

50 Bible Verses on Gratitude & Thanksgiving

New King James Version • From the Psalms of David to the letters of the apostles

There is a kind of gratitude that depends on things going well. When the harvest is full and the house is warm and everyone you love is safe, that gratitude comes easily. Scripture is not very interested in that kind. It is interested in the other kind — the gratitude that persists when the fields are empty, when the doors are locked, when the stone has not yet been moved. That is the gratitude that shapes a person.

These fifty verses are not a self-help list. They are a record of people who found, in every kind of season, that there was still something to bring before God.

Give Thanks in All Things

The most consistent command about gratitude in the New Testament is also the most challenging.

1

1 THESSALONIANS 5:18

“In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

In everything — not for everything. There is an important difference. Paul does not tell you to be grateful that hard things happened. He tells you to give thanks in the middle of them. The thanksgiving is not an emotion that arises from circumstances. It is a practice you bring to them.

2

PHILIPPIANS 4:6

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.”

With thanksgiving. It is the word sandwiched between the anxiety and the request. Gratitude is the hinge of effective prayer — the thing that changes the posture of the person asking. You bring the request as someone who has already begun to remember what God has already done.

3

COLOSSIANS 3:17

“And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”

Whatever you do. Gratitude is not reserved for the big moments, the answered prayers, the obvious blessings. It belongs to everything — every word, every task, every ordinary hour. The life of thanksgiving is a life in which nothing is taken for granted.

4

COLOSSIANS 2:7

“Rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.”

Abounding in it with thanksgiving. The mature, rooted, established faith is not a solemn faith. It is one overflowing with gratitude. As the roots go deeper, the thanksgiving grows louder. They grow together.

5

EPHESIANS 5:20

“Giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Always for all things. Paul keeps raising the scope of thanksgiving — not sometimes, not for the pleasant things. Always. All things. This is not naïveté about suffering. It is the claim that God is present in all of it, working in all of it, and therefore reachable through thanksgiving in all of it.

ENTERING HIS PRESENCE WITH THANKS

Entering His Presence with Thanks

Thanksgiving is not what you feel after worship. It is what you bring before it starts.

6

PSALM 100:4

“Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.”

Enter with thanksgiving. The psalmist describes thanksgiving as the way in — the posture that opens the gates of worship. You do not drift into God’s courts distracted and arrive thankful later. You come in with it already on your lips. Gratitude is not the response to worship. It is the door.

7

PSALM 95:2

“Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving; let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms.”

Come before His presence with thanksgiving. The act of coming to God begins with naming what He has already done. Before the petition, before the confession, before anything else — thanks. It sets the frame for the whole conversation.

8

PSALM 107:1

“Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.”

For He is good. The reason for thanksgiving in the Psalms is always grounded in the character of God before it is grounded in His gifts. You can give thanks because He is good, even before you can list what He has done today. His goodness is the constant. The thanks can be constant too.

9

HEBREWS 12:28

“Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.”

A kingdom which cannot be shaken. The ground of Christian thanksgiving is not circumstances. It is the unshakeable. No economic change, no health report, no political season touches what you have received in Christ. Gratitude rooted there cannot be shaken either.

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2 CORINTHIANS 9:15

“Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!”

Indescribable. Paul has just spent two chapters talking about generosity, then lands here: whatever generosity we show is only an echo of the gift God gave. Christ himself is the gift language cannot contain. Every other thing to be grateful for is downstream from that one.

THE MERCY THAT ENDURES FOREVER

The Mercy That Endures Forever

Some truths need to be said twenty-six times before the heart fully receives them.

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PSALM 136:1

“Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.”

His mercy endures forever is the refrain repeated twenty-six times in this psalm alone. That is not accident or redundancy. It is the way the ancient world drilled a truth into the bones: say it again, say it again, say it again, until the soul stops arguing and begins to believe it.

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PSALM 136:26

“Oh, give thanks to the God of heaven! For His mercy endures forever.”

The last verse of the psalm repeats the first. The whole sweep of history — creation, the exodus, the wilderness, the conquest — is wrapped in this single refrain. Whatever happened in between, His mercy outlasted it. Whatever is happening in between for you, the same is true.

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LAMENTATIONS 3:22–23

“Through the Lord’s mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.”

