

P268

GRACE NOTES PROGRAM

THEME: Just say "Thanks"

SONGS: SING TO THE LORD

LORD I LIFT YOUR NAME

INTRO: William Barclay once said...

"The finest gifts are given, not after waiting until need has to ask, but by the person whose eye sees, whose heart feels, and whose hand is stretched out even before any request is made."

God gave mankind the finest gift that could EVER be given. He SAW our need before we knew it, and before we even asked. We were living our lives apart from Him, but God's heart LONGED for our fellowship, so He commended His love to us through the gift of His Son, Jesus. Jesus STRETCHED OUT His hands on the cross to give us God's love. He died and rose from the grave, to pay the penalty for our sin against God and to provide reconciliation. When we accept this gift, we have fellowship with God. What greater gift could we possibly want?

Today on Grace Notes, our host Barbara Sandbek will talk about how we should respond to this great gift.

The normal thing to do when someone gives you a gift is to say 'thank you'. Yet we so often forget to thank God for the gifts He continually gives us?

In Old Testament times, God COMMANDED men to build altars to commemorate His blessing. He also ORDERED His people to conduct feasts (sometimes for weeks) to celebrate His works on their behalf. Why? Because remembering and rejoicing *reinforced their faith!* And it will do the same for us!

Why should WE praise God? Moses praised Him just for who He is! At the end of His life he summed up his feelings in Deut. 32:3-4 by saying...

I will proclaim the Name of the Lord.

O praise the GREATNESS of our God.

He is the Rock. His works are PERFECT & all His ways are JUST -

A FAITHFUL GOD who does no wrong - UPRIGHT & JUST is He.

God is GOOD and God is GREAT because God is LOVE.

Psalm 136 vs. 1-3 reads...

Give thanks to the Lord for He is GOOD - His love endures forever.

Give thanks to the God of Gods - His love endures forever.

**Give thanks to the Lord of Lords – His love endures forever.
Why does God do all He does FOR US...because He loves us!
We need to allow ourselves to be in WONDER of His love. This will cause
us to respond to Him as Hebrews 12:29 says...**

**...be thankful and so worship (praise) God acceptably with reverence
and with awe.
and do as Psalm 100 instructs...**

*** SING TO THE LORD *****

What should we praise Him for? First of all, for the GIFT OF PHYSICAL LIFE.

I was made aware recently of the truth of Romans 1:20. It says...

**..Since the creation of the world, God's invisible qualities, His eternal power
and His divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what
has been made – so that men are without excuse.**

**In a movie I was watching there was a scene where a man was shipwrecked
on a raft in the middle of nowhere. He had nothing left. The moon was coming
up on the horizon and it was bigger than he'd ever seen. Faced with his losses,
his imminent death, and the incredible display of God's works, he said...**

"God, I don't know you very well, but thank you for life."

**If Hollywood acknowledged that God exists and that life is a gift, how much
more should WE value what we have.**

But more important than physical life, though, is the GIFT of ETERNAL LIFE.

**JOHN 3:16 says For God so loved the world, that He GAVE His only
begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him will not perish, but have
everlasting life.**

**Oh, if we would take this verse and ponder all that's going on here – we'd
enter into that awesome wonder. God's LOVE caused Him to GIVE His Son.
Jesus' LOVE caused Him to GIVE His life for us. This is not a gift that passes
away with time – it's eternal! The only response required of us is to believe in
Jesus. Is that so hard?**

When we accept His gift of love we can claim Romans 8:28 which says...

**I am persuaded that neither life nor death nor angels
nor principalities nor powers nor height nor depth
nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from**

the love of God which is in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Yes, His LOVE endures forever. There may come a time when everything YOU have is stripped away. It may be then that you'll truly understand that with Jesus as your Savior you have everything you need.

We can praise God, too, for the GIFTS He gives to meet our needs. We have squirrels and birds that have adopted our house. (I lure the squirrels with pistachios.) It amazes me how God directs them to the food. Matthew 6:26 says...

Look at the birds of the air. They do not sow or reap or store in barns and yet your Heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?

Matthew 6:31 says...

Do not worry about what you WILL eat, drink or wear – your Heavenly Father knows you have need of them.

Notice, it says...what you WILL eat, drink or wear. That's future provision. Psalm 46:1 says...

God is our refuge and strength, an ever PRESENT help in trouble. God's help is for the PRESENT – not the past and not the future. As Believers, He's forgiven our past and secured and ordained our future.

Philippians 4:6 says...

Do not be anxious about ANYTHING, but in EVERYTHING by PRAYER and PETITION, WITH THANKSGIVING, (KEY) present your requests to God. And what do you get? And the PEACE of God, which transcends ALL UNDERSTANDING, will GUARD your HEARTS & MINDS in Christ Jesus.

Worry keeps us seeing the blessings we have and being thankful.

Why not THANK God for his PROVISION and REST IN HIM (He's got ya covered.)

WHEN should we PRAISE God? 1 Thessalonians 5:18 says...

Give thanks in ALL circumstances for this is God's WILL for you in Christ Jesus.

Even in MIDDLE of painful situations – JESUS IS THERE. For that fact alone we can and should be THANKFUL.

So far we've defined the WHO WHY WHAT and WHEN of praise. Now let's talk about HOW we should praise God?

With a PROPER HEART. Ephesians 5:20 says...

Sing & MAKE MUSIC in your HEART to the Lord.

Music bears your soul. Making music is different than just singing. Music is MADE when a grateful heart mixes with an open mouth.

We need to praise with a PROPER WALK.

Psalm 100:4b says... Be thankful unto HIM & BLESS HIS NAME.

His Name is His character - His faithfulness, patience, mercy, love, kindness, compassion - to name a few. How do we bless His Name? By demonstrating His character - by being Christ-like - by living our lives as a 'thank you letter' to the Lord.

We need to praise with PROPER WORDS to OTHERS about GOD.

Psalm 105:1b says...Make known His deeds among the people.

Heb. 13:15-16 Let us CONTINUALLY offer to God a SACRIFICE of praise - the fruit of lips that confess HIS NAME. And do not forget to do good and to SHARE with others - for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

The greatest gift we can share with others is the salvation message told in this closing song. Why not sing along with me...

**** LORD I LIFT ***

We pray you've been blessed by this program. If so, please write and tell us at..

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Join us on our next program. Until then, let your grace notes be a song of praise!