

How Can I Say Thanks?

Aspects of Authentic Worship and Praise

"Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."
—I Thessalonians 5:16-18

"Thanks Forever" Psalm 30

"The modern American seldom pauses to give thanks for the simple blessings of life. One reason is that we are used to having so much. We simply assume that we will have all the good things of life. Another reason is that it hurts our pride to be grateful. We do not want to admit that God is the provider of all good things. We are simply His stewards. Being thankful requires humility and faith in God. When we have these, we can be grateful." —Richard B. Douglass

I. EXALTATION OF THE LORD (v. 1)

- A. The pledge of purpose.
- B. The praise for deliverance.

II. CALL TO THE LORD (v. 2)

- A. To call for help.
- B. To acknowledge spiritual healing.

III. RECOGNITION OF THE LORD (v. 3)

- A. Deliverance from death.
- B. Deliverance from condemnation.

IV. PRAISE TO THE LORD (vs. 4, 5)

- A. The essence and expression of thanks (v. 4)
- B. The morning of rejoicing (v. 5)

V. SECURITY IN THE LORD (vs. 6, 7)

- A. The sense of security (v. 6)
- B. The source of security (v. 7)

VI. HOPE IN THE LORD (vs. 8-10)

- A. The cry of the human heart (vs. 8, 9)
- B. The call for mercy and help (v. 10)

VII. JOY IN THE LORD (vs. 11, 12)

- A. Outward expression of inner deliverance (v. 11)
- B. The song of the transformed heart (v. 12)



Albrecht Durer

"Our biggest problem in the church today is this vast majority of Sunday morning Christians who claim to have known the Master's cure and who return not [at other times] to thank Him by presence, prayer, testimony and support of His church. In fact, the whole Christian life is one big "Thank You," the living expression of our gratitude to God for His goodness. But we take Him for granted and what we take for granted we never take seriously." — Vance Havner

FOR THOUGHT, DISCUSSION and HOPEFUL APPLICATION...

1. In I Thessalonians 5:17, the charge to "give thanks" is in the form of a direct order. Can thankfulness, gratitude, appreciation really be legislated? Aren't they really only *emotions*? Are they only *subjective reactions*?
2. David's Psalm 30 presents a formula for the principle of thanks. Discuss how each part has contribution to authentic praise.
3. Further, the Psalm has the marks of *objectivity* in its focus on God. John Fischer, writing on Christian music, commented, *"When we admonish people to praise, don't tell them what they'll get out of it, or what God will get out of it. Tell them to praise Him simply because it is right and reasonable to do so. To attach anything more to this is to presume undue importance upon ourselves."* What are the real purposes of saying thanks to God?
4. Words relating to thanksgiving abound in the Old and New Testament. They are inherent in true worship. What do you think is the real central issue of the mandate to give thanks in all things? Is this really possible? Does it involve praising God for the miseries of life too?
5. In our key text of Psalm 30, the writer thanks God for a number of benefits. Count his blessings in the text and apply them to the life of Christians in the age of grace.