

THE ACT OF WORSHIP - Giving Thanks

1 Thessalonians 5:18 *"In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."* Giving thanks to God the Father, should be a way of life! The English Dictionary defines 'thanksgiving' simply as 'an expression of gratitude to God'. So, if you are a believer, then you have plenty to be grateful for, and therefore, thanking God continuously should not be very difficult.

Thanksgiving is an act of worship. The dictionary says it is 'a public celebration of divine goodness'. **Psalm 95** verse **2** tells us to *"...come before His presence with thanksgiving."* **Psalm 100:4** bids us to, *"Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise [celebration]. Be thankful to Him and bless His name."* The AMP says, *"Be thankful and say so to Him, bless and affectionately praise His name."* Notice, the attitude we must adapt when entering into God's presence is one of *thanksgiving [hearts filled with gratitude, delight and adoration]*, but we must remember also to **say so to Him** - to be vocal!!!

Leviticus 22:29 *"And when you offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the Lord, offer it of your own free will."* **Psalm 54:6** says, *"I will freely sacrifice to You and praise Your name, O Lord, for it is good."* Even though the need for blood sacrifice was fulfilled at Calvary, the principle of sacrifice for God's people was not totally abolished. God still requires 'free will' sacrifices, and *thanksgiving* is sometimes a 'free will' sacrifice!

Thanksgiving has a distinctive voice because it is freely testifying of God's goodness in everything. Furthermore, it rejoices in the midst of any adverse circumstances, with an attitude of gratitude!

When Jonah prayed to the Lord from the fish's belly, he said.... *"I will sacrifice to You with a voice of thanksgiving"* [**Jonah 2:9**]. In **Acts 16:25** we see Paul and Silas in prison *"...praying and singing hymns to God."* A hymn will always testify of God's goodness and therefore it must be a form of thanksgiving!

We have seen from the scriptures just read that our sacrifice of thanksgiving must be offered at our own free will. So there may be times in our lives when we must will ourselves to be thankful, that is, without any outside factors governing or prompting us to do it! A truly thankful heart is one which operates because of God's intrinsic goodness and not because of the circumstances. Our thankfulness should be simply based on the fact that 'GOD IS'. Furthermore, isn't it comforting to know that when we are *'giving thanks'*, we are always in the perfect will of God. And if we are in God's perfect will, we are in complete agreement with Him!

Psalm 100:4 says, *"Be thankful and say so to Him."* God dwells within the walls of salvation [**Isaiah 60:18**]. Thanksgiving penetrates these walls and takes you into God's presence. Keep thanking Him for your salvation!