



31
Days of
Thanksgiving

by Brigett Holmes



31 Day of Thanksgiving

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Scripture quoted in ESV unless noted otherwise.

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Why focus on Thanksgiving for a whole month?

Sometimes we need to really dig into the meat of Scripture to uncover the hidden truths it holds, but often we need to just be washed by the Word. Reading verses that are familiar or that do not seem to contain deep spiritual content is not a waste, for we are told that God's Word will not return void. Instead these times allow the Spirit to wash and cleanse us in the Word, allowing us to see life with fresh perspective.

My hope and prayer is that you allow these verses to wash over you each day, allowing the Spirit to soften your heart and change your focus. Seeing all things through the light of God's blessings to be used for His glory can produce an attitude of thankfulness overflowing from a heart of joy.

To make it easier on you, I have included the Scripture verses and not just the references for each day. While trying to keep this study concise, I have still tried to include enough verses to understand the context of the passage. With that said, I still highly recommend reading the Scriptures surrounding each day's reading. Context is of utmost importance when reading and study God's Word.

Brigett

First things first.

Before I began studying thankfulness and gratitude, I thought it would be wise to look up and define the words. After all, it is usually good to know exactly what you're studying.

Thankful- feeling or expressing gratitude; appreciation; conscious of benefit received; expressive of thanks; well pleased

Gratitude- the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness.

Synonyms- gratefulness, thankfulness, thanks, appreciation, indebtedness

Latin- "gratus"- pleasing or thankful. We get the root word from this Latin word. To feel grateful is to feel thankful for something. Gratitude is a feeling of thankfulness.

I just love some of the definitions above. To be conscious of the benefits from God and be well pleased with them should invoke indebtedness.

Day 1

Give thanks to God for those on your prayer list.

Philemon 1:4-5 “⁴I thank my God always when I remember you in my prayers, ⁵ because I hear of your love and of the faith that you have toward the Lord Jesus and for all the saints,”

Paul, a man who definitely prayed often and for many people, was often found giving thanks for those he prayed for. He was specific in praying for those he ministered to and specific in giving thanks for how they ministered to him and furthered God’s kingdom.

Let your intercession be filled with thanksgiving to Jesus your Advocate.

Day 2

We are commanded to give thanks to God.

Psalm 50:14-15 “Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and perform your vows to the Most High, and call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me.”

Here we are reminded that it wasn't the sacrifice of animals that truly pleased God. It is the sacrifice of a thankful heart. Often it will seem like a sacrifice to be thankful, but it is during these times we see God glorified all the more.

Give thanks to God Most High, even when it's hard and you don't feel like it.

Day 3

We should include thanksgiving when petitioning the Lord.

Philippians 4:6 “do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

One of the most familiar verses on thanksgiving, but we often stop at verse six. Yes, go to God in prayer, petition Him, cry out to Him, but offer up thanks for all He has already done AND all He WILL do. As you recall His faithfulness in the past, it will encourage your faith in Him for the future. And the result is His peace.

Even in times of need, desperation or anxiety, give thanks to Jesus, your Prince of Peace.

Day 4

It is a good thing to give thanks to the Lord

Psalm 92:1; 4 “It is good to give thanks to the LORD, to sing praises to your name, O Most High;
For you, O LORD, have made me glad by your work; at the works of your hands I sing for joy.”

Have you ever had a day where you just felt like everything you did was wrong? I know I have. But when we offer up thanks to the Lord, we can rest assured that it is a good thing. Look around at the works of His hands-nature, a sunrise, a child. These should cause us to pause and give thanks for all the beauty that surrounds us, if we just open our eyes to see it.

Do you need to do some good today? Give thanks to the Lord your Creator.

Day 5

True thanksgiving will move us to action, not just speech.

1 Chronicles 16:4,7-8 “Then he appointed some of the Levites as ministers before the ark of the LORD, to invoke, to thank, and to praise the LORD, the God of Israel. 7 Then on that day David first appointed that thanksgiving be sung to the LORD by Asaph and his brothers. 8 Oh give thanks to the LORD; call upon his name; make known his deeds among the peoples!”

The Ark had just been brought to Jerusalem. David sang and danced before it, and then he appointed the Levites and priests to give praise and thanks to the Lord. The word thank in verse four is “yodah” and means to revere or worship with extended hands. Basically, they were singing, praising and thanking the Lord with arms lifted high in worship. It was more than a passing word. It was an expression of their whole body.

How is the Lord, the God of Israel, calling you to worship and thank Him today?

Day 6

Give thanks for the hard, painful times of life.

Matt 26:26-29 “²⁶ Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.” ²⁷ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you, ²⁸ for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. ²⁹ I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.”

