

**I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving.  
This also shall please the LORD better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and  
hoofs. (Psalm 69:30-31)**

SERMON OF MARCH 29, 2026, TO THE SAINTS AT WESTBORO BAPTIST CHURCH IN TOPEKA, KANSAS

As promised in December, 2025, I am continuing with this 3<sup>rd</sup> installment on our thankfulness to God based upon the blessings of grace which are reserved and delivered to us and revealed to us pursuant to the terms and conditions of that everlasting covenant of grace, and I add to these the gifts of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit themselves. Then, I conclude with comments about when and under what circumstances we are to give thanks, for whom we are to give thanks, and to whom we are to give thanks, and why. Thank you for your patience in listening:

**Thanks are to be given for adopting grace;** this is one of the spiritual blessings with which the Lord's people are blessed in Christ, "*according to the good pleasure of his will,*" **Ephesians 1:3, 5.** There is such a display of grace in the blessing of adoption as caused the Apostle John to break forth in rapture, and say, "*Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!*" **1 John 3:1.** Two things serve to excite thankfulness for this grace:

- That it is bestowed on persons very unworthy (**Genesis 32:10:** "*I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands*"); such who are by nature children of wrath, as others (**Ephesians 2:3:** "*Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others*"); and yet by this grace, children of God. Such of whom God himself says, "*How shall I put the[m] among the children?*" **Jeremiah 3:19.** Yet of his grace puts them there; such who are like the wretched infant, cast out into the open field, in the day it was born, to the loathing of its person, and yet taken into the family of God (**Ezekiel 16:1-6**); who have nothing lovely in them to recommend them, as Moses to Pharaoh's daughter (**Exodus 2:5-10**), and Esther to Mordecai (**Esther 2:5-7**) had; but all the reverse. "*And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live.*" (**Ezekiel 16:6**)

- The various blessings annexed to this grace; such have the glorious liberty of the children of God (**Romans 8:21**); liberty of access to God, as children to a father; and a right to all privileges and immunities, which fellow citizens with the saints (**Romans 8:17; 1 Peter 3:7; Ephesians 2:19**), and those of the household of God have; these are never more servants, but heirs, and have a right to the heavenly inheritance. **Ephesians 3:6:** "*That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.*" **Ephesians 2:19:** "*Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the*

household of God.” And see, e.g., **Ephesians 1:18, Ephesians 5:5, Colossians 1:12, Colossians 3:24; Hebrews 1:4 & 14, Hebrews 9:15, Hebrews 11:8, and 1 Peter 1:4.**

**Thanks are to be given to God for regenerating grace, 1 Peter 1:3-5:** “*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*” This is wholly owing to the free grace and rich mercy of God; it is denied to be of blood, or of the will of men, or of the will of the flesh; but of God. (**John 1:13:** “*Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*”) The prime and direct and sole source is his sovereign grace and favor; who, “*of his own will, begat he us with the word of truth.*” **James 1:18.** We should be thankful for this grace, since without it there can be no enjoyment of eternal life; “*Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,*” **John 3:3:** “*Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*”

**Thanks are to be given as for a right to eternal life;** which lies not in the righteousness of men, but in the righteousness of Christ; therefore we are made meet for it, which is all of grace, **Colossians 1:12-17:** “*Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*” A person who has inherited anything has a right to it.

**Thanks are to be given for victory over all spiritual enemies;** and so for persevering grace in faith and holiness to glory, notwithstanding them all. **Psalms 94:14:** “*For the LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance.*” Nothing is more distressing than a body of sin and death, and nothing more desirable than a deliverance from it. **Romans 7:24:** “*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*” and yet no hope of it but through Christ; and having hope of it in this way, such a soul may say with the apostle, “*I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord!*” (**Roman 7:25**). That is who, how and where the deliverance comes from. That is, that there will be a deliverance from this body of death; and not from that only, but from every enemy, sin, law, and death; and therefore his people can say, “*Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory*” (**1 Corinthians 15:57**); over death and the grave; over sin, the sting of death; and over the law, the strength of sin; so that nothing shall hinder an abundant entrance into the kingdom and glory of God. **2 Peter 1:10-11:** “*Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall*

*never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*" Nothing shall separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus. **Romans 8:38-39.**

