



Always Thankful

Bible Study

Leader's Guide

[Please provide: copies of this study, Bibles, musical accompaniment, and hymnals for attendees.]

Opening prayer: Dear Lord God, heavenly Father, send Your Holy Spirit to open our hearts and eyes so that we may see how we are to be always thankful. Show us in Your Word the way to a truly thankful heart. Amen

The Apostle Paul tells us to give thanks in all circumstances (1 Thessalonians 5:18). It is easy to give God thanks for His blessings and for sending His son, Jesus to die for our sins. But can you honestly say that you give thanks in all of your circumstances, good or bad?

There are three very good reasons to be “Always Thankful” in all our circumstances.

1. Be “Always Thankful” to our Creator Who has Made the Heavens, the Earth and You

Read Isaiah 40:28–31.

Who is the Lord? He is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.

What other characteristics of God do you find in these verses? He does not faint or grow weary.
His understanding is unsearchable.

What does God supply to the weary and the weak? God gives power to the weary and increases the strength of the weak.

When was the last time you went out at night to look into the sky without any light pollution and saw how vast the stars are? God knows the name of each of them and holds them in their places. Man has only begun to discover the conditions for life to exist and that there is only one planet like the earth suitable for us. God placed the earth right where it needed to be for us to peer out and marvel at the vastness of His creation.

What wonders of this world makes you stop and say, “This could only be the hand of God”?
Encourage participants to discuss amazing aspects of God’s creation.

Read Romans 3:19–20. Even with all creation surrounding us, we still have problems with being “Always Thankful.” That problem is called sin. We have a problem living by the law that God created for the world.

What is the purpose of the Law?

The Law shows us our sin and shows us our need for a Savior.

Read Romans 3:23, 6:23 and 1 John 1:8.

Who has sinned? All have sinned (Romans 3:23).

What is the wages of our sin? The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23).

What if you say you have no sin? If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us (1 John 1:8).

2. Be “Always Thankful” for the Cross of Christ

We are sinners. Yet, God loves us. Because of His great love for us, He sent His one and only Son, Jesus Christ, to pay the price we could not pay to be redeemed from sin.

Read Mark 10:45 and Hebrews 10:10 to complete this sentence: Jesus came to be the ransom for many and the sacrifice once for all.

Read Hebrews 4:15 and 1 John 4:10 to complete this sentence: Jesus was without sin to be the propitiation for our sins. Through His perfect life and His death for our sins, Jesus satisfied God’s demands for the perfect keeping of His Law and for the payment required for our sinful disobedience.

Read Hebrews 12:2 to complete this sentence: Jesus despised the shame of the cross.

Read John 3:16 and John 1:12–13 to complete this sentence: So that by believing in Him we might have eternal life and be called the children of God.

All our debts have been paid by Jesus our Savior! What a reason to be “always thankful!” As Colossians 2:13–14 says, *And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.* Because of what Jesus our Savior did for us on the cross, and because He rose from the dead, we can be “always thankful” as the Holy Spirit leads us to always keep the cross of Christ before us.

In this season of thankfulness as you reflect on what Jesus did for you on the cross, for what in particular would you like to thank Him? Write your thoughts in the form of a “thank you” note.
Dear Jesus, my risen Savior ...

3. Be “Always Thankful” in Trials—They Serve a Purpose

It’s been said that when God wants you to grow, He makes you uncomfortable. Therefore, we can give thanks in all our circumstances because God is love and has our best interest in mind. We can consider it joy in various trials because God wants us to grow.

Read James 1:2–3. What does the testing of your faith produce? The testing of our faith produces steadfastness.

What does it mean to be *steadfast*? To be *steadfast* means to be firmly fixed in place or position; to be unwavering.

Read: 1 Peter 1:5–7. What purpose do the trials in our lives serve? God uses the trials in our lives to test our faith, to strengthen our faith, and to draw us closer to Him.

Read 1 Peter 4:12–13. Not only are we to give thanks in all circumstances but we are to *rejoice* in our trials. Trials are tough. How can we rejoice in them? As we share in Christ’s sufferings while we live our lives on earth, we will rejoice when Jesus’ glory is revealed to us at His second coming, and as we live with Him in our heavenly home. As we recognize that God uses the trials in our lives to draw us closer to Him, this is also a reason to rejoice. We can also rejoice because God is always with us no matter what troubles we face.

Recall a trial you’ve faced. From this experience, for what can you thank God? Encourage participants to share their responses.

Read Romans 8:28. What reassurance do you find here? God reminds us that He works in all things for the good of those who love Him.

Read the following verses. What does each one tell you about God?

Isaiah 54:10: God’s love is steadfast and will never go away.

Hebrews 13:5b: The Lord promises He will never leave you nor forsake you.

1 Corinthians 1:9: God is faithful.

How do these descriptions of who God is and how He feels about you give you reason to be thankful in all circumstances? Knowing that God keeps all His promises, we are thankful because we know He will always love us and will never leave us and that He is always faithful.

What benefits are found from being around someone who is thankful even in difficult circumstances? An individual with an “attitude of gratitude” gives glory to God and reminds us to focus on God’s constant blessings to us.

Read each proverb below and complete the statements.

Proverbs 15:13: A glad heart makes a cheerful face .

Proverbs 15:15: The cheerful of heart has a continual feast.

Proverbs 17:22: A joyful heart is good medicine.

How do we achieve an attitude of thankfulness? We achieve an attitude of thankfulness by the power of the Holy Spirit who opens our eyes to all that the Triune God does for us. Through God’s means of grace, we are constantly reminded of all the good God works in our lives, especially through Jesus our Savior.

Holy Scripture provides us with examples of individuals who in trying times, praised and thanked God. Though he suffered at the hands of King Saul as a young man and later as Israel’s king, David gave thanks to God.

Read 1 Chronicles 16:8–30. What did David say to make known (v. 8)? David said to tell everyone of God’s deeds.

What did David say the people (including us) are to tell about (vv.9, 23)? All God’s people are to tell of His wondrous works.

What are we to remember (vv. 12, 15)? We are to remember all the wonderful things God has done and continues to do in our lives, His miracles, His judgments, and the covenant He has established with us.

What are we to declare (v. 24)? We are to declare God’s glory among the nations and all the great things He has done and continues to do for everyone.

According to verses 28–30, how else are we to give thanks to God? We are to sing praises to God and to give Him glory.

Read: Psalm 28:6–7. What particular quality of God do these verses mention for which we can be “always thankful?” We can be always thankful because of God’s strength.

Knowing that God is almighty, how does this affect your thankful attitude? God gives us His strength so that we can do all things through faith in Him (Philippians 4:13).

Closing prayer: Dear Lord God, forgive us when we are not thankful in all things. Through Your Holy Spirit, open our eyes to see Your wondrous works in our lives and fill our hearts with thanksgiving that we may now give thanks in all our circumstances. Help us to always remember You are love and You will never leave us nor forsake us. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

Sing: “*Rise, Shine You People,*” LSB 825

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