

THE MIRACLE OF *Giving Thanks*

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1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 *Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you... Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.*

Our reality is shaped by our focus in life. A Princeton study found that employees were satisfied with their salary *until* they discovered it was less than that of their peers. If we focus on what's missing we'll live as hostages to self-pity.

1. **Two great mindsets** — We have the power to choose the outcome of our lives! (Romans 8:5)
 - John 10:10 *The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*
 - This verse shows us we can live with fear and pending doom, or live with our focus on the life Jesus can offer, in any circumstance: a life filled with abundance.
2. **Giving thanks, the power over the enemy** — Israel defeated a great army only through obedient praise!
 - 2 Chronicles 20:1-30 *...Now when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated...*
 - As we are genuinely thankful from the heart, God fights for us in spiritual battles!

3. **The transforming miracle of giving thanks** — Jesus told ten lepers to show themselves to the priests and, as they went, were healed and physically cleansed of leprosy. However, one of them came back to give thanks and was made physically *and* spiritually whole.
 - Luke 17:12-19 *...So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? ("Katharos," clean, physically pure) But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?" And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well." ("Sozo," whole, delivered)*
4. **Develop a lifestyle of giving thanks** — Giving thanks and praise do not always start from feeling grateful. At times it begins out of sheer obedience, but as we praise and glorify God *in the midst of difficulties* a thankful and grateful heart becomes real.
 - All of us can recount times when God delivered us, healed us, brought miraculous provision, and set us free from things we could not do ourselves. List one of those times below and thank Him for His great faithfulness! **And Happy Thanksgiving!**

Prayer — Father, You have been so faithful in all Your works and what You have promised will come to pass. (Joshua 23:14) Some are experiencing traumatic physical and emotional challenges in this season. Empower them to give thanks in their situation and allow them to experience Your power to deliver as they genuinely give heartfelt thanks!