**Thanks are to be given for Christ**, the great blessing of grace and gift of God: "*Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift*" **2 Corinthians 9:15**. The donor of this gift is God, of whom are all things (**1 Corinthians 8:6; Hebrews 2:10**); hence Christ is called the "*gift of God,*" by way of eminence, **John 4:10**. He is a sovereign Being, and disposes of all his gifts, and so this, to whomsoever he pleases. It is his own he gives, and he may do with that what he will. **Matthew 20:15(a)**: "*Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?*" This is a gift like himself, suitable to the greatness of his Majesty (**1 Chronicles 29:11**), as King of kings (**1 Timothy 6:15**); it is a royal gift, like that "*Araunah, as a king, gave unto the king,*" **2 Samuel 24:23**. The gift is the Son of God; "*To us a Son is given*" (**Isaiah 9:6**); the only begotten Son of God (**John 3:16**), his own Son (**Romans 8:32**), the dear Son of his love (**Psalms 91:14**), his Son and Heir (**Hebrews 1:2**); him he has given to be for a covenant of the people (**Isaiah 42:6**), the Mediator (**Hebrews 9:15**) and Surety of it (**Hebrews 7:22**). God has entrusted his Son with all the blessings and promises of this covenant of grace (e.g., **John 13:3**). He has been appointed to be an head over all things to the church (**Ephesians 1:22**); and to be the Savior of the body, the church (**Ephesians 5:23**); even to be God's salvation unto the ends of the earth (**Isaiah 45:22 and 52:10**); for which purpose he has not spared him, but has delivered him up into the hands of men, justice, and death (**Romans 8:32; Mark 9:31**); and for which those to and for whom he is given, have reason to be thankful (**Romans 8:28-30**).

**The nature of the gift** is reviewed here.

**It is entirely a free gift**; it is one of those things, and the chief of them, which are "*freely given unto us of God,*" **1 Corinthians 2:12** ("*Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things are freely given to us of God*"). The gift of our Lord Jesus Christ is unmerited and undeserved; wholly of free grace, and flowing from the pure love of God, to persons of all the most unworthy, **John 3:16; Ephesians 2:1-10**.

**It is a suitable one**; nothing could have been given us more suitable to our case and circumstances. "*Such an High priest became us*" (**Hebrews 7:26**); such a Prophet (**Acts 7:37**), such a King (**Revelation 19:16**), such a Mediator between God and men (**1 Timothy 2:5**), such a Redeemer (**Job 19:25**) and Savior (**Isaiah 49:26; Acts 5:31**), such an Advocate (**1 John 2:1**) and Intercessor (**Hebrews 7:25**), one so full of grace and truth (**John 1:14**), who is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption (**1 Corinthians 1:30**), who is indeed ALL in ALL (**Ephesians 1:23**); all that we want (**Hebrews 4:16**), and all that we can desire (**Psalms 27:4**).

**It is a very large and comprehensive gift**. God, with Christ, freely gives us all things; and blesses, with all spiritual blessings in him, the blessings of grace and of glory, **Romans 8:32; 2**

**Peter 1:3; Ephesians 1:3.** Christ being ours, all things are ours; and therefore we have reason to be thankful, **1 Corinthians 3:22-23:** “*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.*”

**It is an unchangeable and irreversible gift.** It comes from the “*Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.*” (**James 1:17**). Not only the giver (“*I change not*”), but the gift itself is unchangeable; who is “*Jesus, the same yesterday, today, and for ever.*” (**Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8**) It is one of the gifts of God which are “*without repentance*” (**Romans 11:29**); to which may be added, that it is “*unspeakable*” (**2 Corinthians 9:16**); none can say how great it is, what is contained in it, and what the benefits arising from it in time and to eternity (**1 Corinthians 2:9**).

**We are to be thankful for the Spirit of God,** and his gifts and graces. The Spirit himself is the gift of God, **Luke 11:13** (“*If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?*”). And a great and glorious gift he is (**2 Corinthians 3:8:** “*How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?*”), for which we have reason to be thankful (e.g., **2 Corinthians 3:6-18**). Especially when we consider to what ends and purposes he is given. As to be a Comforter of his people, “*He shall give you another Comforter,*” **John 14:16** (“*And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever*”). **John 16:13:** “*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.*” To be a Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ (**Ephesians 1:17:** “*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.*”). To strengthen the saints with all might in the inward man (**Colossians 1:11; 2 Corinthians 4:16; Ephesians 3:16**). To be the earnest and pledge of their future glory and happiness, **Ephesians 1:14, 17:** “*Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. ... That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.*” **Ephesians 3:16:** “*That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.*” The various graces of the Spirit are gifts and very valuable free grace gifts. Faith, which is of the operation of the Spirit, is “*not of ourselves, it is the gift of God,*” which no man has nor can exercise unless it be given him of God (**Ephesians 2:8-9:** “*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.*” **Romans 10:17:** “*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*” **John 3:27:** “*John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.*” All men have it not, **2 Thessalonians 3:2:** “*And that we may delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith;*” and therefore it is distinguishing grace to those who have it, and should be thankful for it. A good hope is through grace, and is given both by God the Father and our Lord Jesus

