16 verses 8 to 22

Which gives thanks to God for what He has done

V8 – God has **made known what He has done publicly amongst the nations – and we have it recorded in the Bible**

V9 and V12 – God has **wonders and miracles** –

V12 and V14 – God has **pronounced judgements**

VV16-17 – God made **covenant promises to the patriarchs – Abraham, Isaac and Jacob**

V18 – God made **a promise to give Jacob the land of Canaan**

V19 and V21- **God protected His people from oppressors and foreign kings – when they were weak and only a few in number**

V22 – **God guarded His chosen ones and prophets**

In a nutshell – God preserved His people Israel throughout their History – so that He could send a descendant of Abraham – Jesus – who would bless all people on Earth!

And even up to our time - God has preserved His people – His universal Church - followers of Jesus - despite intense persecution – and despite many attempts to get rid of God's Word – the Bible – over the centuries

Now Please turn to – NT reading - Philippians 1:3–5

Paul – v3 – thanks God every time he remembers the Philippians in the Church in Philippi - and - v5 - thanks God that **He has brought Paul and the Philippians together in gospel partnership.** And because of that partnership – we have Paul's letter to the Philippians in the NT – which has wonderful teaching in it – and it's a blessing to us!

Now Please turn to - 1 Thessalonians 1:4–6, 9

Paul writes to the Thessalonians in the Church of Thessalonica and thanks God – because He knows v4 – they are **loved by God and chosen by God!** Their faith is not an accident but the result of God's gracious choice.

And Paul is thankful – v5 - **the gospel came with God's power**, not just words – but also, the **Holy Spirit brought conviction and real change.**

And Paul is thankful – v6 – **the Philippians imitated Jesus**, receiving the message of Jesus with joy even though it brought suffering.

And v9 – Paul is thankful - **the Philippians turned to God from the idols they used to worship** —and he's thankful **their faith involved real repentance and a complete change of direction.**

Application

What about us?

What has God done in the past for us that we can give thanks for?

The list is endless really!

But our **spiritual blessings** include...

- The moment **God opened our heart to believe in Jesus** (Acts 16:14)
- God has **given us His Son** - so we have **forgiveness and eternal life** (John 3:16, 1 John 1:9)
- God has given us **His Word** – as a lamp and guide for our life!
- God has given us the **Holy Spirit** [HS]- Anne Graham says the HS is like an engagement ring because we – as Jesus' Church - are the bride and Jesus is the groom – and the HS – as the engagement ring - is the guarantee we belong to Jesus and the guarantee of the promise - **Jesus will return**
- God has given us **the gift of prayer** - and we are thankful for many **answered prayers**
- God has given us **a church family** - and **we are partners in the gospel** - we have spiritual shepherds [a minister and elders] – we have **mentors** – and **prayer partners** – we have **brothers and sisters in Christ**

Then there's **physical blessings**

- **Family, friends and loved ones who give and receive love** – we have the blessings of **being a parent or grandparent** – and we have **the blessings we receive from our parents, our children and grandchildren**
- We have **food, clothes, shelter, finance**
- **Seasons of good health, healing from sickness, and the ability to work, to serve, and live active lives** (Psalm 103:2-3; Acts 17:25; Psalm 28:7)
- We have the blessing of **finances** through employment
- **Seasons of joy – celebrations – birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, job or study opportunities, and work achievements**
- We have **community services and government** – designed to keep us safe!
- We have the **beauty of God's creation** – sunrises, sunsets, beaches, mountains, nature, animals (Psalm 19:1, Psalm 104; Genesis 8:22)
- **Rest and refreshment** – holidays and times to rest our weary bodies
- **We can even thank God for the trials we face** – because they help us persevere, learn valuable lessons and help our faith to grow stronger!
- **If we reflect on how God has brought us to where we are now** – we have plenty of reasons to give God thanks

It's particularly helpful for us to be thankful for what God has done in the past – because it reminds us of God's faithfulness to us – and it can relieve our doubts when we think God is not going to help us now or in the future!

As we sang earlier...

Count your many blessings, name them one by one,

And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.

Challenge: When was the last time – we took time to thank God for what He has done for us in the past?

[Slide-2nd heading]

2nd then – Give thanks to God -for what He is doing now – Look Around!

Give thanks to God for what He is doing now

Please turn again to - our OT reading from 1 Chronicles 16:23–27

The author is thankful...

Verse 23

Thankful that **the LORD brings salvation every day** and He is worthy of continual praise.

Verse 24

Thankful that **God's glory and wonderful deeds are known and can be proclaimed to all nations.**

Verse 25

Thankful that **the LORD is great and above all other so-called gods and idols**, and is deserving of our highest praise.

Verse 26

Thankful that **the LORD alone is the true Creator**, while other so-called gods are empty and powerless and imposters!

Verse 27

Thankful that **God reigns in splendour and majesty**, His presence brings strength and joy.

Now Please turn again to our NT reading from Philippians 1:6–8, 9–10 —

Verse 6

Paul is thankful that **God has begun a good work in the Philippians** - their spiritual growth is secure in God's hands.

Verse 7

Paul is thankful for that the Philippians **share a partnership with Paul in God's grace**, even through hardship and imprisonment.

Verse 8

Paul is thankful for **his deep love for them**, a love shaped and sustained by Christ himself.

Verse 9

Paul is thankful that **their love is growing more and more**, guided by godly knowledge and spiritual insight!

Verse 10

Paul is thankful that **they are learning to choose what really matters**, making **good choices** - so their lives will be pure and fruitful for Jesus.

Please turn again to our NT reading from 1 Thessalonians 1:2–3, 7–8 —

Verse 2

Paul is thankful for **the whole church** and remembers them regularly in his prayers.