New every morning. Jeremiah wrote this from rubble and loss. The mercy was not new because it had not been there before. It was new in the sense of being freshly present, freshly given, waiting for him when he woke. Every morning is a delivered mercy. Gratitude meets it at the door.

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PSALM 103:2

“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.”

Forget not. David speaks this to himself as a command, because forgetting is the natural drift. Gratitude requires memory. The practice of thanksgiving is largely the practice of remembering — of going back through what God has done and refusing to let it blur into background noise.

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PSALM 103:3–5

“Who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, who satisfies your mouth with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.”

Five things, stacked. Forgiveness. Healing. Redemption. Crowning with lovingkindness. Satisfaction. David does not let the benefits stay vague. He names them specifically. Precise gratitude is deeper gratitude. When you name the particular thing God has done, the thanks carries more weight.

THE ONE WHO CAME BACK

The One Who Came Back

Gratitude is not automatic. It requires turning around.

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LUKE 17:15–16

“And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan.”

He returned. One of ten lepers healed, only one came back. Jesus does not chase the other nine. He notices the one who returned. The act of coming back to give thanks is itself something extraordinary. It is the completion of the miracle in the person’s soul.

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LUKE 17:17–18

“So Jesus answered and said, ‘Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?’”

Where are the nine? Jesus asks the question without bitterness, but He asks it. Receiving a gift and not returning to thank the Giver is noticed. The absence of gratitude is not neutral. It is a gap, a missing thing, a relationship left incomplete.

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ROMANS 1:21

“Although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.”

Nor were thankful. Ingratitude is listed here alongside failing to glorify God as one of the roots of spiritual darkness. It is not a small omission. The person who receives everything and thanks no one has disordered their whole relationship with reality. Gratitude is not courtesy. It is clarity.

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DEUTERONOMY 8:10

“When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land which He has given you.”

When you have eaten and are full. God instructs His people to thank Him specifically in the moment of satisfaction — because that is precisely when gratitude is most easily forgotten. Contentment can produce either thanksgiving or forgetfulness. The choice between them shapes the whole character of a life.

2
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DEUTERONOMY 8:11

“Beware that you do not forget the Lord your God by not keeping His commandments, His judgments, and His statutes which I command you today.”

Beware that you do not forget. Moses said this to people about to enter a land of abundance. Prosperity is more dangerous to gratitude than poverty. When everything is going well, it is easy to take it as your own achievement rather than a given gift. Gratitude requires active resistance to forgetfulness.

GRATITUDE WITH THE WHOLE HEART

Gratitude With the Whole Heart

Half-hearted thanks honours no one. The Psalms teach us to bring everything.

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PSALM 9:1

“I will praise You, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will tell of all Your marvelous works.”

With my whole heart. Divided gratitude is thin gratitude. The part of the heart that is elsewhere — calculating, worrying, resentful — is the part not giving thanks. When the whole heart gathers, the thanksgiving changes in quality. It fills the room.

2
2

PSALM 9:2

“I will be glad and rejoice in You; I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High.”

I will sing praise to Your name. Singing is one of the most complete acts of gratitude because it involves the body, the breath, the mind, and the voice all at once. The Psalms know something that modern life has nearly forgotten: gratitude finds its fullest expression in song.

2
3

PSALM 138:1

“I will praise You with my whole heart; before the gods I will sing praises to You.”

Before the gods — in full view of every competing claim on your allegiance. Public gratitude is its own kind of confession. When you give thanks to God in front of the things that want your devotion, you are declaring who you belong to.

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PSALM 34:1

“I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.”

At all times. Continually. David does not write this from a season of ease. He wrote it while hiding from Saul, pretending to be mad before a foreign king. The continual praise is the anchor that holds in every kind of weather. Not dependent on the weather. Chosen regardless of it.

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PSALM 86:12

“I will praise You, O Lord my God, with all my heart, and I will glorify Your name forevermore.”

Forevermore. The scope of thanksgiving in the Psalms is not limited to this life. David reaches ahead to the forever, as if the gratitude he carries now is only the beginning of something that has no end. What starts as morning thanks becomes an eternal song.

WHEN GRATITUDE BECOMES TESTIMONY

When Gratitude Becomes Testimony

Private gratitude is good. Shared gratitude is transformative.

