



The Harvest

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Gratitude

In this season, what are you thankful for and why? Take some time to list out what those are below:

The year 2020 has been a challenge for all of us. And even that sentiment might be an understatement. We've dealt with natural disasters, a worldwide pandemic, the loss of jobs, the shutdown of our nation, disconnection from our friends and family, devastating loss of those we love, and a sense of hopelessness throughout the world. To say that we were steamrolled by trying times only begins to scratch the surface. The weight of these difficulties may be heavily burdening each of your hearts right now, and the season of Thanksgiving may not be exactly where your mind goes.

The world can feel overwhelming. Sometimes, even in times unlike the ones we're currently facing, we feel so burdened that we can't begin to think of something we're thankful for. We allow our circumstances to alter our perception of life. We let our situations dictate how we view ourselves, our family and friends, and even the Lord Himself.

When life gets difficult, there comes the temptation to view God as somehow less good. We can begin to feel as if God has abandoned us – as if He has not kept His promises – as if He has not given us good gifts. As fallible human beings, we can forget all the goodness God has brought to us. We get hyper-focused on the negative circumstances, forgetting entirely the joys God has gifted to us.

Pause: Have you ever felt yourself forgetting what God has given you in favor of focusing on the negative? Reflect a little bit on when this has happened and why you think that is:

Now, spend some time reading Psalm 100.
Focus especially on verses 4 and 5:

*“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 through all generations.”*

This is our call as believers: we are both encouraged and also required to bring our thanksgiving to the Lord. Focusing on God allows us to shift our mindset from the negativity in life to the joy that comes from knowing and following Him. Thinking only of the unrest in our lives and in the world will lead to dissatisfaction. We will be unhappy with our circumstances, our day-to-day lives, and with God Himself. We will begin to blame the Lord for that which we should be praising Him. We have the honor of approaching God in joy and in thanksgiving. We are called to gratitude.

God has given us so much - the very breath in our lungs when the national pandemic could have stolen it, the family and friends that no amount of distance can take away from us, the financial provision when we could have had nothing, the knowledge of seeing our loved ones again, and the hope that only Yeshua can provide. We have everything to be thankful for. Though times are tough, the truth remains: God is good. We can't help but be grateful.

Take some time to pray and thank the Lord for every good thing He's brought into your life. Each and every one of us – no matter what – have many things to be thankful for. Make sure to let God know how thankful you are. Doing so will not only fulfill the command to give thanks and rejoice but will also mold your heart and shape your mindset.

Worship:

- ~ Grateful by Elevation Worship
- ~ We Give You Thanks by All Sons & Daughters
- ~ Enter the Gates by Bryan & Katie Torwalt
