

## Lesson 5 A Prayer of Gratitude Psalm 65

**Purpose:** To experience the joy of saying “thank you” to God.

**Gratitude:** (n.) the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to show kindness.

**Synonyms:** gratefulness, thanks, recognition, acknowledgment, hat tip, credit, regard, and indebtedness.

The author of this lesson series said, “Because I have difficulty receiving gifts or compliments from others, I have had to remind myself to look people in the eyes when they offer me a gift or a compliment and say ‘thank you’.”

When we are unable to receive the good things that others offer us, we cheat ourselves, and we cheat them. When we are able to say thank you for gifts given, we are able to take the gift in, enjoy it and engage in a personal, intimate way with the giver of the gift. In the same way, when we express gratitude to God for the gifts He gives us, we enter into a cycle of joyful relating with him. We take in his love, feel a deeper connection with Him and experience joy.

**Group Discussion:** Let’s look at a few scriptures about giving thanks.

- **Psalm 100:4:** *“Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.”*
- **Ephesians 5:20:** *“Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*
- **Colossians 3:17:** *“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”*
- **1 Thessalonians 5:18:** *“In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”*

**Personal Reflection.** Think about how it is to receive a gift or a compliment. It shows that someone is thinking about you and wanted to express it. And it is true, at least in my opinion, it is not the size of the gift, it is the thought that counts.

**Note from the ESV Study Bible: Psalm 65.** This is a thanksgiving; the specific occasion is a fruitful harvest (**vv. 9-13**). Perhaps this good harvest has come after a drought, which was a sign of divine displeasure (**see vv. 3, 9-10**). Or it is the Festival of Weeks, also known as Pentecost.

The harvest is set in context of God’s faithfulness to His covenant promises (**Ps. 65:1-8**). The Sinai covenant ties together God’s grace, the believing response of the people, and the fruitfulness of the land. Singing this song should develop a deep spirit of gratitude in the heart of the worshippers.

**Outline of Psalm 65**

- **65:1-4** Praise for God in Zion.
- **65:5-8** You (God) Have Shown Us Awesome Deeds
- **65:9-13** You Have Made the Land Produce Abundantly

The subtitle in the Amplified Bible is *God's Abundant Favor to Earth and Man*. Let's Read **Psalm 65**.

**Discussion:**

1. In this psalm, four categories of gifts are expressed. The psalmist expressed forgiveness (**v. 3**), relationship (**vv. 4-5**), creation (**vv. 6-8**) and sustaining loving care (**vv. 9-13**).
2. God is powerful. This can either be good news or bad news. It is significant to know that God uses his power to help us, not as a weapon to harm us. In this psalm we reflect on how God uses His power to protect, provide, create and to save us.
3. In **verse 5** God is called "our Savior," the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the afar off upon the sea. Think about it, God sustains all the living things of the earth, air, and sea. As Creator, He is highly involved in an ongoing way with His Creation. More specifically for us as humans, he is our hope as Creator, Sustainer, and Savior.
4. God is our source of our hope. He is the creator and maker of all things. He supplies all of our needs and He is the one that sustains life as we know it. But ultimately, God Himself has provided a way for us to be reconciled to Him through His Son, Jesus Christ.
  - a. From everlasting, to everlasting, He is God. This world and the things in it will pass away, but God has no beginning nor ending.
5. The psalmist mentions several of God's awesome deeds in **verses 6 and 7**. Some other awesome deeds God has done are, providing us with salvation through Christ, keeping us alive, forgiving our sins through Christ. God is the one who controls the climate and allows food to grow. He is the one that keeps creation going in the proper order.
  - a. On a personal level He is the one who gives us skills and abilities to obtain and maintain jobs. He gives us the capacity to think and reason. Above all else, He is the One who draws us to Christ. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him:..." (**John 6:44**)
6. **Verse 8** offers a picture of the fears and joys common to all people of the earth. When we look at the wonders of God, they can cause us to experience fear. To know that God is so powerful that he can create mountains and rivers, oceans, seas, and places like the Grand Canyon can bring about fear of God.
7. The wonders of God in creation such as the birth of a child, the changes in seasons, the beaches, and the personal tender loving care of God can cause us to sing songs of joy.
8. **Verses 9-13** describe the specific ways in which God tenderly loves and cares for the earth. **Deuteronomy 11:12**, described the Promise Land as, "A land which the Lord thy God careth

for: the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.” God has always been a good steward of His creation and still is.

- a. He knows how to water, to send the right amount of sunshine to care for the earth. He allows trees and crops to grow as well as the animals that roam the land and are in the pastures.
  - b. **Verses 9-13** reveals a caring nurturing heavenly Father.
9. Since God cares for the earth, we should be inspired to do our part to care for things as well. God has given us the gift of His creation. One way to express gratitude for a gift is to cherish it and take good care of it.
10. Personally, expressing gratitude to God has a way of lifting us from complaining and talking about what we don't have and moving to being thankful. It can help us to appreciate what God has already done and is doing on our behalf.
11. What are you grateful for today?

**Prayer:** Spend some time expressing your gratitude to God.

#### **Now or Later**

Write a psalm of gratitude or a thank-you letter to God expressing your feelings.