

The Bible Banner

November 2018



Enter into His Gates with Thanksgiving

The experience is told of a well-known Bible teacher and pastor in a crowded restaurant. Just as the pastor was about to begin his meal, a man approached and asked if he could join him. The pastor invited him to have a seat. Then as was his custom, the pastor bowed his head in prayer. When he opened his eyes, the other man asked, "Do you have a headache?" the pastor replied, "No, I don't." The other man asked, "Well, is there something wrong with your food?" the pastor replied, "No, I was simply thanking God as I always do before I eat."

The man said, "Oh, you're one of those, are you? Well, I want you to know I never give thanks. I earn my money by the sweat of my brow and I don't have to give thanks to anybody when I eat. I just start right in!"

Undaunted, the pastor replied, "Yes, you're just like my dog. That's what he does too!"

Do you forget to give thanks? *"And Jesus ... when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples..." John 6:11*

PIZZA POCKETS

Use the "Thin 'n' Crispy Pizza Crust" recipe, but replace $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the flour with **gluten flour** and do not pre-bake. Then assemble **pizza sauce**, your **favorite vegan burger** (I use burger delight), and your **favorite vegan cheese** (I use "Easy Peasy Cheesy").

Mix just enough burger into the pizza sauce to make it on the thicker side. Roll out a portion of the pizza dough on a cutting board and cut it into sections double the desired pocket size. (This can be anywhere from the size of a medium-sized cookie to about half the size of a burrito.) Place the pizza/burger sauce in the middle of one half of the crust piece carefully leaving a small edge of the crust filling-free. Place vegan cheese on top of the burger. Fold over the pizza pocket crust and thoroughly press together and seal the three remaining edges.

Bake at 350°F (180°C) in the oven until the crust is thoroughly cooked and slightly golden. These may be eaten immediately or frozen or refrigerated for later. We actually like the rewarmed variety even better.



THIN 'N' CRISPY UNLEAVENED PIZZA CRUST

4 cups WW flour (white wheat is best) 1 tsp salt 6 Tbsp oil 2 cups very warm water
Mix all dry ingredients together and add oil. Add water a little at a time as needed to make a knead-able mass. Press onto two oiled cookie sheets or 3 pizza pans. Prick thoroughly with fork and bake at 350°F (180 °C) until mostly cooked before adding toppings. Remove from oven, add toppings and finish cooking until crisp.

A Christian Confederate Soldier's Prayer

(Anonymous - alleged to have been found on a CSA casualty at Gettysburg)

I asked God for strength, that I might achieve.
I was made weak, that I might learn humbly to obey.
I asked for health, that I might do greater things.
I was given infirmity, that I might do better things.
I asked for riches, that I might be happy.
I was given poverty, that I might be wise.
I asked for power that I might have the praise of men.
I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of God.
I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life.
I was given life, that I might enjoy all things.
I got nothing that I asked for but got everything I had hoped for.
Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered.
I am, among all people, most richly blessed.



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Thank God, Life isn't Fair

"Don't ruin your shoes", I sighed, dreading the thought that I might have to find the money to buy yet another pair of shoes on a very limited paycheck. With four growing children, it seemed that one of them always needed new shoes.... Sometimes, as I looked at the latest torn-up or outgrown pair of shoes, I felt very unthankful and a little sorry for myself, that I didn't have the money (like some people I knew) not to have to stress about buying new shoes. It seemed so unfair...

The truth is-- life isn't fair. For example, I've noticed that some of the people who work the hardest, still end up barely scraping together a meager existence for themselves and for their families. In addition, I have witnessed that sometimes those that study the hardest for a test don't make a good grade and yet there may be someone with a good memory that didn't study at all who scores well. As unfair as it may seem, some of the thinnest people eat the most junk food, while some people remain stocky despite eating a healthy diet. Inevitably, I've also noted that some of the nicest people seem to have the worst things happen to them. The list of things that are unfair in life could go on and on. And yet the Bible says, "*In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*" 1 Thess. 5:18

Being unthankful is a characteristic of the foolish and wicked. (2 Tim. 3:2; Romans 1:21) Instead of being thankful, the unthankful (or pessimists-- those that always see the cup half empty instead of half full) will always have something to complain about. Their attitude is ---"*Nothing to do but work, Nothing to eat but food, Nothing to wear but clothes...Nothing to breathe but air... Nothing to sing but songs...Nowhere to go but out, Nowhere to come but back, Nothing to see but sights...[and] Nothing to have but what we've got;*"("The Pessimist" poem, condensed) If God's people sound like that, may God help us to have a change of perspective.