As many times as I've read and heard this passage, it had never occurred to me that Jesus gave thanks for both the bread and the cup of this meal. Specifically, the two items that represented His body about to be broken and blood poured out. He thanked God for it. Not because He wanted to suffer, but because He knew Sunday was coming.

Give thanks to God in the midst of the pain, knowing that Jesus, the Lamb of God, holds you and eternity in His nail-scarred hands.

Day 7

All creatures in heaven give thanks to God.

Rev 4:8-12, 7:11-12 “⁸ And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!” ⁹ And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, ¹⁰ the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever.”

“¹¹ And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹² saying, “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.”

The angels, elders, and four living creatures do not rest day or night, but continually give honor and praise, glory and thanks to Him Who sits on the throne. Our Lord deserves and gets continual praise, but He also desires continual praise and thanks from our lips as well.

Give thanks to the Lord God Almighty now and you will be well practiced for praise in heaven.

Day 8

Give thanks for the little in your life.

John 6:11 “Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted.”

Another familiar passage where Jesus feeds the 5000 by multiplying the five loaves and two fish. But before they were ever multiplied, Jesus gave thanks for the little that was given to Him. It is always amazing what God does when we thank Him for our little and give it over to Him to use.

Give thanks for the small things expecting God, your Bread of Life, to do big things with them.

Day 9

Thanksgiving should be a daily offering.

Hebrews 13: 15-16 “¹⁵ Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of *our* lips, giving thanks to His name. ¹⁶ But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.” (NKJV)

The wording “continually offer” is a reference to the Old Testament daily sacrificing in the temple. No longer are we to offer up animals as a sacrifice thanks to the once for all sacrifice of Jesus. Now our sacrifice is praise and thanksgiving. But just as the Old Testament sacrifice was a daily event, so our praise and thanks should also be given daily.

Offer thanks to God, your Priest and Prophet, today that is well pleasing.

Day 10

Give thanks to God for answered prayer.

2 Cor 1:8-11 “⁸ For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. ⁹ Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead. ¹⁰ He delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again. ¹¹ You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many.”

Paul and his companions were at the point of death, yet God spared them. Paul knew many had been praying for them and they would and should now offer up thanks for their answered prayer. As often as we’ve asked God to answer a prayer, we should thank Him that many times for answering.

Give thanks to God, your Savior, for your answered prayers.

Day 11

Give thanks to God in the midst of evil.

Daniel 6:10 “¹⁰ When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously.”

Worshiping God had just been banned. Evil surrounded him. Yet Daniel continued to pray and thank God-as he had done previously. We must make prayer and thanksgiving a lifestyle. Daniel’s prayers were not lists of wants. Despite all he had been through, even in the midst of evil, he still found reasons to give thanks to God.

While surrounded by evil, give thanks that Jehovah is still Sovereign God.

Day 12

Give thanks in agreement that all wisdom is from God.

Matt 11:25 ²⁵ At that time Jesus declared, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children;”

Here we see Jesus thanking the Father that some things were hidden from the wise yet revealed to the “little children”. The word for thank in this verse is “exomologeō” which translates “to acknowledge or agree fully.” Jesus is acknowledging that it is not man’s wisdom that reveals spiritual or heavenly things, but God’s. And He often lavishes His wisdom on the humble and “uneducated”. (James 1:5)

Ask God, the Good Shepherd, for wisdom and thank Him for it, knowing He will answer your prayer.

Day 13

Thank God for “unanswered prayers. (When He says “no”.)

Eph 5:17-21 “¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit,¹⁹ addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, ²⁰ giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Give thanks always and for everything. Ouch! That is hard. But if we look at the beginning of the verse, “understand what the will of the Lord is,” it becomes bearable. Our will is often not God’s. God’s will is for us to glorify Him, and this often happens more by going through the storms of life instead of them being calmed. The purpose of prayer is not to change God’s will, but to line our hearts to His will.

Give thanks that the Lord your Banner accomplishes His purposes even during the storms.

Day 14

God's presence produces thanksgiving.

Psalm 100:4 “Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name!”

Before we even enter His presence, at His gates, there should be thanksgiving and praise on our lips. His presence will cause us to give thanks. And thanksgiving opens the gate of our hearts to see God’s presence at work around us.

Thank the Great I AM for His presence and work in your life.

Day 15

Humility is the foundation of true thanksgiving.

Luke 18:11-14 “¹¹ The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’ ¹³ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ ¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

The Pharisee’s prayer was focused on himself and all he had done. God took no glory from this, and the man went away never knowing or experiencing God. True thanksgiving focuses on God, yet allows us to experience God’s presence, mercy and grace.

