

THANKSGIVING SERVICE

Concord Community Church—Urdu/Hindi Service
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In 2 Timothy 3:2, We see that an *unthankful attitude* is listed with *unholiness* as two major indicators that the final stages of the last days have begun. Apostle Paul told us that society at the end of the age will become “unthankful”.

The word unthankful is a translation of the Greek word *acharistos*. The word *charistos* on its own simply means thankful, but when an “a” is added/attached to the front of it, it reverses the condition and turns into an attitude that is unthankful and ungrateful.

This is a picture of people who previously had a thankful heart but now are unthankful and unappreciative. They no longer focus on their blessings they have in their lives; instead, they fixed on what they don't have.

We need to know that as long as an ungrateful attitude prevails in our life, we will never be happy. *Thankfulness is a prerequisite to happiness, because only a thankful heart can be a happy heart.*

One thing is clear: **unthankfulness & unholiness** are connected. *One always leads to the other*. That is why Apostle Paul lists the word “unholy” immediately after the word “unthankful”. When people stop expressing a heart of gratitude towards God, unholy attitudes inevitably (without fail/at all times) begin to materialize, and these attitudes are soon followed by blatant (obvious and shameless) unholy behavior.

Some Thoughts on Being Thankful

THE MEANING OF THANKFULNESS

Thankfulness is an important subject to the apostle Paul and in the Word of God as a whole. Some combination of the word is found 169 times in 162 verses in the NASB and 195 times in 186 verses in the NET Bible. Paul uses the concept over 40 times in his epistles and seven times in Colossians alone (cf. 1:2, 3, 12; 2:7; 3:15, 17; 4:2). The concept of thankfulness in the New Testament comes from the use of two Greek words. The first is *charizomai*, which comes from *charis*, "grace." The second is *homologeō*, "to confess,

acknowledge," ([Heb. 13:15](#)). Thankfulness is a mental and/or verbal expression of one's acknowledgement and appreciation of God's person, His grace, blessings, and sovereign work in one's life and the world. Some *key ideas* related to thankfulness are: biblical understanding, trust, humility and grace, the right focus and values, and joy. It is through the possession and function of these qualities that we become thankful. So, why should we be thankful?

SOME GENERAL REASONS WHY WE SHOULD BE THANKFUL

1. *Because it honors God.* When we are thankful, we recognize that God exists, and we are acting on the reality of His life as the very source and means of ours. True thankfulness recognizes our total dependence on God and stems from realizing that everything going on in our lives and all we have is the product of God's sovereign control, infinite wisdom, purposes, grace, and activity ([2 Cor. 4:15](#)).

2. *Because it is commanded in Scripture.* First, the Psalms are filled with the call to give thanks. An example is [Ps. 100:4](#) which says, "Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name." Then Paul tells us in [1 Thessalonians 5:18](#), "In everything keep on giving thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (my translation). In Colossians, he twice gives the command to be thankful (3:15, 17).

3. *Because of the dangerous consequences of thanklessness:* Thanklessness is dangerous to self and others. It dishonors God and leads to proud humanism or dependence on man rather than God (cf. [Rom. 1:21](#)). In addition, it leads to bitterness, complaining, and a joyless life ([Heb. 12:15](#)). Since thankfulness is a response to the grace of God, its opposite, *bitterness* with its companions, *complaining* and *grumbling*, are the product of an unthankful heart that fails to properly respond to God in faith to His person, infinite wisdom, grace and purposes. Thanklessness promotes pettiness and occupation with self, people, and problems. That in turn creates depression and feelings of hopelessness because we become focused on our problems rather than on the Lord.

But thanks be to God who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and who makes known through us the fragrance that consists of the knowledge of him in every place ([2 Cor. 2:14](#)).

This verse in 2 Corinthians demonstrates that a thankful and God-focused person counts on God and His triumph and will manifest the sweet fragrance of a life filled with the knowledge of Christ rather than the spirit of bitterness and complaining. Thankfulness, then, becomes a spiritual barometer; it is an evidence of the condition of our spiritual life and value system, which should give us a warning if we have ears to hear (cf. [Eph. 5:4](#) & 20 and note the context of each verse. For verse 4, the context or focus is living as children of God rather than as children of the world [cf. vs.1]; for verse 20, the context or focus is the fruit of the Spirit [cf. vs. 18]).

THE TIME FOR THANKSGIVING (THE WHEN AND WHERE)

First, we should give thanks whenever we pray. Scripture teaches us, both by illustration (cf. [Eph. 1:16](#); [Phil. 1:3-4](#); [Col. 1:3](#); [1 Thess. 1:2](#)) and by direct admonition ([Phil. 4:6f](#); [Col. 4:2](#)), that prayer should generally be accompanied by or offered in a context of thanksgiving. The reason is perhaps found in the very nature of thanksgiving! Thanksgiving turns our eyes from our problems and ourselves to the Lord that we might focus on Him and His sovereign grace. It helps us to see life through the perspective of God's *person, principles, promises, plan, provisions, and purposes*. Then, as this happens, this upward focus promotes faith and courage in the face of the trying and painful situations that we all eventually face to one degree or another.

Second, we should always give thanks in everything and for everything ([Eph. 5:20](#); [1 Thess. 5:18](#)). Now why? In addition to the reasons already given, it helps us to focus on the sovereignty of God and the fact that He is in control and working all things together for good regardless of how they may seem to us in our limited perspective (cf. [Rom. 8:28, 29](#); [Jam. 1:2-4](#); [Gen. 50:19-20](#)). While all things may not be good, God uses them for good, the good of making us like His Son. Also, since a spirit of thanksgiving keeps our eyes on the Lord, it also keeps us alert and promotes an eagerness to go to God in prayer to lay our burdens and those of others at His feet ([Ps. 68:19-20](#); [Col. 4:2](#)). Finally, we should always give thanks because it protects us against the dangers and consequences of thanklessness mentioned above.

SOME OBJECTS OF THANKSGIVING (THE WHAT)

We should give thanks for God Himself and for His sovereign activity and control over the universe. What a hopeless world this world would be if all things had no purpose and were merely the product of time plus chance. As we see here in [Colossians 1:12-14](#), we should give thanks for our salvation through Christ and for the unfathomable riches that are ours in Him ([Eph. 3:8](#)). After all, we are blessed with every spiritual blessing, and we are complete in Him ([Eph. 1:3](#); [Col. 2:10](#)). As illustrated so often by Paul in the salutation of his epistles, we should give thanks for others who know the Savior and are growing and serving the Lord.

Therefore, as a church, God's adopted children (John 10:12) and as born-again believers, let's clearly understand the practice and importance of being thankful. Let us express our thankfulness this evening to our triune God as He deserves and as per Ephesians 5:27.

May God help us to do just that.....Amen.