



## Thanksgiving

Throughout the Bible, we see *thanksgiving* for blessings as a theme. The Old Testament resounds with the people praising God; Israel had a history of giving thanks to God for the mercy and deliverance he showed them. In the New Testament we read, Jesus "Then he took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven he gave thanks and broke them" ([Luke 9:16](#)). At the Last Supper Jesus took bread and gave thanks, and offered it to His followers ([1 Cor. 11:24](#)). Jesus always prayed before meals.

With the holiday approaching, let's consider some thoughts for thanksgiving.

**Motive.** When we give thanks to God, our sole motive should be *pure gratitude*. Thanksgiving is giving thanks and that alone. Of all our types of prayers, a thanksgiving prayer is the least likely to be polluted or corrupted with selfish thoughts or a subconscious appeal to manipulate God. It is about God's blessings toward us and our appreciation of those blessings.

**Knowledgeable.** Being grateful requires us to look back into the past, whether times recent or years past, and acknowledging blessings for which we are thankful. Our culture is infatuated with the future and the result is that thanksgiving is sometimes neglected. But to give thanks to God is to look backwards, not forwards, and to express gratitude for the good things that have come our way.

**Comprehensive.** On the U.S. holiday, we thank God for the meal. Sometimes we include more in our prayers. We should, because we are so blessed. God is to be thanked for our family, friends, housing, jobs, and possibly hundreds of other minor things. Giving God thanks should be a theme running through our lives in times good and bad. The Pilgrims lived close enough to the soil to know how dependent they were on God's providence. In bitter winters with scarce food, they learned to thank God for all they had. And they were eager to thank Him during times of abundant blessing, too.

As Thanksgiving Day approaches, ponder and consider the many blessings you enjoy. Be grateful for these wonderful benefits and thank God for them. *KMG*