Reflect on where you came from and thank Immanuel, He did not leave you there and is not finished with you yet.

Day 16

Lack of thanksgiving can reveal a lack of love.

Romans 1:20-21 “²⁰ For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. ²¹ For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.”

Those who know God and have submitted their life to Him will live a life that glorifies God and is thankful to Him. Although it may not be popular to say or comfortable to hear, maybe we just don't love God enough. People in love do crazy things that makes no sense to anyone else. They certainly honor and thank the one they love. Do you love God enough?

Thank Jesus, your Bridegroom, for His love for you and ask Him to give you a deeper love for Him.

Day 17

Be thankful that we are always triumphant in Christ.

2 Cor 2:14 “¹⁴ But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere.”

When the Roman Empire was in its prime, victorious generals were led through Rome in a celebratory parade called “The Triumph”. Paul likens our sharing the gospel as we go out to that victory parade. Yet the victory of the gospel received is eternal, unlike the short-lived victories of earthly generals. We will one day be led in ultimate triumph through the streets of heaven. Nothing done for Christ’s or the gospel’s sake is done in vain.

Celebrate and give thanks to the Resurrection and Life for the victories won in Christ for eternity.

Day 18

Give thanks to God that He hears and answers before we even ask.

John 11:40-44 “⁴⁰ Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?” ⁴¹ So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. ⁴² I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me.” ⁴³ When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out.” ⁴⁴ The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.”

Before Jesus even spoke a word for Lazarus to arise, He thanked God for hearing Him. He knew the Father had always heard Him. He was confident of the Father’s attentive ear.

Thank God, Faithful and True, that He knows our needs and is working to supply them before we even ask.

Day 19

The generosity of others should cause us to give thanks to God.

2 Cor 9:10-12 “¹⁰ He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹ You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God. ¹² For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God.”

Notice that Paul is not praying for his own life to be blessed, but for those in the Corinthian church. The Jewish believers were uncertain of the Gentile converts, but as the Gentiles gave to alleviate the needs in the Jerusalem church, it did more than meet physical needs. It also confirmed the Holy Spirit in the Gentiles and produced thanks to God for needs met and kingdom advances.

Thank Jehovah-jireh for those who are blessed to be generous for the Lord (especially if you are one of them).

Day 20

Give thanks to God for completed tasks.

Nehemiah 12:31a,40,43 “³¹ Then I brought the leaders of Judah up onto the wall and appointed two great choirs that gave thanks.

⁴⁰ So both choirs of those who gave thanks stood in the house of God, and I and half of the officials with me;

⁴³ And they offered great sacrifices that day and rejoiced, for God had made them rejoice with great joy; the women and children also rejoiced. And the joy of Jerusalem was heard far away.”

After years of being broken down and much effort to rebuild them, the walls of Jerusalem were finally restored. Such a great undertaking could not have been done without God. Once completed Nehemiah organizes the people and leaders into two large thanksgiving choirs to praise the Lord.

Thank God, the Alpha and Omega, for the completed task in your life.

Day 21

Give thanks to God for Jesus' victory over sin and the grave.

1 Cor 15:55-58 “⁵⁵ ‘O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?’ ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.”

Our ultimate battle is not against others but sin. Jesus conquered sin on the cross and gave us victory through His death and resurrection. Knowing this we can persevere in our work of the Lord, confident our efforts will be rewarded.

Thank Jesus, your Redeemer, for His victory on the cross and the sacrifice He made for you.

Day 22

Give thanks to God before you eat.

Matt 15: 36 “³⁶ he took the seven loaves and the fish, and having given thanks he broke them and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds.”

Again, we find Jesus having compassion on the people and feeding a multitude. And as always, He is seen thanking the Father, regardless of how little it appears to be, before breaking the bread and feeding the multitude. If you consider the very act of eating. In sustaining our life, something else must lose its life. Here in a seemingly mundane act, we see a very vivid picture of a spiritual truth. Only through death (Jesus’) are we given life (eternal).

Thank the Lord, our Sustainer, for the food you will eat today.

Day 23

Give thanks to the Lord when He pours out His grace on others.

1 Cor 1:4-8 “⁴I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge— ⁶even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you— ⁷so that you are not lacking in any gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁸who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Paul was thankful that God poured out His grace on the Corinthian believers when He included them in His kingdom. We should be thankful of how He blesses others in His kingdom-especially in salvation. Are you thankful or jealous when you see others blessed?

Thank the Lord your Master for pouring out His grace in your life and in the life of those around you.

Day 24

Thank God for giving His Son Jesus.