I distinctly remember the day that I got a change of perspective....

Her shoes were picture perfect, like they'd just come out of the box that morning. A well-dressed lady, walking into the church nursery where I was baby-sitting, commented to the girl's mother politely, "Those shoes are so cute—they look brand new."

The mother turned and looked at her palsied child, who despite her age, was still in a baby stroller and unable to walk. "Thank you," she said sadly, "she doesn't ever wear them out."

The thought struck home, I would never look at a pair of worn-out shoes the same again. Although I still struggled to keep four kids in shoes, I was reminded-- instead of complaining-- be glad that your children have the health to run and play so that they CAN wear their shoes out.

Many years before this story took place, I had another similar change of perspective. I grew up a PK (preacher's kid) and although for the most part, I had a happy childhood, I had my own list of how life was unfair. Because my father had to be on the platform each week, he rarely ever got to sit with the family in church like the other fathers. Furthermore, since he had two churches at the time and lots of responsibilities, sometimes he couldn't be everywhere the other kids' fathers were. Life just wasn't fair...

But one Sabbath, as I sat and listened to my father preach, the sermon title caught my attention. It was "Thank God, Life isn't Fair". To my child-like-mind this sounded crazy and made me think. Truly, I don't remember most of the details of my father's sermon, only the mysterious title. But it changed my perspective so that every time I hear the phrase "*Life isn't fair*"—I remember the other part—"**Thank God, Life isn't Fair**".

We are to "Thank God, that Life isn't Fair" because since according to Romans 3:23 "*all have sinned*" -- if life were fair, God would just give us what we deserve. We would just get death. But according to Romans 6:23 He gives us life instead. "*For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*" To save us from death, Jesus got the unfair side of the bargain. Jesus Christ, the innocent, bore the sins of the guilty. The Bible says "*But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*" Isaiah 53:5 "*[Jesus] died for us, and now he offers to take our sins and give us his righteousness. If you give yourself to him, and accept him as your Saviour, then, sinful as your life may have been, for his sake you are accounted righteous. Christ's character stands in place of your character, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned.*" {RH, November 11, 1915 par. 2} With an unfair trade like that, no wonder Paul says, "*Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.*" 2 Cor. 9:15 "Thank God, Life isn't Fair!"





Your Likeable Liver

Perhaps, it is not a surprise that the first definition for “liver” in the Webster’s 1828 Dictionary is “*one who lives*”—suggesting the importance the liver plays in total body health. The liver is important enough that it is mentioned by name in the Bible 28 times.

Yet, most people don’t really take time to appreciate their liver or to thank God for making it.

Although your liver is only about the size of a football and weighs only about 3 pounds, it performs the functions both of a filter and a fabulous chemical factory. Its job is converting toxins into waste products, cleansing your blood, and metabolizing nutrients to provide the body with some of its most important proteins. In fact, we know that *“More than 500 vital functions have been identified with the liver. Some of the more well-known functions include the following: Regulating blood clotting*

Production of bile, which helps carry away waste and break down fats in the small intestine during digestion

Production of certain proteins for blood plasma

Production of cholesterol and special proteins to help carry fats through the body

Conversion of excess glucose into glycogen for storage (glycogen can later be converted back to glucose for energy) and to balance and make glucose as needed

Regulation of blood levels of amino acids, which form the building blocks of proteins

Processing of hemoglobin for use of its iron content (the liver stores iron)

Conversion of poisonous ammonia to urea (urea is an end product of protein metabolism and is excreted in the urine)

