



# Thankfulness

**TEXT:** 1 Chronicles 16:7-36

**KEY VERSE:** Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. — Psalm 106:1

## RESPONSES

1. The author was King David. The occasion was the bringing of the Ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the tabernacle made for it in the City of David. Discuss with the class that this was a happy occurrence for the Children of Israel and for King David in particular. A fitting psalm of thanksgiving was written to help celebrate. Usually when one is truly thankful, he gives voice to his emotion through praise, prayer, songs, poetry, etc. This psalm contains all these elements.

2. When the Temple was dedicated, the Levites provided singers and trumpeters to praise and thank the Lord in one accord. God sanctioned this program by filling the Temple with the cloud of His glory. Ask your class to name some of the songs that have been written to express the theme of thanksgiving. Many songs may not use the word "thanksgiving," yet the meaning is there. "How Great Thou Art," expresses appreciation for God's great power and love to us. "The Comforter Has Come," shows our gratitude for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Discuss how the Christmas carols show our thankfulness for God's wondrous gift of the Savior and salvation.

3. Verse 9. A testimony usually gives praise and thankfulness to God for His goodness and mercy. Discuss with the class that the verse mentioned admonishes all to sing and talk of God's wondrous works. Some may feel that their testimony, or their ability to give it, is not as great as another's. Still they will derive a benefit from doing so. See Malachi 3:16; Matthew 10:32; Revelation 12:11.

4. Encourage the students to read their lists which will probably enumerate such items as God's covenant to Abraham to give the Children of Israel the land of Canaan, the Law He had given, and the protection He had provided. God had made the heavens, He is a living God, not an idol, and He is a merciful God. As the Children of Israel served God in truth, they had many blessings. Is not God just the same today? When men serve Him in Spirit and truth, they have His blessing. Discuss with the class how this blessing may not always be in evidence, but this true hope will take one to Heaven, which is the greatest of all blessings.

How nice it is to receive heartfelt thanks from someone to whom we have given a gift or for whom we have done some favor. Surely then, the God of all the universe and on whom our very lives depend, is pleased when those of His creation show and express thankfulness for the many blessings He daily sends our way. See Psalm 68:19.

1. The portion of text we are studying is referred to as a "psalm," although it is not included in the Book of Psalms. Who was the author? What was the occasion? See 1 Chronicles 16:1.

2. At different times, musicians and singers had been appointed and used in the worship of the Lord. How were an orchestra and choir used to express thanksgiving? See 2 Chronicles 5:13.

3. What verse in the text might be used to explain the reason for singing and testifying in church? In what way can a testimony be considered thanksgiving?

4. Make a list from this psalm in our text of some of the marvelous works that the Lord had done for the Children of Israel for which they were to be thankful.

## ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

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5. To whom were the Israelites to tell of the glory of God and His marvelous works? Who are we supposed to tell of God's greatness?

6. How do we develop a spirit of thanksgiving even during times of great difficulty? See 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.

7. As we serve God with all our hearts, He truly will supply all our needs (Philippians 4:19). List some of the things you would consider needs.

8. List some of the things the Lord has given above and beyond your needs.

9. Give an example of when Romans 8:28 was proven in your own life.

5. Verse 8 says to make known His deeds among the people, and verse 24 says to declare His glory among the heathen, His marvelous works among all nations. Christians today are admonished to be witnesses for Christ to the uttermost parts of the earth. How does thanksgiving relate to witnessing? The fuller the heart is with thankfulness and praise to God, the easier it is for that one to tell others of God's greatness. How do we fill our hearts with thanksgiving? Count your blessings—every blessing—see what God has done.

6. Many people are unthankful because they feel deprived in some respect, yet if they would start counting their blessings they would realize the goodness of God. Ask the class for a definition of *great difficulty*. Some might define this term to mean "the severe lack of material possessions," but that sort of situation cannot prevent us from having the hope of eternal life. Other students may say that "having a painful, terminal illness" would be *great difficulty*. When we have Christ as Savior, we have the promise that "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him" (2 Timothy 2:12). We also have the promise of the healing of all our diseases. We have His arm to lean upon, and His Spirit to comfort and uphold us. Encourage the students to suggest other things which might be considered a great difficulty, and with Scripture find a way by which we can "in every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

7. When we serve God with our whole heart He gives His salvation, the first requisite. He has also promised food and raiment. See Matthew 6:33, 1 Timothy 6:8, and Hebrews 13:5. In Isaiah 33:16 we are promised a place of defense, our bread, and water. Ask the students to add to this list, and have them point out why they consider the items suggested as needs.

8. Allow time for students to respond with their answers. The lists will vary according to the ages of the students, but no doubt this list will produce many good reasons why they should be thankful, not only on Thanksgiving Day, but every day of the year. Discuss with the students that their spirit of thankfulness should be expressed when the Lord supplies their basic needs, as well as for the many things He gives above their needs.

9. Class participation will give a good wrap-up for this lesson. Most students will be able to recite an incident in their lives that worked out for their good. Some may recall an outstanding healing (actually, all healings are outstanding). Some may tell of the development of a talent in art, music, or speech. Some have experienced an accident which later became the springboard for a testimony. There are many possibilities in this question, and the answers from the students should be helpful in letting the teacher point out that it is our obligation to be thankful for all things that happen to us, good or bad.

## YOUR WRAP-UP

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## SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What happens when we begin to thank God in prayer?

How many times a day do we say, "Thank you"? Try to count them. How many times a day do we say, "Thank You" to God?

Why do we need to tell God we thank Him, when He already knows everything and knows that we're thankful?

How will it affect our Christian testimony if we forget to be thankful?

Do we really need to thank God for our food in public? Why?

How can we be thankful for something when we don't see how God can be using it for our good?

If something comes into our lives that we don't understand—a car wreck that totals our car, our home destroyed by fire, a debilitating illness—can we still be thankful? How? Why should we be?

## THINGS TO DO

Have the students write a note of one or two things for which they are thankful. Let each student read aloud his own, or mix them up and pass them around the room, with students reading each other's.

Using a large chalkboard or posterboard, draw a big circle in the center. Write GOD in the middle of the circle. Around the inside edges of the circle, write the names of things the class is thankful for. As you discuss how God is related to each item, draw a line to it. Think of how our every need is supplied by God, the One who created us. Things to be thankful for: good health, happiness, family, eternal life, etc. Don't forget to give God thanks for all these things!

Using your hymnbook, make a list of songs. Write the titles on a transparency for an overhead presentation, or

make copies of the list for everyone in your class. With your students, go through the songs listed and mark how many of them deal with praise and thanksgiving to God.

Discuss the story of the ten lepers (Luke 17:11-19), or have your students act it out.

One week ahead of time, ask your students to come prepared with an object symbolic of something for which they are thankful.

## Answers for ANSWER