Christ, **2 Thessalonians 2:16**: “Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace.” **Romans 15:13**: “Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.” Jesus Christ, the Great Shepherd of the Sheep preached at **Luke 4:18-19**: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.” As under shepherds and ambassadors of our Lord Jesus Christ, we all are invigorated, more or less, by that same Almighty Spirit, to do the same (“to preach the acceptable year of the Lord”), pursuant to His gifts and direction and power. **2 Corinthians 5:20**: “Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.” It is that simple; it is that glorious. Ambassadors carry the message of their sovereign King. **2 Timothy 1:14**: “That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.”

### **When, in what cases and circumstances, and for whom thanks are to be given.**

**When; always**, this is the rule, “giving thanks always for all things” **Ephesians 5:20**: “Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Every day, night and day, constantly, continually, all the days of a man’s life; for there are ever new mercies, they are returning every day and every morning: therefore says the Psalmist, “Every day will I bless thee.” **Lamentations 3:22-23**: “It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.” **Psalms 145:2**: “Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever.” **Psalms 146:2**: “While I live I will praise the LORD: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being.” **Psalms 68:19**: “Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. Selah.”

**In what cases and circumstances, in what state and condition**, are we to be thankful? In every one, “in everything,” that is, in every state, “give thanks,” **1 Thessalonians 5:18**: “In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”

**Not in prosperity only**, when we are to be joyful, cheerful, and thankful; and when we are not to attribute our prosperity to ourselves, nor to second causes, but to God, and be thankful; otherwise we shall only “sacrifice to” our own “net,” and “burn incense” to our own “drag,” **Habakkuk 1:15-16**: “They take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag: therefore they rejoice and are glad. Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous.” These references are to fishing. They call fishermen to this date, “anglers.” Some of the best catches are from the use of nets by dragging them in certain spots in a lake, river, or ocean. Fishermen, and any other person who gets some gain by their efforts, delude themselves that it is due to their skill and inherent worth and/or their equipment which they built or wisely purchased,

and thereby they have success by their power. Kansas is land-locked; but most of the world live upon the fish in the waters. **Deuteronomy 8:18:** *“But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day.”*

**But in adversity also;** as Job blessed God, or was thankful, when he was stripped of all. **Job 1:21:** *“And said, Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. The people of God have reason to be thankful under afflictions, when the Lord puts underneath his everlasting arms (**Deuteronomy 33:27:** *“The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them.”*) He supports them under their afflictions. When he strengthens them on a bed of languishing, and makes their bed in their sickness, **Psalm 41:3:** *“The LORD will strengthen him upon the bed languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.”* When he chooses them in the furnace of affliction, **Isaiah 48:10:** *“Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.”* When he is with them passing through the fire and water, so that the one shall not kindle upon them, nor the other overflow them, **Isaiah 43:2:** *“When that passest through the waters, I will be with thee: and the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when though walkest through the fire, they shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.”* In short, since he makes all things work together for their good here and hereafter, they should be thankful. **Romans 8:28:** *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”* **1 Peter 4:19:** *“Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.”**

**In times of temptation;** since the temptation might have been suffered to have been greater and heavier than it is; and since the grace of God is sufficient to support under it, and carry through it. **2 Corinthians 12:9:** *“And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”* The faithfulness of God will not suffer his people to be tempted above what they are able to bear. **1 Corinthians 10:13:** *“There hath no temptation take you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation will make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”* And since Christ is able to help them that are tempted, and sympathizes with them, and prays for them that their faith fail not. **Hebrews 2:18:** *“For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.”* **2 Peter 2:9:** *“The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.”* **Revelation 3:10:** *“Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.”* **Luke 22:31-32:** *“And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that they faith*

*fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.”* He ever liveth to make intercession for his people at the right hand of God. (**Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25**)

**When in very uncomfortable frames.** At least better might be wished for, since these might have been worse and have issued in despair, or bordering on it. In the midst of all it should be considered, that though frames are changeable things, Jehovah changes not (**Malachi 3:6**), Christ is the same always (**Hebrews 13:8**), the covenant of grace is sure (**2 Samuel 23:5**), the gifts and calling of God without repentance (**Romans 11:29**); the Lord knows them that are his (**2 Timothy 2:19**), and they shall never perish (**John 10:28**).

