

# Thank God for What I Don't Have!

Message 2 of 2 in the series: "Thank God!"

## A. It is important that we thank God for what we have.

1. Thanking God reminds us of His goodness.

"Enter his gates with thanksgiving; go into his courts with praise. Give thanks to him and praise his name. **For the LORD is good.** His unfailing love continues forever, and his faithfulness continues to each generation." Psalm 100:4-5 (NLT)

2. Thanking God reminds us that everything we have comes from Him.

"When you have eaten your fill, be sure to praise the Lord your God for the good land he has given you. But that is the time to be careful! Beware that in your plenty you do not forget the Lord your God and disobey his commands, regulations, and decrees that I am giving you today. For when you have become full and prosperous and have built fine homes to live in, and when your flocks and herds have become very large and your silver and gold have multiplied along with everything else, be careful! Do not become proud at that time and forget the Lord your God, who rescued you from slavery in the land of Egypt. Do not forget that he led you through the great and terrifying wilderness with its poisonous snakes and scorpions, where it was so hot and dry. He gave you water from the rock! He fed you with manna in the wilderness, a food unknown to your ancestors. He did this to humble you and test you for your own good. **He did all this so you would never say to yourself, 'I have achieved this wealth with my own strength and energy.'** Remember the Lord your God. He is the one who gives you power to be successful..." Deuteronomy 8:10-18a (NLT)

## B. It is also important that we thank God for what we don't have when we surrender our lives to Jesus.

1. We don't have guilt/shame.

"Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight! Yes, what joy for those whose record the Lord has cleared of guilt, whose lives are lived in complete honesty! When I refused to confess my sin, my body wasted away, and I groaned all day long. Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat. Finally, I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide my guilt. I said to myself, **'I will confess my rebellion to the Lord.'** **And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone.**" Psalm 32:1-6 (NLT)

"The Lord is compassionate and merciful, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. He will not constantly accuse us, nor remain angry forever. He does not punish us for all our sins; he does not deal harshly with us, as we deserve. For his unfailing love toward those who fear him is as great as the height of the heavens above the earth. **He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west.** The Lord is like a father to his children, tender and compassionate to those who fear him. For he knows how weak we are; he remembers we are only dust." Psalm 103:8-14 (NLT)

2. We don't have the impossible task of being good enough to earn our way into heaven.

"God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that **in him we might become the righteousness of God.**" 2 Corinthians 5:21 (NIV)

"When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners. Now, most people would not be willing to die for an upright person, though someone might perhaps be willing to die for a person who is especially good. But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. And since **we have been made right in God's sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God's condemnation.**" Romans 5:6-9 (NLT)

"I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway... Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord... now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. And because you belong to him, **the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death.**" Romans 7:19-8:2 (NLT)

3. We don't have overwhelming responsibility for planning out our lives.

"There is a path before each person that **seems right**, but it ends in death." Proverbs 14:12 (NLT)

“The Lord says, **I will guide you along the best pathway for your life.** I will advise you and watch over you.” Psalm 32:8 (NLT)

*Note:* We don't need to understand God in order to trust/love Him.

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart; **do not depend on your own understanding.** Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.” Proverbs 3:5-6 (NLT)

4. We don't have anxiety and stress from trying to make desired outcomes happen.

“Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For **my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.**” Matthew 11:28-30 (NLT)

“Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. Yes, **I am the vine; you are the branches.** Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit.” John 15:4-5a (NLT)

5. We don't have bitterness that comes from unforgiveness/holding grudges.

“...and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us.” Matthew 6:12 (NLT)

“Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone. **Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, ‘I will take revenge; I will pay them back,’** says the Lord. Instead, ‘If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals of shame on their heads.’ Don't let evil conquer you but conquer evil by doing good.” Romans 12:17-21 (NLT) (*Deuteronomy 32:35, Proverbs 25:21-22*)

6. We don't have fear.

“For **God did not give us a spirit of timidity or cowardice or fear,** but [He has given us a spirit] of power and of love and of sound judgment *and* personal discipline [abilities that result in a calm, well-balanced mind and self-control].” 2 Timothy 1:7 (Amplified Bible)

“The Lord is my light and my salvation—so **why should I be afraid?** The Lord is my fortress, protecting me from danger, so **why should I tremble?**” Psalm 27:1 (NLT)

“**There is no fear in love.** But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment.”

1 John 4:18a (NIV)

### C. Four meaningful things we can do to thank God for what we don't have:

1. We can make a list of things we don't have because we've surrendered our lives to Jesus.
2. We can thank God for the things He has freed us from by telling Him out loud that we are grateful for the items on our list. This can be done in private or together with others. (i.e. “Thank you Lord that I don't have \_\_\_\_\_.”)
3. If we realize we have been picking up one/some of these items again, we can repent of our sinful desire to do so and surrender control of every part of our lives to God again. (i.e. “Lord, you know I have given in to the temptation to hold a grudge/be afraid/live in shame/try to control my life, etc. Please forgive me. Renew my mind. I surrender every part of my life to you. Please fill me with your Holy Spirit and give me the desire and the power to do what pleases you.”)
4. We can keep our list in our car/desk/purse/Bible and thank God every day at stoplights, before meals, before bedtime, before heading to work/school, etc.

John Schmidt • 11-27-22 • [john@centeringlives.com](mailto:john@centeringlives.com)

### Scripture verses to consider:

“The LORD is my strength and shield. I trust him with all my heart. He helps me, and my heart is filled with joy. I burst out in songs of thanksgiving.” Psalm 28:7 (NLT)

“It is good to give thanks to the LORD, to sing praises to the Most High.” Psalm 92:1 (NLT)

“Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.”

1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NLT)