

Cultivate Thanksgiving

Psalm 100

MPS The Lord God fills our heart with thanksgiving as we fill our life with His God-ness and goodness.

OBJ Every person can cultivate thanksgiving in the heart by four practices.

INTRO Did anything so fill your heart this week that thanksgiving just flowed out of you? Thanksgiving wanes because we are so consumed with all we could have we've forgotten how to be thankful for what we DO have.

READ Psalm 100:1-5

*Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth! ²Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into his presence with singing! ³Know that the LORD, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. ⁴Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name! ⁵For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations. **Psalm 100:1-5***

Psalm 100 concludes a series of Psalms (from 91) that rejoice in the Lord who is King. At the apex of rejoicing, the psalmist summons the whole earth to respond to the Lord in thanksgiving for all He has done. This Psalm was likely used as a refrain of worship for the Hebrew people, to be sung at festivals. And while brief and pointed, it is filled with broad exhortation that spans the scope of our lives with God. From a Biblical perspective, thanksgiving is not a Christian holiday but a posture of life from which we live in right response to the Lord. We are instructed to “*give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*” (1 Thes 5:18). And according to Romans 1:21, failure to give thanks to the Lord is a first indicator of our straying from Him. [Thanksgiving that marks our lives as God’s people demands far greater attention that we give it.](#)

TRANS Today I want us to spend our time drawing from its exhortation to cultivate greater thanksgiving in our hearts and lives throughout this season.

[The Lord God fills our heart with thanksgiving as we fill our life with His God-ness and goodness.](#)

In an age of rage as the anticipated, and arguably the most favorable response, thanksgiving is far too rare. It seems to occupy less and less priority to subsequently have become far too rare on our lips. The only reason things don’t cross our lips is because our heart is not filled with it, because what fills the heart spills forth from our lips.

Q? HOW do you cultivate more thanksgiving in our heart so that it pours forth from our lips?

OBJ [Four Practices to cultivate Thanksgiving.](#)

1. [Worship the Lord](#) 100:1-2

“*Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth! Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into his presence with singing!*” he declares! The Psalmist begins with an appeal for all the earth to praise the Lord, an invitation into the most wonderful of all life practices that engage the whole of our being, the worship of the One who is infinitely and ultimately worthy of glory and praise! [Worship of the king of majesty is the true source of unending thanksgiving.](#)

TRANS This first practice likely provides a strong indication for why we have so little thanksgiving.

We struggle with thanksgiving when so full of everything else we become deplete of God’s real goodness filling our lives. In other words, our thanksgiving wanes when our worship is filled with false idols, false hopes, and false gospels, anything that consumes our affections, attention, and energies, that is unable to replenish in greater measure than it demands of them. And that is anything that is given what only God is worthy of.



How often we approach God not as He is worthy but as we are feeling. We beckon of Him for our life priorities instead of honoring Him as the priority of our life. We allow everything in the world to determine how we think, believe, and approach God in worship. But we allow little of His nature, character, and divine being to motivate our worship. Approaching God in this way reveals just how extensive sin controls our whole being, that the One who is infinitely worthy can be regarded as less or not worthy at all. When we approach God in this way, worship is reduced to little more than our tool of leverage to get God to do something to alleviate all our false worship and idolatry. Worship is when we come before God to ascribe to Him of all that we know He is worthy of, and find that we are filled more by Him than all that we have given to Him. As one commentator states, Psalm 100 “makes our worship an end in itself, rather than the means to another end, such as our own inspiration.”¹ [When the Scriptures beckon into the presence of the Lord, it is to give our all, in adoration and praise unto Him, to find that He is more. And His more produced in us overflows in thanksgiving for all things.](#)

TRANS Worship leads us more deeply into the eternal wonder of God! Which leads to the next catalyst for cultivating thanksgiving in our heart and life.

2. **Ponder His God-ness** 100:3

Know that the LORD, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Worship that draws one deeper into the presence of God leads to pondering the wonder of His God-ness. How quickly we can acknowledge He is God but absent the weight of glory that He is due.

ILLUS I learned to ponder in college. A couple of times a semester my fraternity would issue a late-night summons to some farmer’s field miles out of town. The night was typically a couple of hours given to nothing more than sitting on the tailgate of trucks, staring at the stars, and talking about whatever happened to come up. I am sure no world problems were solved during this time. But some lifelong friendships were forged.

HYMN Count Your Many Blessings

V1 When upon life’s billows you are tempest tossed, when you are discouraged thinking all is lost,
Count your many blessings name them one by one, and it will surprise you what the Lord has done.

V2 Are you ever burdened with a load of care? Does the cross seem heavy you are called to bear?
Count your many blessings, every doubt will fly, and you will be singing as the days go by.

V3 So amid the conflict, whether great or small, do no be discouraged, God is over all;
Count your many blessings, angels will attend, Help and comfort give you to your journey’s end.