**Amidst all the reproaches and persecutions of men.** So the apostles were thankful that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ (**Acts 5:41**); the apostle Peter says such are happy. **1 Peter 4:14:** *“If he be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.”* Those who are persecuted for righteousness sake are pronounced blessed by Christ, and are exhorted to rejoice, and be exceeding glad, **Matthew 5:10-12:** *“Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.”*

**For whom;** for all men, for kings and all in authority, **1 Timothy 2:1-2**, since these are powers ordained of God, and are ministers for the good of men, are terrors to evildoers, and a praise to them that do well. Such are to be honored and obeyed, and thanks to be given for them, which is good and acceptable in the sight of God. **Romans 13:1-6.** We are to be thankful for our relations and friends, and for the continuance of them. (**Ephesians 5:20**) Children are the gifts of God to parents, and as such to be owned with gratitude, as they were by Jacob and Joseph. **Genesis 33:5:** *“And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children; and said, Who are those with thee? And he said, The children which God hath graciously given thy servant.”* **Genesis 48:9:** *“And Joseph said unto his father, they are my sons, whom God hath given me in this place. And he said, Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them.”* **Psalms 127:3-5:** *“Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.”* Likewise for the churches of Christ, and all the saints in them; for their prosperity, for their grace and the increase of it; for their faith, and for their love to one another; these are what the apostle expresses his thankfulness for in almost all his epistles. See, e.g., **Ephesians 1:16, Romans 1:8.** So for the ministers of the gospel saints should be thankful, who are the gifts of God to the churches, and are promised as such, **Jeremiah 3:15:** *“And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.”* These are the servants of the most high God which show unto men the way of salvation (**Acts 16:17**), and who are the churches’ servants for Jesus’ sake (**2 Corinthians 4:5**), and faithful stewards in the house of God (**1 Corinthians 4:2**), to give to everyone their portion of meat in due season (**Luke 12:42**). Thanks should be given for an increase of converts through the ministry of the word, when there are additions made to

churches of such as shall be saved (**Acts 2:21**); when the gospel is succeeded for the gathering in of others to Christ and into his churches besides those who are already gathered. **2 Corinthians 2:14**: "*Now thanks be unto God, which always causes us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.*"

**To whom are thanks to be given on the above account?** To God, of whom are all things (**1 Corinthians 8:6**), and to whom the glory of all belongs (**Jude 25**). He is the proper and primary object of thanksgiving; "*I thank my God, through Jesus Christ, for you all,*" **Romans 1:8**, God, Father, Son, and Spirit.

**Thanks are to be given to the Father.** "*Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father,*" **Ephesians 5:20**. Therefore, the same apostle blesses or gives thanks unto him as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for blessing the saints in him with all spiritual blessings, **Ephesians 1:3**. The apostle Peter blesses or gives thanks to him as such for regenerating grace particularly, **1 Peter 1:3**. And he is to be considered in such an act of thanksgiving as Christ's God and our God, and as Christ's Father and our Father. **John 20:17**: "*Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.*" For as we are directed to pray to him, saying, "*Our Father, which art in heaven,*" **Luke 11:2**; so we should give thanks to him as such, saying, "*Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,*" **2 Corinthians 1:3**.

**Thanks are to be given to the Son of God**, our Lord Jesus Christ. These are sometimes given to him particularly and alone, "*I thank Christ Jesus the Lord,*" says the apostle, **1 Timothy 1:12**. If thanks are to be given him on such an account as there (putting Paul into the ministry), then certainly for other favors received from him; as for his suretyship engagements (**Hebrews 7:22**), for his assumption of human nature (**John 1:14**), for suffering and dying in the room and stead of his people (**1 Corinthians 15:3**; **Hebrews 2:9**), and for many other acts of grace done by him, and blessings of grace received from him (**Romans 11:5**). Besides, it is in the name of Christ, and through him, we are directed to give thanks to God, **Ephesians 5:20**: "*Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ*". **Romans 1:8**: "*First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.*" As it is proper we should, since all our mercies come to us through him; it is in him we are blessed with all spiritual blessings (**Ephesians 1:3**), and it is out of his fullness we receive, and grace for grace (**John 1:16**); and all the grace that is wrought in us in regeneration, and in carrying on the work of sanctification, is all "*through Christ*" **Ephesians 2:7**. Nor can we come to God in any other way with our thanksgivings but by him; he is the only way to the Father. **John 14:6**: "*Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*" Jesus Christ is the way of access to him with boldness and confidence; and therefore "by him" we are to "*offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks unto his name,*" **Hebrews 13:15**. Nor are our spiritual sacrifices, either of prayer or praise, acceptable to God, but through Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom our persons are accepted,

