

Lutheran Women in Mission

Thanksgiving All Year Long by Alice Schuman

Opening

Sing "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty" (*LW 444, TLH 39, LBW 543*) or "Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise" (*LW 451, LBW 526*) or "I Will Sing of the Mercies" from *Jesus' People Sing!*

Introduction

Each year families and friends gather around heavily laden tables to celebrate Thanksgiving Day. In our postmodern culture we encourage each other to be thankful but seldom do we hear about specifically thanking the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, to whom we owe our thankfulness.

Should our thanks be limited to one day a year? How can it be when we are showered with blessings every moment of our lives? Let's take a look at what the Word of God teaches us about living each day in thanksgiving to our Heavenly Father. Think about and discuss the questions that follow each Bible reading.



Living in Thanksgiving

- **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**

When are we to be thankful?

What are some of the situations when it is hard to be thankful?

- **1 Corinthians 15:56-57**

What can help us to be thankful despite difficult circumstances?

What might cause us to forget to be thankful when our lives are going smoothly?

- **Philippians 4:4-7**

What four characteristics of the Christian life are mentioned here?

How are we to deal with the anxieties we face?

For what are we to thank Him?

How might offering thanksgiving with your request change your view of a situation?

Responding to God's Promises

Giving thanks in all circumstances, even those that are hard to bear, is a witness to our faith and

trust in a loving Father. As you read the following verses note the promises God gives that help us live in joyful thanksgiving.

- **Romans 8:31-39**

What promises do these verses contain?

How can this support us when days are dark?

- **2 Corinthians 2:14-17**

What do you think "we are to God the aroma of Christ" means?

How does the Gospel impact those who are perishing?

How does the message impact those who are being saved?

Why is our joyous living in thanksgiving so important?

- **Psalm 100:1-5**

What are some ways we express thanks to God in worship?

How does participating in public worship make thanksgiving grow in us?

How does private worship enlarge our thankfulness?

How can joining with our sisters in LWML in worship and service encourage us to be thankful?

Closing

Our Heavenly Father makes all our days good ones through the salvation He brings to us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Every week we have an opportunity to thank the Lord in a special way with our public worship. Often we enjoy the celebration of His marvelous feast of Holy Communion. Let us reflect upon that weekly Thanksgiving Day as we speak the following responsive reading of Psalm 100.

Leader: Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.

Group: Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.

L: Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his.

G: we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

L: Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise;

G: give thanks to him and praise his name.

L: For the Lord is good and his love endures forever;

G: His faithfulness continues through all generations.

Sing "Now Thank We All Our God" (LW 443, TLH 36, LWB 533) or "In You is Gladness" (LW 442, LBW 552) or "Let All That is Within Me" from *The Other Song Book*.

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