Ch Count your blessings, name them one by one; count your blessings, see what God hath done;
count your blessings, name them one by one, and it will surprise you what the Lord has done.

True worship always leads one to ponder more the God-ness of God. He made us; with all the complexities and intricacies of the human body, mind, and soul. Of which to this day humanity studies our being and does not find the end of His wonder in us. We are His; all of our strengths and weaknesses, our successes and failures, and yet He rejoices over us with gladness; quiets us by his love; and exults over us with loud singing. (Zephaniah 3:17) He redeemed us; what sin separated God made a way to reconcile and make us His very own to care for, comfort, and dwell among. [What greater wonder to ponder than the God-ness of God!](#)

Worship draws us to ponder more deeply the truths of God in all of His God-ness, to cloak our whole life in the wonder of who He is and all He has done, and that we are counted with Him. There is no higher worship than when we linger to ponder more fully all of who He is and has done to make us His own. [Pondering God’s God-ness cultivates from every affection and attention, every energy and emotion, to pour forth in thanksgiving unto Him!](#)

TRANS Thanksgiving is not merely the fruit of knowing God, but the key to entering more deeply into His presence.

3. **Commune in His presence.** 100:4

¹ Donald Williams and Lloyd J. Ogilvie, [Psalms 73–150](#), vol. 14, The Preacher’s Commentary Series (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Inc, 1989), 207.



Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name!

The courts of God are no ordinary place where anyone can enter. The courts of God are “restricted worship space”, where the only ones who are welcome are those who have had a way made for them.

ILLUS I attended a Texas Rangers baseball game while in seminary. They had recently completed their new stadium and it was all the rage. We had my friend’s five-year-old son with us. We had purchased the \$5 outfield tickets but wanted to see if we could find some better seats. We arrived early, and sure enough we found some amazing seats, just behind home plate on the third base side. No one was stationed to stop us, so we walked down to about the fifth row where there were three available seats right on the end. Shortly after we sat down and began to enjoy the game, an usher had the audacity to come tell us we were not welcome to be in those seats. We inquired “why?” because after all, no one else had been seated there. He responded, “Because these seats are reserved for the team wives.” And he was right; we were the only men seated in a full section of women.

The Psalmist records that courts of God have two distinguishing traits; they are restricted access and filled with the blessing of His Name. I do wonder if this is not a main reason why some people do not find the presence of God more all-engaging. **Do you have access to enter the gates into God’s court? Do you often find yourself in church wondering what all the hype is about?** Don’t get me wrong, there are plenty of places called “church” that are nothing more than “hype”. **But when the name of Jesus is exalted, do you find yourself struggling to care, unmoved because He is unimpressive to you? Do you come in for some reason other than to bless His Name?** You see, you can get into church and do most all the things that others are doing and STILL NOT be in the court of God. But you will never commune with God in His presence without entering His court by praise and thanksgiving. And one of the surest ways to not get through the “gate” is to come for some reason other than to bless His Name. **Friend, communing with God is a place of restricted access, but God never turns away any who wants to come in. And entering into the presence of God only produces a greater outpouring of blessing and thanksgiving.**

TRANS Finally, to bless the Name of the Lord in His presence leads to testify of His goodness to the whole world.

4. Testify to His faithfulness 100:5

For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.

No one enters the courts of God with praise and thanksgiving and leaves with anything other than “good”. God’s goodness flows from His God-ness. He is like no other. His love is not contingent, but steadfast and enduring. His faithfulness is not finite, but carries forth to all generations. Communing in the presence of God produces thanksgiving in the heart like nothing else because He fills the heart with that which nothing else can, His goodness.

ILLUS Every marketing ploy in the world knows this: the one thing people cannot do is be silent when we find a deal that is like no other! Marketing hides the hurt to exploit the smallest amount of good, always knowing it people feel the good they will not be silent about it.

Luke 7 records Jesus teaching this principle. A sinful woman comes to Jesus, breaks an expensive bottle of oil and anoints his feet with her oil and tears. The Pharisees get angry that Jesus would allow a sinful woman to touch him, let alone have all this money wasted in such a way. You see, they were not thankful because they did not understand the supreme worth of Jesus. When they asked Jesus why he would allow this, he tells a parable of two debtors. One owed a very great debt and other not so great an amount. When the debt of both is canceled, Jesus asks, “who do you think will love more, the one with the greater or lesser debt?” The answer is obvious to all humanity because we understand that goodness cannot be contained but must be shared! **The person who testifies faithfully of Jesus Christ is always the one who is most thankful to the Lord for what He has done in filling their life with His goodness.**

Is that you, friend? Are you spending time with Jesus so that your life is filled by His God-ness and with His goodness, to tell everyone about what He has done for you?

The Lord God fills our heart with thanksgiving as we fill our life with His God-ness and goodness.