even in him the beloved. **Ephesians 1:6.** “*Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*” **1 Peter 2:5.**

**Thanks are to be given to the blessed Spirit;** for, as he is the object of prayer, so the object of praise and thanksgiving there is great reason that as we should be careful not to quench, vex, resist or grieve the good Spirit of God with our ingratitude. **Isaiah 63:10:** “*But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them.*” **Acts 7:51:** “*Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.*” **Ephesians 4:30:** “*And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*” **1 Thessalonian 5:19:** “*Quench not the Spirit.*” So that we should be thankful to him for all that he has done for us; in quickening (**Romans 8:11**) and regenerating us (**Titus 3:5**); in beginning and carrying on the good work of grace in us, and in sealing us up to the day of redemption (**Ephesians 1:13 and 4:30**). Besides many other acts of grace which might be mentioned, not the least of which, by example, is mentioned in **Galatians 3:14:** “*That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.*” Always remember these verse: **John 16:14:** “*He [the Holy Spirit] shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.*” **John 14:26:** “*But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring aall things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*”

**Now this work of thanksgiving is to be performed towards God with a celebration of the divine perfections,** which are displayed in his acts of kindness to us (**Ephesians 2:9**). As we are to give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness (**Psalms 30:4; 97:12**), so at the remembrance of every other attribute of his. See, for example, **Psalms 20:7, 22:27, 45:17, 77:11, 103:18, 105:5, 106:7, 111:4, 119:52, 55, 137:1 and 6, Jonah 2:7, and Song of Solomon 1:4**). It is in this way the living creatures are said to give glory, and honor, and thanks unto God, **Revelation 4:8-9:** “*And the four beast had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever.*” This is also to be done by a recollection of the benefits of God (**Psalms 103:2:** “*Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.*”). Which, though so many that we are not able to reckon them up in order before him (**Psalms 40:5:** “*Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order to thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.*”). Yet, as much as in us lies, we are to call upon our souls to call to mind, and not forget, if possible, any of his benefits; and to inquire, what shall we render to him for them. **Isaiah 63:7:** “*I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to*

*the multitude of his lovingkindnesses.*” And this is to be performed with all our hearts, with all that is within us, with all the powers and faculties of our souls, and to the utmost of our abilities; as we are to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our strength. **Luke 10:27:** “*And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.*” We are to give thanks to him in like manner, in the most intense way we are capable of; as we are to serve him with grace in our hearts in every branch of duty; so in this, even in the exercise of every grace. **Colossians 3:16.**

### **The reasons or arguments for giving thanks.**

**It is the will of God;** and that is reason sufficient why it should be attended to, **1 Thessalonians 5:18:** “*In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*” It is that good, perfect, and acceptable will of God made known in his word, which he has commanded and directed to (**Romans 12:2:** “*And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*”). “*Offer unto God thanksgiving,*” **Psalm 50:14.** This is a sacrifice acceptable to him, and well pleasing in his sight, **Psalm 69:30-31:** “*I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving. This also shall please the LORD better than an ox or a bullock that hath horns and hoof.*”

**This is the will of God "in Christ Jesus,"** (**1 Thessalonians 5:18**) which is made known by him; who, lying in the bosom of the Father, has declared his whole mind and will to the sons of men. **John 1:18:** “*No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father; he hath declared him.*” And it is also to be given unto God in and through Christ. **Colossians 3:17:** “*And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father.*”

**It is enforced by the example of Christ,** who himself gave thanks to God, and that for the distinguishing blessings of his grace bestowed upon his people, according to his sovereign will and pleasure. **Matthew 11:25-26:** “*At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.*”

**The examples of saints in all ages,** patriarchs, prophets, and apostles; the book of Psalms is full of instances.