2 Cor 9:12-15 “¹² For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God. ¹³ By their approval of this service, they will glorify God because of your submission that comes from your confession of the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others, ¹⁴ while they long for you and pray for you, because of the surpassing grace of God upon you. ¹⁵ Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!”

As the needs of the Jerusalem church were being met, Paul was thankful of the material things given. But these reminded him of the ultimate gift given by God to meet our deepest need-redemption.

Thank God for His material provisions and Jesus Messiah our spiritual provision.

Day 25

Thanksgiving and sacrifice to God go hand in hand.

Jonah 2:9 “But I with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice to you; what I have vowed I will pay. Salvation belongs to the LORD!”

In the belly of the fish, in the depths of the sea, Jonah commits to follow through with his vow to the Lord. To Jonah, this is a sacrifice, but he says he will do it with thanksgiving. We later read just how hard that is. Sacrificing anything is not easy, but have you tried to do it with a thankful heart?

With a thankful heart, offer your sacrifice to the King of kings.

Day 26

Come in corporate thanksgiving to the Lord.

Psalm 95:1-2 “Oh come, let us sing to the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation! ² Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

These verses call us as a collective group to worship and give thanks. Is it sometimes harder to pour out your praise and thanksgiving with others around? It is not enough to watch others-we must join in. Thanksgiving should be the natural response to God’s presence.

Join in thanks to the Lord, the Rock of your Salvation.

Day 21

Thank God for healing-physical and spiritual.

Luke 17:15-16 “¹⁵ Then one of [the lepers], when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; ¹⁶ and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan.”

Jesus is recorded healing ten lepers in this passage. But only one, when noticing he was healed, returned to give glory and thanks. How often are we like the nine, too busy being caught up in life, the crowd, or even the cure to realize where true healing comes from. And then too busy to give thanks.

Thank God, our Great Physician, who heals our physical and spiritual maladies.

Day 28

Replace sin with thanksgiving.

Eph 5:3-4 “But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. ⁴ Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.”

We all have areas of weakness. Sins that so often tempt us. But if we just try to stop sinning, there is a gap that remains. Time left unfilled; space left quiet. We cannot take something out of our life without replacing it with something. If we truly desire to sin less, break habits, change, we must exchange those things for God, His Word, praise and thanks. A life filled with God will have no room for the world.

Thank the Lord, a Consuming Fire, for filling your life with His Spirit.

Day 29

Give thanks to God for He is holy.

Psalm 30:4 “Sing praises to the LORD, O you his saints, and give thanks to his holy name.”

Our Lord is holy and so is His name. But in our culture today, God’s name is misused and treated every way but holy. The thought of our Lord, or even the mention of His name, should invoke thanksgiving. Why? He is holy; we are not. Yet He is merciful and gracious. (vs 5)

Let your praise be full of thanksgiving to the Lord, the Holy One of Israel.

Day 30

Give thanks to God for every person.

1 Tim 2:1-2 “First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, ²for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.”

Did you notice that we are instructed to pray for and give thanks for all men. Paul goes on to make sure Timothy (and we) understands this is even for the leaders and authorities. That would include the Gentile, Roman leaders who sought to destroy the church. This can only be done when we view them with God’s eyes and see the lost, miserable state they are in. What “Roman” do you need to pray and give thanks for?

Pray and give thanks to the Light of the World for all men.

Day 31

Give thanks to God for everything in all circumstances.

1 Thess 5:16-18 “¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray without ceasing, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

Thankfulness is a character trait of believers. By finding things to be thankful for we become joyful, another trait that true believers should express. The thanks on your lips overflow from a joyful heart.

Give thanks to the Lord of lords, always and for all things.

My hope is that these past thirty-one days have changed your heart, your outlook and your life. Not because you completed this study, but because you opened the Scriptures daily. Allowing the Word of God to wash over you, cleansing, renewing, and refreshing you.

I am so thankful to each of you who have supported me through my blog, social media or in real life. You are such an encouragement to me. My prayer is that each one of you who goes through this study is drawn closer to the Lord, loving Him more and desiring Him deeply.

What are your biggest takeaways from this study? I love hearing from you and would love to hear what you learned. You can always drop me a note at bridgett@2herbitup.com to chat. I read all email and respond personally (though it may take a few days 😊).

You can also find me on Facebook at www.facebook.com/2herbitup and I'm @bridgett.holmes on Instagram.

Thank You

Thank you to my husband and kiddos who put up with Mama on the computer even more than normal while trying to get this study finished. After salvation, you are my richest blessings.

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Of course, the biggest thanks belongs to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. You continually pour out grace upon grace to me, bless me beyond measure, and work abundantly beyond anything I can imagine.

Soli Deo gloria