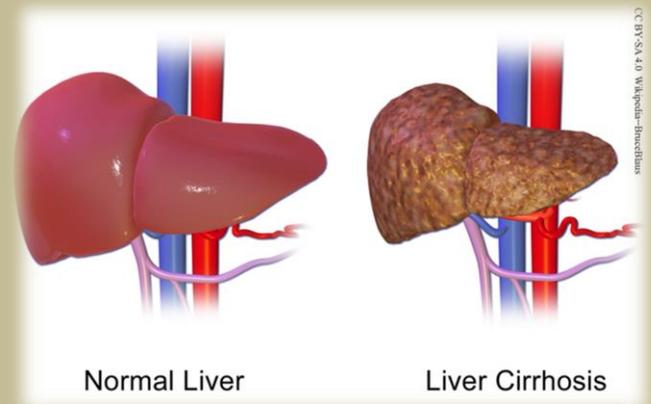
Clearing the blood of drugs and other poisonous substances

Resisting infections by making immune factors and removing bacteria from the bloodstream

Clearance of bilirubin, also from red blood cells. If there is an accumulation of bilirubin, the skin and eyes turn yellow.”¹

God has made our liver to do amazing things. *“It is the only organ in the body that is able to regenerate. With most organs, such as the heart, the damaged tissue is replaced with scar, like on the skin. The liver, however, is able to replace damaged tissue with new cells. If up to 50 - 60 percent of the liver cells may be killed within 3 - 4 days in an extreme case like a Tylenol overdose, the liver will repair completely after 30 days if no complications arise.*

Complications of liver disease occur... when the damaging agent such as a virus, a drug, alcohol, etc., continues to attack the liver and prevents complete regeneration. Once scar tissue has developed it is very difficult to reverse that process. Severe scarring of the liver is the condition known as cirrhosis.”²



Normal Liver

Liver Cirrhosis

In other words, as long as the liver is not misused, abused and overworked, it does its work well. But repeated alcohol consumption, drug or chemical use (even pharmaceuticals and pesticides), or sometimes even viral hepatitis ruins the liver’s ability to regrow. Instead the liver will harden and be unable to filter the blood of common toxins. Some *“signs and symptoms of liver disease include: Skin and eyes that appear yellowish (jaundice), abdominal pain and swelling, swelling in the legs and ankles, itchy skin, dark urine color, pale stool color, or bloody or tar-colored stool, chronic fatigue, nausea or vomiting, loss of appetite, [and] tendency to bruise easily.”³*

Here are four things, besides practicing temperance, that you can do to improve your liver function.

Exercise -- *“Aerobic exercise training improves hepatic [liver] enzymes and psychological well-being”⁴*

Drink Lemon Juice-- Lemons are your liver's best friend. In fact, a study on mice published in 2017 *“found that treatment with lemon juice exerted hepatoprotective [liver-protective] effects on alcohol-induced liver injury”⁵*

Use the herb milk thistle --*“One of the most common uses of milk thistle is to treat liver problems. A 2016 study found that milk thistle improved diet-induced liver damage in mice.”⁶*

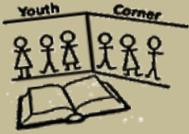
Take remedial doses of activated charcoal to absorb toxins in the body -- A team working at the Liver Failure Unit at University College London and the Royal Free Hospital have invented a charcoal like carbon that soaks up deadly toxins that are released in liver disease. They say *“Tiny carbon beads could offer hope to those with liver disease...”* This *“breakthrough treatment for liver disease could offer hope to the millions worldwideAccording to Professor Jalan, if the trials are successful patients would take a teaspoon of nanoporous carbon [activated charcoal] in a sachet before bedtime. The carbon would remove toxins produced by bacteria in the gut that would otherwise enter the body and liver, allowing them to pass harmlessly through the body.”⁷*

Why not show your gratitude to God for making your liver, by treating it with kindness, today?

1-- https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/healthliver_biliary_and_pancreatic_disorders/liver_anatomy_and_functions_85,P00676library/conditions/

2-- <https://uihc.org/health-topics/liver-disease-frequently-asked-questions> 3 - <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/liver-problems/symptoms-causes/syc-20374502> 4-- <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4196401/> 5- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5439254/>

6--<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/320362.php> 7-- <http://www.uclhospitals.brc.nihr.ac.uk/news/tiny-carbon-beads-could-offer-hope-those-liver-disease>



A Love Story

Once upon a time there lived a woman by herself in a little house by the side of the road. Now on the surface, this woman seemed happy and even godly at times, but buried beneath the cloak of happiness there was an ugly secret that haunted her. More than 15 years before, she had been in love with a man in her community. Now the man's face somehow looked a little different than the face of most of the other men she knew, but despite this, his winning personality had won her heart. Day after day, almost like childhood sweethearts, they had spent happy hours together in nature, working, or visiting friends and family. One day, he declared to her friends that she was like a diamond. Observing his obvious love and appreciation for her, the whole community was just waiting for the announcement of their engagement. But then something awful happened...

