



In All Circumstances

Psalm 145 — A Study for Caregivers

By Jan Brunette

I will exalt you, my God the King; I will praise your name for ever and ever. Every day I will praise you and extol your name for ever and ever. Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom (Psalm 145:1-3).

Opening Prayer

Lord, help me see clearly the blessings You have prepared for me today. May I thank You for each step You lead me through. May Your Spirit be my constant Guide and Instructor. In Jesus' name, I ask this. Amen.

Numerous times in my life, I have heard individuals ask, "Is this really in my job description?" It usually means they have been confronted with a difficult task on the job. Some walk away, acknowledging it's too tough or too dirty or too time-consuming. Others may consent but do it grudgingly or haphazardly. Still others embrace the request and work hard at seeing it through. No matter the choice, few approach it with an attitude of praise and thanksgiving for the challenge given them.

The burdens and cares of our families are no different. With our aging population, many spouses, siblings, and children find themselves becoming caregivers. Sons, daughters, husbands, and wives face debilitating diseases at any age. Trapped in unexpected life-changing patterns, we can't help but ask, "Was this really part of my job description?" Some run from caregiving, while others do it resentfully and fearfully. Others stand side-by-side with the care-receiver yet struggle to remain stable mentally and emotionally. As energy dwindles, the idea of praising and thanking God in the midst of it all becomes extremely difficult, if not impossible.

How can we, as caregivers, alter our thinking and turn our stress level from fear and fatigue to trust and rest? Several verses open the door to understanding God's will for us in these most heartbreaking situations.

Read **1 Thessalonians 5:18**. How can we give thanks in all circumstances? _____

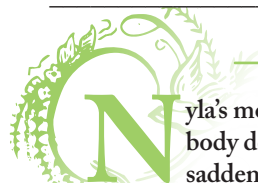
Even on the most difficult and demanding days, God's blessings can be discovered. Though sometimes overlooked, they are present. List some things we can be thankful for even when challenging circumstances appear. _____

Why would giving thanks in all circumstances be God's will for us? _____

Read **Proverbs 3:5-6**. What advice is offered for potential growth in our trust level? _____

We want to understand. We want it all to make sense. We want it fixed. But life isn't always that simple. One of the most excruciating things we can encounter is watching a loved one suffer. God wants to focus us on the positives in every situation, and we pray for that ability.

Compare the verses above with **Isaiah 55:8-3**. How can this section comfort us? _____



Nyla's mother had Parkinson's disease and Lewy body dementia. With each visit, Nyla left deeply saddened and grieved by her mother's deteriorating condition. All Nyla could remember were the happy days when her mother gave selflessly in service to the Lord. Now that was gone. However, when Nyla returned for other visits, the staff in skilled nursing care would share of her mother's shining example to them, even in her current mental and physical state. Before long, Nyla realized she was only looking at what her mother could not do, instead of what she could do. In the process, she learned to praise and thank God for the blessings her mother exhibited in the present, not to review the past with grief.

Psalm 145

Offering praise and thanksgiving to God in the midst of our circumstances is considered a sacrifice to God. (See **Psalm 50:14** and **Hebrews 13:15**.) **Psalm 145** can aid us in our daily walk with our caregiving and our ability to view those circumstances differently.

Read **Psalm 145:1–7** and **10–13**. In these sections, discover many ways to praise God in the midst of our storms.

Make note of every time the words “you” and “your” are used referring to God Himself.

On days when we struggle with finding some reason to thank and praise Him, these verses can be read over and over again. As we read them, we may not “feel” any differently, but in time we will begin to grasp the grace and mercy of a powerful God who loves beyond all measure.

The trustworthy qualities of God, often overlooked in our perception of Him, are mentioned in the following verses. List the quality or qualities and what they mean to us in our caregiving challenges.

Verse 8 _____

Verse 9 _____

Verse 13b _____

Verse 14 _____

Verses 15–16 _____

Verse 17 _____

Verse 18 _____

Verse 19 _____

Verse 20a _____

The difficult part to grasp is that, in spite of God’s amazing qualities, power, grace, and mercy to help us, we can still doubt our own ability to have the strength and wisdom to be the caregivers we need to be. Living one day at a time — sometimes one hour at a time — feels overwhelming, but it is only by doing so, in Him, that His comfort and rest are ours. Note the hope the following verses give.

Joshua 1:9 _____

Esther 4:14b _____

Matthew 6:33–34 _____

Matthew 11:28–30 _____

John 16:33 _____

Ephesians 2:10 _____

1 John 4:4 _____

Consider the following verses, recording where our strength really comes from when physical and emotional strength wanes.

1 Corinthians 4:6–7 _____

2 Corinthians 12:10–12 _____

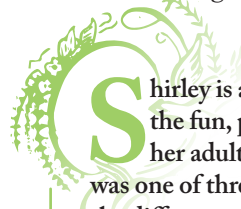
Colossians 2:9–10 _____

Isaiah 40:28–31 _____

Isaiah 41:10 _____

Jesus wants us to rely on Him for strength and to find our rest in Him. He carried the burdens of every ache and every pain to the cross. We now are united with Him in His resurrection power (**Ephesians 1:18–20**; **Romans 6:1–7**), and He prepares the way before us. There is not one step that we will take that He has not walked before us. He carries us with His victorious arms. When we try to go without Him, we permit our fears to enter. We are encouraged instead to cry out, “I am determined to trust You today, Jesus. Guide me and lead me as I walk through these scary unknowns with You.”

Psalm 145 concludes with **verse 21**. Record it and use it often on the most difficult days, no matter the circumstances, no matter the tough decisions that need to be made.



Shirley is a friend who loves life and always looks for the fun, positive side of every situation. However, her adult life has not been an easy one. Her mother was one of three loved ones that Shirley guided through the different stages of Alzheimer’s. One day she entered her mother’s room to discover her mother tearing up paper and throwing it everywhere. Rather than getting upset, Shirley gathered paper of her own, sat on the floor next to her mother, and joined in the “fun.” They continued tearing paper, building a tower with it, knocking it down, and rebuilding it. After much giggling and play, her mother tired of it and walked away. Shirley gladly picked up the pieces. It is a beautiful memory she will never forget.

We need never doubt that God will give us what we need. The following verses provide comfort as we cry out to Him as caregivers.

Isaiah 43:1–3a _____

Hebrews 13:20–21 _____

Closing Prayer

Lord, may I now move forward, my “eyes fixed on Jesus, the author and perfecter of [my] faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. [I will] consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that [I] will not grow weary and lose heart” (Hebrews 12:2–3). *Amen and Amen.*

Hymns: “Christ Be My Leader” (*LSB* #861; *LW* #365); “What a Friend We Have in Jesus” (*LSB* #770; *LW* #516; *TLH* #457); “My Hope is Built on Nothing Less” (*LSB* #575; *LW* #368; *TLH* #370)