Verse 3

Paul is thankful for **their faith, love, and hope** — faith that produces good works, love that serves, and hope that endures.

Verse 7

Paul is thankful that **they have become an example to other believers**, showing what genuine Christian faith looks like.

Verse 8

Paul is thankful that **their faith is being spoken about everywhere**, because their witness has spread widely.

Application

If we put those 3 passages together – and we look around us - how can we be thankful to God - for what He is doing now?

We can be thankful...

- **The Good News of Jesus is still being proclaimed today and People are still coming to faith** - Individuals are still turning to Jesus, sometimes quietly, sometimes slowly.
- **Lives are being genuinely changed** - Old patterns of life are being left behind; new desires are forming. Repentance and perseverance continue even in the middle of struggles.
- God is still **continuing the good work He began** in each of us in our Church Family. This happens through spiritual growth – when we pray - read and study the Bible - and when we are taught from the Bible! [**Sign-up sheet for Bible Study in foyer – and don't forget our prayer meeting on Tuesday**]
- We can be thankful that – **our faith is producing action** - Believers are serving, giving, forgiving, and loving in costly ways. Faith is being expressed through works of love (1 Thess 1:3) – In our church we have **spiritual**

shepherds, Bible study leaders, Jaffa leaders, SRE teachers and ministry leaders

- **The Love of Jesus is being shown** – through our **mercy ministries** – like **P.A.T.** and **P.W.A.** – and through **hospitality** – like **morning tea** – and through **pastoral care**
- **The hope of Heaven** – is sustaining people through hardship. As Christians, we persevere through illness, grief, opposition, or uncertainty – knowing we have the glory of Heaven to look forward to
- **Churches continue to exist and witness** - Despite weaknesses, despite decline, despite discouragement, despite attacks from Satan. Churches still worship, pray, teach the Bible, baptize people, celebrate the Lord's Supper and evangelise.
- **God is still being glorified** - through quiet obedience; faithfulness; and persistent prayer. God is also glorified in our perseverance, resilience and endurance!
- **We can also be thankful for technology** – Emails; Bible Apps; Prayer Apps; Online Bible Study; access to online Bible commentaries and sermons; and of course our prayer chain!
- **Then of course – we also have the **daily blessings of God's provision** – and the **blessings of family and friends**.**

Sometimes we take for granted what we have!

Sometimes we look at the negatives and we don't see all the things we can be thankful for! Even the simple things!

Scottish minister Alexander Whyte was known for his uplifting prayers in the pulpit. He always found something to be grateful for. One Sunday morning the weather was so gloomy that one church member thought to himself, "Surely the preacher won't think of anything to thank the Lord for on such a wretched day like this." Much to his surprise, however, Rev Whyte began by praying, "We thank Thee, O God, that the weather is not always like this."

Challenge: When was the last time – we took time to thank God for what He is doing right now?

[Slide-3rd Heading]

3rd then – Give thanks to God -for what He will do!

Give thanks to God for what He will do

Please turn again to - our OT reading from 1 Chronicles 16:28–36

Verses 28–29

We can be thankful that **all peoples will one day recognise the LORD's glory**, give Him the honour due His name, and worship Him rightly.

Verses 30–31

We can be thankful that **the LORD reigns as King**, ruling securely over the world, and that His kingship will be openly proclaimed.

Verses 32–33

We can be thankful that **all creation will rejoice** because the LORD is coming to **judge the earth with justice and righteousness**.

Verse 34

We can be thankful that **the LORD is forever good**, and His steadfast love will never end.

Verses 35–36

We can be thankful that **God will finally save and gather His people**, and that He will be praised forever, from generation to generation.

Please turn again to our NT reading from Philippians 1:6, 10–11

Verse 6

We can be thankful that **God will finish the good work He has begun in His people.**

Verse 10

We can be thankful that **God is preparing His people to be pure and blameless for the day of Christ.**

Verse 11

We can be thankful that **God will fill His people with righteousness – because of Jesus – and God deserves all glory and praise for that!**

Please turn to again to our NT reading from 1 Thessalonians 1 v10

Ultimately - we can be thankful that **Jesus will return - one day. And He will rescue His people from God's wrath and from the coming judgment.**

I pray we can see there is a lot to be thankful for!

One last challenge: Perhaps you could write a prayer of thanks – and if you would like to send it to me – I will publish it in our prayer news - it can be anonymous if you wish!

Conclusion

[Slide-Conclusion Heading]

To finish up then...

The author of Chronicles teaches us to thank God by **remembering His mighty acts.**

The Apostle Paul teaches us to thank God by **recognising His grace at work in ordinary people.**

And together they teach us that gratitude is not naïve optimism — it is **deep confidence in a faithful God.**

So when we pray:

- We don't just thank God when life is easy.
- We thank God **because He is faithful**, even when life is hard.
- We thank God **not only for what we can see**, but for what He has promised to complete.

[Slide]

A thankful heart changes how we pray:

- It turns - **anxiety into trust.**
- It turns - **complaining into hope.**
- It turns - **weariness into perseverance.**

And in a world that is quick to grumble and slow to give thanks,
a thankful praying church becomes a powerful witness.

So as we leave this morning, I pray we are people who:

- remember God's faithfulness,
- recognise God's work among us,
- and wait with confidence for the day when Jesus returns and every prayer of thanksgiving is finally fulfilled.

“Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; His love endures forever.” Amen.

Let's pray...

Faithful God,

*we thank you for all you have done,
for all you are doing among us now,
and for the hope you give us in Jesus.*

*Teach us to pray with thankful hearts,
to see your grace at work,
and to trust that you will finish what you have begun.*

In Jesus' Name, we pray. Amen.