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1 CHRONICLES 16:8

“Oh, give thanks to the Lord! Call upon His name; make known His deeds among the peoples!”

Make known His deeds among the peoples. Gratitude that stays private is only half of what it was made to be. When you tell others what God has done, the thanks becomes testimony. The personal becomes communal. The moment of gratitude multiplies into something larger than itself.

2
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1 CHRONICLES 16:34

“Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.”

The song of praise at the ark’s arrival in Jerusalem. David had this written and performed in public, at a national moment, before the whole gathered people. He did not keep the gratitude to himself. The bigger the gift, the more public the thanks ought to be.

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PSALM 105:1

“Oh, give thanks to the Lord! Call upon His name; make known His deeds among the peoples!”

Make known His deeds. The grammar of gratitude in Scripture always moves outward: receive, thank, declare. Gratitude is not self-contained. It has a natural trajectory toward the people around you who have not yet seen what you have seen.

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ACTS 2:46–47

“So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people.”

Gladness and simplicity of heart. The early church ate together with gladness. The daily meal became an act of thanksgiving. Not a theological discussion, not a programme — just people eating together with simple, uncomplicated gratitude. Something about that simplicity attracted people to them.

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REVELATION 7:12

“Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen.”

Thanksgiving appears in the throne-room worship of heaven. It is not a minor note in eternity. It is part of the vocabulary of the redeemed before the face of God. The gratitude that begins here continues there. You are practising something that never stops.

THANKSGIVING BEFORE THE ANSWER COMES

Thanksgiving Before the Answer Comes

Some of the most powerful thanks in Scripture is given before the rescue, not after.

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JONAH 2:9

“But I will sacrifice to You with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay what I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord.”

From inside the fish. Jonah gives thanks before he is delivered. The thanksgiving comes in advance of the rescue, as an act of faith that the rescue is certain. This is the highest form of gratitude: given before the evidence arrives, on the strength of who God is.

3
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HABAKKUK 3:17–18

“Though the fig tree may not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines; though the labor of the olive may fail, and the fields yield no food... yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.”

Yet I will rejoice. When the harvest has failed on every front, Habakkuk gives thanks anyway — not for the circumstances but in them, to the God who has not changed. This is not denial. This is the most honest form of faith: grateful not for the gifts because they are gone, but for the Giver who remains.

3
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ACTS 16:25

“But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.”

At midnight, in stocks, in prison. Paul and Silas sang. Not later when the earthquake came, not after the doors opened — before. The singing at midnight is the thanksgiving that precedes the miracle. And the prisoners were listening. Something about gratitude in darkness draws witnesses.

3
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JOB 1:21

“Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return there. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.”

Blessed be the name of the Lord. Job says this having lost his children, his wealth, his health. Not as resignation but as a shaking declaration of faith. The name of God is still blessed when the hands are empty. That is not easy theology. That is costly worship, wrung out of grief.

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DANIEL 6:10

“Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.”

And gave thanks — with the law of death signed against him, facing the lions’ den. The thanksgiving did not wait for safety to arrive. It was part of who Daniel already was, baked into his custom since early days. Gratitude that holds in danger is the kind that was built in the ordinary.

GRATITUDE AS A WAY OF SEEING

Gratitude as a Way of Seeing

Thankfulness changes what you see before it changes what is there.

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JOHN 11:41

“Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, ‘Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.’”

Father, I thank You — before Lazarus came out. Jesus gave thanks at the sealed tomb, in front of the weeping crowd, before a single visible thing had changed. The thanksgiving was based not on what had happened yet but on the relationship that made the miracle certain.

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PSALM 22:3

“But You are holy, enthroned in the praises of Israel.”

Enthroned in the praises of Israel. God inhabits praise. This is not metaphor — it is a theological claim about what gratitude and thanksgiving actually do. When you praise and thank God, you are not decorating the air with good feelings. You are building a throne. You are making a place for Him to be.

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PSALM 50:23

“Whoever offers praise glorifies Me; and to him who orders his conduct aright I will show the salvation of God.”

Whoever offers praise glorifies Me. Praise and thanksgiving are acts of glorification — they make God larger in the vision of the person giving thanks, and in the vision of everyone watching. The grateful life is a life that constantly expands its picture of God.

