

## Thanks

### Scripture Reading — 1 Thessalonians 5:12-24

*Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 1 Thessalonians 5:18*

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The Heidelberg Catechism says that belief in the providence of God makes it possible for us to be "thankful when things go well" and "patient when things go against us" (Q&A 28). So sometimes we are thankful, and sometimes we are patient. Paul sums things up this way. He says it is God's will for us to be thankful "in all circumstances." Really? Well, it may help to note that Paul is not saying we should be thankful for all circumstances but in them. When things seem to go against us, I think God expects us to be grateful that his hand holds us and helps us to endure under the strain. That's a big challenge--to look for reasons to be thankful when the going is tough. Sometimes it can be equally difficult for us to be thankful when things are going well. We might not think it would be that way. After all, when things go well, we have so much to be grateful for. But the very nature of human beings, even if we are Christian, is to overlook the crowd of God's good gifts to us every day. Let me suggest that today you sit still where you are and exercise the gift of noticing. Notice what you see, what you have, and who is with you. Notice the color, beauty, and variety around you. Keep noticing, and make a list of the gifts you notice. Then give thanks to God, the great giver!

### Prayer

*O great Creator and Giver of all gifts, give us today the great gift of being able to notice all your gifts. Open our hearts to a spirit of thanksgiving, we pray. For Jesus' sake, Amen.*

**Devotion topics:** [Christianity](#), [Discipleship](#)

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