

Thanksgiving: More than a  
Holiday - A Powerful  
Weapon

# Introduction

- We desire to be mature in Christ and reach our full potential in His fullness. (Ephesians 3:19, 4:13) We truly want to be pleasing to God and effective for His purposes on the earth.
- As we enter into this week, we desire for thanksgiving to be more than a national holiday. We will enjoy the restful break, our families, and good food; but we long for meaning and purpose that matures us for Him.
- According to the Bible, the act of giving thanks is an effective tool and powerful weapon in God's kingdom. Let's agree with God, His Scripture, and each other to become spiritual warriors in the area of thanksgiving.

# 1. A Voluntary Act of Worship

- In the Old Testament, the “Thank offering” was a voluntary offering, it was not required by the Law. It was an offering of meat, unleavened bread, and leavened bread that was “a pleasing aroma to the LORD.” (Leviticus 3:1, 7:12, 22:29)
- These sacrifices were costly and inconvenient, yet it was completely the individuals choice out of love and thanksgiving for their God.
- Many of us today realize how ridiculously good God has been to us and we want to do something for Him.
- Taking time to stop, be alone with God, and begin to worship Him with thanks will be costly and inconvenient; but it will be a voluntary act that shows you love for God and greatly pleases Him.

## 2. A Doorway to His Presence

- “Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise; give thanks to Him and praise His Name. For the LORD is good and His love endures forever; His faithfulness continues throughout all generations.”  
Psalm 100:4-5
- Isn't it just like God to turn our voluntary act of worship that's meant to please Him into a gift that blesses us.
- This promise in Psalm 100 provides such an amazing gift to us. Thanksgiving will actually usher us into His presence! When we truly give thanks, our eyes are removed from ourselves, our pride, our stuff, and our problems; and fixed on God, our Provider and Protector.

# 2. A Doorway to His Presence

- This concept of thanksgiving as a door into God's presence has been a powerful tool in my personal journey with God.
- There are times when I've been in rebellion and feel far away from God even after I've repented and received forgiveness. There are times when I'm worn down and just don't feel like worshipping Him. There are times where I'm in a dry spell and I just don't feel His presence even when I'm pursuing Him. And there are times when I'm discouraged or beat up and I feel like He's a million miles away.
- But when I willfully choose to stop and begin thanking Him for salvation in Jesus, the Holy Spirit, my family, my friends, my job, and acknowledging my many blessings, I will find that I'm instantly drawn into His presence and I'll begin to weep and be ministered to by His love for me. It is truly awesome!

# 3. A Weapon Against Satan

- “Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”  
1 Thessalonians 5:18
- “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your request to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:6
- “Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.” James 1:2-4

# 3. A Weapon Against Satan

- Spiritual sissies fold when they come into hardship. They shrink back and begin to whine, doubt God, and throw a rebellious pity party for themselves. This neutralizes us as God's servants and damages our witness to the world.
- However, spiritual warriors combat the plan of satan through hardship by turning it into an opportunity to draw closer to God. A warrior's willful response is to thank and praise God in the difficulty. This immediately stops satan's plan and makes Him think twice about that attack in the future because He actually lost spiritual ground in the attempt.
- This reaction has to become spiritual "muscle memory" through study, fellowship, training, and consistency.

# 4. A Path to Increased Intimacy

- “Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”  
1 Thessalonians 5:18
- “Whoever has My commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves Me. He who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I too will love him and show Myself to him.” John 14:21
- When we choose to be thankful in every circumstance, good or bad; we are being obedient to one of God’s difficult commands. Obedience is God’s love language and it will always produce increased intimacy with God. If you want to be closer to God, choose to be thankful in your next difficulty; you will find joy, peace, and a closeness with God that’s indescribable.



# Conclusion

- Since thanksgiving is such a powerful tool, it would be a waste for it to only be an annual holiday tradition.
- God commands us to be thankful at all times because He loves us and wants us to receive the great benefits of a thankful lifestyle everyday of our lives.
- As we close in a time of worship, I challenge you to get alone with God and commit to be a consistently thankful person. If needed, repent for being thankless.
- Ask for His grace and strength to be thankful in hard times so you can thwart satan's plans and be closer to Him.
- And take a moment and enter His sweet presence by actually thanking Him now for the blessings you have.