

“GIVING THANKS ALWAYS FOR ALL THINGS UNTO GOD AND THE FATHER IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.” Ephesians 5:20

Sermon to the servants of our Lord Jesus Christ at Westboro Baptist Church in Topeka, Kansas, on October 5, 2025

Today’s sermon will address the gracious disposition of mind, thankfulness. Here is the context of the verse cited above:

Ephesians 5:18-21: “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.”

Thankfulness follows contentment: a discontented man is not thankful for anything; but a contented man is thankful for everything. Thankfulness is a branch of godliness; none but a godly man is truly a thankful man. An unthankful saint is a very odd sound, if not a contradiction. In **2 Timothy 3:1-4**, perilous times are described when men are defined, among other really unsavory things, as "*unthankful, unholy,*" as joined together, and that combination make sense. Also **Luke 6:35** describes the enemies of God’s people as "*unthankful*" and "*evil.*" "*But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.*" In particular none but an holy man can give thanks "*at the remembrance of the holiness of God,*" **Psalms 97:12** ("*Rejoice in the LORD, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his*

holiness.”) Concerning this gracious disposition of mind, thankfulness, I suggest the following things:

The things for which thanks are to be given. They are for all things; the rule, and which is, according to the will of God, is "*giving thanks always for all things.*" (**Ephesians 5:20**). **1 Thessalonians 5:18:** "*In every thing [or for everything] give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*" To which agrees what the apostle says, at **Philippians 4:6:** "*Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*"

For **temporal mercies**; for God is the "*Father of Mercies*," even of all such mercies; **the** author **and** giver of them, and therefore thanks should be returned to him for them. **2 Corinthians 1:3:** "*Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort[.]*"

For **our beings**; to be, is better than not to be. None could give us existence but God, the fountain of being. **Acts 17:28:** "*In him we live, and move, and have our being*"; that is, we have it from him, as well as are supported in it by him. **Psalms 100:3-4:** "*Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.*" The wonderful formation of man, the structure of his body, the symmetry and perfection of its parts, as well as soundness of limbs, are matters of praise and thankfulness; as they were to the Psalmist David, **Psalms 139:14-16:** "*I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my*

substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."

For **our life**, which is from God. He "*giveth to all life, and breath, and all things,*" **Acts 17:25**. Some of God's creations have a being, and yet not life, as inanimate ones. Some have life, yet only a vegetative one, as plants. Others only an animal one, as brutes. But God has given to man a soul, both living and rational. Adam's body was made out of the dust of the earth, and then God breathed into him the "*breath of life, and man became a living soul.*" **Genesis 2:7**. Such a life every man has, which is a grant and favor from God, **Job 10:12**: "*Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.*" Therefore thanks should be given to him for it, and for all the mercies of life, and for that more than for them. Since "*the life is more than meat,*" or drink, and raiment. **Matthew 6:25**. Everything by which life is nourished, supported, and made comfortable; and, indeed, is preferable to all a man has besides, **Job 2:4**: "*And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.*"

For **the preservation of our being and life by God**. His visitation (**Job 10:12**), which is every day, every morning (**Job 7:18**), preserves our spirits (**Psalms 36:6**). He upholds our souls in life; he is therefore truly called, the "*preserver of men,*" (**Job 7:20**). He is worthy of praise and thanksgiving on that account not only because he has made the heaven, earth, and seas, and all therein; but because he "*preservest them all,*" **Nehemiah 9:6**: "*Thou, even thou, art LORD alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee.*"

For **our health**, and for the continuance of it, and for restoration to it when it has been interrupted. Health is a very valuable mercy, and without which the outward blessings of life cannot be comfortably enjoyed. Therefore it is greatly desired, both by us and for our friends. The apostle John wished for Gaius, that he might "*prosper and be in health, even as his soul prospereth*," **3 John 1:2**. Persons favored with such a mercy have reason to be thankful; as also when it has been lost and restored again. Therefore Hezekiah, when recovered from his sickness, said, "*The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day*," **Isaiah 38:9,19**. A contrary behavior, as it is very unbecoming, is justly resented; as in the case of the nine unthankful lepers in **Luke 17:12-19**: "*And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.*"

For **every mercy enjoyed**, be it what it may; not only for life and health, for food and raiment, which are the principal mercies; but for every other, including the least that can be thought of. I recommend you spend time each day seriously considering the whole panoply and constellation of mercies God has poured upon your head. And, expressing heart-felt thanks for the same. **1 Timothy 4:4**: "*Every creature [creation] of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be*

received with thanksgiving." So that it seems the goodness of any creature mercy to a man depends upon his thankfulness for it. This is the difference between a thankful and an unthankful man: an unthankful man, thinks nothing good; and a thankful man thinks everything good, and blesses God for it, **1 Timothy 4:4-5**: "*For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.*" This he does every day; mercies are returned every day, and are new every morning (**Lamentations 3:22-23**); and therefore men sensible of them will say, "*Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. Selah.*" **Psalm 68:19**.

Every day we should be thankful for spiritual mercies, whether of a lower or of an higher kind.

For the **means of grace**, the gospel, and the ministry of it; and a great mercy it is to be under the sound of it. **Proverbs 8:34**: "*Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.*" The voice of wisdom is the gospel of Christ. It is a source of great happiness to be born and live in a place where the gospel is preached, and not among Pagans, Mahommedans, Papists, and so-called "Christians;" where there is a "*famine.*" Not a famine for bread, nor a thirst for water, but of "*hearing the word of the Lord,*" **Amos 8:11**. A dreadful judgment it is on a people when the Lord commands "*the clouds,*" the ministers of the word, "*that they rain no rain upon them,*" that is, preach not the gospel to them. **Isaiah 5:6**. The gospel was first restrained to the Jewish people, and forbidden to be preached to the Gentiles. **Matthew 10:5-6**: "*These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep*

*of the house of Israel.” But afterwards the apostles had a commission to preach it to all nations. **Mark 16:15:** “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”*

The Gentiles embraced it gladly, glorified it, or were greatly thankful for it. When the Jewish Christians perceived that God had given repentance to the Gentiles also, they glorified God, or were thankful to him, and blessed his name; and when the apostles declared the conversion of the Gentiles by the ministry of the word, **Acts 11:18:** “*When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.*” **Acts 28:28:** “*Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.*” **1 Thessalonians 2:13:** “*For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.*” When the apostles declared the conversion of the Gentiles by the ministry of the word, it caused great joy among the brethren; and when they were successful in all parts, they could not but express their thankfulness to God, saying, “*Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ,*” **2 Corinthians 2:14.**

When it is food to believers, and is sweet to their taste, as the honey and the honeycomb, and they esteem it more than their necessary food, then they are truly thankful for it. **Psalms 19:7-11:** “*The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they*

than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.” Job 23:12: “Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.” It is in itself glad tidings, and a joyful sound. Romans 10:15: “And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!” And see Luke 1:19, Luke 1:53, Luke 8:1, and Acts 13:32.

And when it is experimentally heard and known, it causes praise and thankfulness, even among personages of the highest class; "*all the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O Lord, when they hear the words of thy mouth*"; the doctrines of the gospel, so as to **understand them.** **Psalm 138:4-5** ("*All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O LORD, when they hear the words of thy mouth. Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD: for great is the glory of the LORD.*") As they will in the latter day glory, the gospel ministry will be the means of enlarging the interest of Christ. See, for example **Isaiah 11:9**: "*They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.*" **Revelation 11:15-17**: "*And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.*

To which may be added, as means of grace, the ordinances of the gospel, called the goodness and fatness of the house of God, the provisions of Zion. **Psalm 36:8:** *“They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.”* **Psalm 63:5:** *“My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips[.]”* **Psalm 65:4** *“Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.”* When saints are blessed with them, and made useful and beneficial, they “shout aloud for joy,” or are exceeding thankful for them. **Psalm 132:13-16:** *“For the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread. I will also clothe her priests with salvation: and her saints shall shout aloud for joy.”*

And with these may be mentioned, the ministers of the gospel, who are the gifts of God to his churches; **Ephesians 4:11-12:** *“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”* And he has given his ministers gifts to qualify them for such offices; and he gives them to his churches, as under-shepherds to the Great Sheperd of the sheep (**Hebrews 13:20**). **Jeremiah 3:15:** *“And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.”* These are reckoned among the blessings and privileges of churches, and of all true believers. **1 Corinthians 3:21-23:** *“Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to*

come; all are yours; And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." And therefore they have reason to be thankful for their "joyful sound"; and especially based upon those circumstances which are described at **Isaiah 30:20-21**: "*And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers: And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.*"

Thanks are to be given particularly for the **blessings of grace** themselves, the things which are freely given of God. And in order to have thankfulness for these in men there must be knowledge of them; which is had by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation. There, must too be an application of them, a view of special interest in them; the Spirit of God must witness to their spirits that they belong unto them. He must take of the things of Christ, and show them unto them; which will cause exultation and thankfulness in his elect people. See for example: **Ephesians 1: 15-23**: "*Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave*

him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” **Romans 8:14-17:** “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.” **Psalm 25:14:** “The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.” **Nehemiah 9:19:** “Yet thou in thy manifold mercies forsookest them not in the wilderness: the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to shew them light, and the way wherein they should go.” **John 16: 12-15:** “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.”

The Lord willing, more particulars will be expounded upon the grounds for our thankfulness based upon the blessings of grace vouched safe to us and revealed to us pursuant to the terms and conditions of that everlasting covenant of grace. (**2 Samuel 23:5; Jeremiah 32:40; Ezekiel 37:26; Hebrews 13:20**).

I Love you. Amen.