3
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ISAIAH 12:4

“And in that day you will say: ‘Praise the Lord, call upon His name; declare His deeds among the peoples, make mention that His name is exalted.’”

Make mention that His name is exalted. The grateful person cannot stop talking about who God is. The overflow of real thanksgiving is declaration — telling the people around you what you have seen, what He has done, who He is. Gratitude that stays silent is still young.

4
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ROMANS 8:28

“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.”

All things. This verse is the foundation of thanksgiving in hard seasons. Not that every thing is good, but that every thing is being worked. By God. Toward good. The person who believes this can give thanks not just for the pleasant things but for all things, because all things are in His hands.

RECOGNISING THE SOURCE OF EVERY GOOD THING

Recognising the Source of Every Good Thing

Gratitude starts with knowing where your gifts come from.

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JAMES 1:17

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.”

Every good gift. James closes the door on the idea that good things are neutral luck or self-made achievement. Every one of them has an address: above. The Father of lights. Recognising the source of every good thing is the beginning of a grateful life.

4
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MATTHEW 5:45

“He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.”

His sun. His rain. Jesus calls them God’s — common gifts given to everyone without discrimination. The sunlight on your face this morning was not incidental. It was given. The practice of noticing the ordinary gifts — light, air, bread, warmth — is the beginning of a life that never runs out of things to be grateful for.

4
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ACTS 14:17

“Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.”

Filling our hearts with food and gladness. The harvest, the rain, the fruitful season — these are described as God’s witness to Himself in the world. Every meal is a testimony. Every season that produces food is God showing Himself to those willing to notice.

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1 TIMOTHY 4:4

“For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving.”

Received with thanksgiving. The thanksgiving is what transforms the receiving. The meal eaten with gratitude is not the same meal eaten without it. The gift received with thanks is a different thing from the gift taken for granted. Gratitude changes the nature of the act of receiving.

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ROMANS 11:36

“For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.”

Of Him, through Him, to Him. Every good thing originates in God, moves through His provision, and belongs back to Him as thanksgiving. The shape of the grateful life is circular: receive from God, give thanks to God. Everything that comes in goes back as worship.

COUNTING THE BENEFITS

Counting the Benefits

Specific gratitude is deeper gratitude. The Psalms teach us to count and name.

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PSALM 103:1-2

“Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.”

All that is within me. David does not delegate gratitude to a department of his soul. He calls every part of himself to participate. The appetite, the memory, the imagination, the emotion — all of it brought into the act of blessing. Wholehearted thanksgiving mobilises the whole person.

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PSALM 103:6-11

“The Lord executes righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed. He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the children of Israel. The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy.”

Abounding in mercy. The Hebrew is hesed — covenant love, loyal love, love that does not give up. David counts God’s character as one of the benefits. Not just what God does but who God is counts as something to be grateful for. The character of your God is the most durable ground for thanksgiving.

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PSALM 116:12

“What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits toward me?”

What shall I render? The psalmist feels the debt and wants to meet it. But there is no adequate response to what God has given. The question itself is the answer: the only fitting response to God’s benefits is a life shaped by the attempt to give back. Gratitude as lifestyle, not moment.

4
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EPHESIANS 1:3

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.”

Every spiritual blessing. Before Paul lists them — adoption, forgiveness, redemption, the Spirit, an inheritance — he says they are already given. In Christ. Past tense. The thanksgiving is not for things yet to come. It is for things already secured. You are not waiting to be blessed. You already are.

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2 CORINTHIANS 4:15

“For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.”

Thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God. This is the destination of all grace: thanksgiving. God’s grace spreads outward through people, and each person it reaches becomes another voice of thanks. Gratitude is not the beginning of the story. It is the shape of the ending.

Fifty witnesses across thirty centuries — a man inside a fish, a king in exile, apostles in prison, a widow at the temple, and a Son giving thanks at a sealed tomb — all arriving at the same place:

The grateful life is not the life that has the most. It is the life that forgets nothing it has been given.

Start there. Start today. Begin with one thing, and see where it leads.

A CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, I want to be a thankful person.

Not just when it is easy.

Not just when the harvest is full.

Teach me to notice what You have given

before I catalogue what I still need.

Teach me to enter Your gates

with thanksgiving already on my lips.

You are good. Your mercy endures.

That is enough to begin with.

Amen.

* Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever *