

Gospel Outreach



Thoughts for Thanksgiving (Part 2)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again as I continue to share with you "Thoughts for Thanksgiving."

I want to begin by reminding you how important it is to be thankful and to give thanks. The Bible has a great deal to say about this. Let me just read today one passage from the New Testament, 1 Thessalonians 5:16–19. Paul says this:

> "Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit..."

You see, there are three things that the Word of God exhorts us to do all the time: to rejoice, to pray, and to give thanks. And particularly, about giving thanks, Paul says, "in everything give thanks." We ought to be giving thanks all the time. And then he says about giving thanks, "for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." You see, it's the will of God that we give thanks. That's a very important fact and many Christians miss it. I've seen this from experience in the lives of many Christians. They can be in the will of God in everything they're doing, the place they live, their job, their ministry, their church, and yet they don't feel to be in God's will. They're discontented, they're frustrated, they're trying to find some change, a change of location or something else. But what they need to change is none of their circumstances. The change they need is to start giving thanks. Because you can be perfectly in the will of God in every aspect of your life and yet, if you're not giving thanks you're not in the will of God. Paul says, "in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus." And then he says, "Do not quench the Holy Spirit." So you see, as soon as we stop giving thanks we're quenching the Holy Spirit. We're quenching the very source of our joy and our peace and our power. Often the change that's needed in our lives is not an external change but is an inner change whereby we resolve to obey God and to give thanks in everything.

Now, I want to give a practical application of this to us as residents and citizens of the United States in this Thanksgiving week. I believe that often we Americans are guilty of quenching the Holy Spirit by not giving thanks, by not acknowledging all the blessings that God is continually giving us in this nation, blessings which are not enjoyed by most other nations. So each day this week I want to take a

practical application, I want to take something specific for which to thank God. And I want to ask you to join with me in thanking God for this specific thing. Yesterday the topic that I chose for specific thanksgiving was the religious liberty that we enjoy in this nation paralleled by very few other nations on the face of the earth today.

Today I want to go one step further with this theme and I want to thank God for the gospel outreach from this nation. Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." We have the blessing of receiving the gospel, but we have the greater blessing of giving the gospel. Not only do we enjoy it but we export it.

If we look back over history, it seems that God has privileged certain nations and certain periods to be a main source of gospel outreach. I believe in the Dark Ages there was a time when much of the gospel outreach in Europe started from Ireland and God blessed Ireland. Then there was undoubtedly a time when England was the main nation that provided the gospel to many other nations of the world. There was a time when the nation was Scotland, there was a time when Sweden held that privileged position. But today that privilege is ours in the United States. Just think of all the specific Christian outreach that goes forth from this country. Here we are listening to Christian radio. Let's thank God for the Christian radio that goes out from this nation. Just to mention two great Christian undertakings: the Far East Broadcasting Corporation and Trans World Radio. Shall we thank God for them? And then think of the many Christian leaders from other countries who found a base and support for their ministry in the United States.

Of course, this is very real to me because I'm one of them. I was born in India, brought up in Britain and I worked hard for the Lord for many years in Britain, but I'll have to say that the support and appreciation I received since I've lived in the United States has far exceeded anything I ever experienced in any other nation. And I want to thank God for it.

Think about some other well-known servants of God from other countries who found a place of refuge and support in this country. Our dear sister, Corrie ten Boom, of course, is from Holland; Richard Wurmbrandt; and then what about Watchman Nee. Though he was a Chinaman and died in China, the main source for the distribution of his ministry throughout the world is here in the United States. So, I believe it is correct to say that we in the United States enjoy today a unique privilege: the privilege of being perhaps the main source of the giving forth of the gospel to many, many other nations, to say nothing of the work of the American Bible Society and the New York Bible Society, who between them provide the greater part of Bibles that are translated and made available to nations and other lands. Shall we not agree together to thank God for these privileges? Let's agree together then, to thank God for the blessings that I've mentioned both yesterday and today, for our religious liberty, and our privilege to give the gospel to other less fortunate lands. Will you join with me as I pray briefly now?

"Our God, we want to thank you for the privileges we enjoy in this nation, privileges that are granted to few other nations anywhere on earth. We want you to know, Lord, that we're grateful and we want to take this special opportunity to express our gratitude to you. Help us, Lord, to be grateful people, to appreciate all that you do for us. We give you the praise and the glory in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ."

Thank you for praying with me.

Now, let me share with you a topic of thanksgiving on a rather more personal basis. Each week I receive letters from listeners thanking me for the help and the blessing they receive from this radio ministry. And so, each day this week I want to thank God personally for this ministry and the blessings it provides. And also each day this week I'm going to read from one or more of these letters that I receive from listeners. For instance, here's a listener who writes:

> "I would like to give a word of testimony for the Foundation Series. I have been reading a chapter or two of the study, as time permits. Last Sunday's reading happened to include chapter 4, Faith for Salvation, which concludes with a sinner's prayer. That morning I read it out loud to myself, rattling it off with no particular stress as to content, but shortly thereafter I had the blessed reassurance that I am absolutely with positive certainty through the door, abiding in eternity now, a member of the family of God."

Don't you think we should thank God for a letter like that? And then, here's a letter from Nashville, Tennessee:

> "I would like to tell you how much I enjoy your program every evening. I take a late lunch so that I can have a chance to listen to your program. It has taught me so much about the Lord. I have enclosed a small donation which in no way can pay for your book on the marriage covenant. I have been listening about the marriage covenant and making a covenant with God for the past two weeks. I have made a quality decision to put God first in my life and I can truly see a wonderful difference. And my spirit just can't get enough of His

> Word. I will be getting married soon and I would like to use some of God's covenant for marriage as you have spoken it on the radio in our vows."

Should we thank God for that response, too? So, I do want you to join with me each day in thanking God for our privileges and our blessings.

Radio Program

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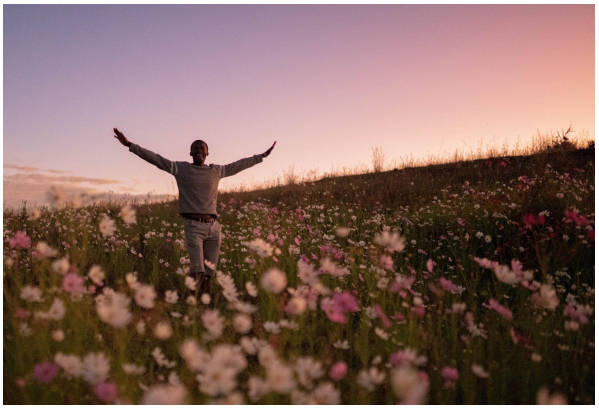

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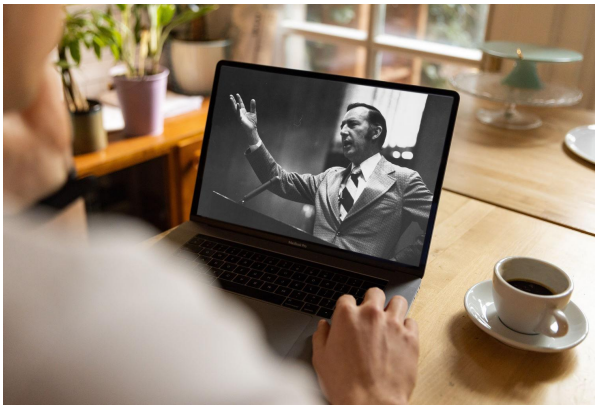

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