One day, the man and woman got in a heated argument and the woman got her feelings hurt. Day after day, she nursed the wound and soon she developed quite a bit of "scar tissue". She began to deny to people that she had ever loved the man. After all, how could she have been attracted to someone who had such a horrible deformity on his face? Furthermore, although others saw him as a cheerful, energetic Christian, she thought he had a way of pointing out imperfections of her friends in an embarrassing fashion. As weeks turned into months, and months into years, the community lost hope of their ever getting married. Although they hoped that she would just forgive and forget, it became obvious that she was nursing a grudge and used every excuse possible to tell people why she could not marry him.

Often when his name came up in conversation, she would report his newest "offense" or dig up an old greatly exaggerated one from the past. Despite this, it was obvious that he was more than sorry for the part he had played in their argument. Although she often spoke evil of him, only words of kindness and concern for her well-being came from his lips to others. The community observed as year after year he continued to cater to her every little whim. Of course, she had demoted him from the level of a friend down to the level of a hired man (although he regularly refused any pay). But still, if she needed a new fence everyone knew he would build it. If her roof leaked, he would fix it. In between times, he tended her yard, or made sure her house was winterized. If he saw she was tired, he would even wash the dishes for her. When she came back from a trip, often she would find fresh flowers for her and her mother. He would even do little "pet projects" for her that no one else even deemed as important. Everyone thought he would soon give up and move on to another woman, but he never did. Year after year, his life ebbed away in loving service as he happily did her bidding. Nothing, unless it crossed his religious convictions, seemed too great a sacrifice for her.



At first the community commented, *"That's so sweet, how can she refuse?"* After a while, they began saying, *"She is crazy, any woman in her right mind couldn't refuse a man like that! The women I know would do just about anything to have a man love them like that."* But after watching the love and care the man offered her year after year for 15 years with still no reciprocation of affection, they began to say, *"She doesn't even deserve him."*

It was at this point in the story that the thought struck me, God has been doing the same thing for 6,000 years. His potential bride, his church, misuses and abuses his mercy. Yet *"his hand is stretched out still."* (Isaiah 5:25) Year after year, he sends us showers and flowers, helps us with our projects, often even catering to our little whims. He fixes the problems that come up in our lives and "winterizes" our homes against the storms of this world. Although God lives outside of time, century after century, his life ebbs and flows in continual loving service for us. Nothing, not even the life of his Son seemed too great a sacrifice for His beloved. We, like the woman in the story, are also undeserving. Yet, no matter how we have treated Him, though *"thou hast played the harlot with many lovers,"* God still says, *"yet return again to me, saith the LORD."* (Jer. 3:1) Like the man in the story, God consistently gives the greatest gift He can give to his beloved, the gift of Himself. No wonder, Solomon wrote of God's love, *"Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned."* (Song of Solomon 8:7) Do you reciprocate God's affection? Or like the woman in the story, do you just ignore His infinite love? Shouldn't we *"love him, because he first loved us?"* 1 John 4:19 Why not start today to show your thankfulness for God's Amazing Love?



Study to Show Thyself Approved

8 Reasons to be Thankful even when Everything seems to be going Wrong

1. **Help is Just a call away--** “And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.” Ps. 50:15
2. **We have received a Gift from the King of the Universe --** “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.” 2 Cor. 9:15 (“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 6:23)
3. **We have a Friend who miraculously makes good come out of all the bad things that happen to those who love Him --** “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” Romans 8:28
4. **We have the Scripture panacea --** *“Repeat often the first three verses of the fourteenth chapter of John. This scripture is a panacea [cure-all] for trouble, disappointment, and affliction. A conviction that the hope of eternal life is sure causes the heart to overflow with gratitude and thanksgiving.” {PC 5.1}* “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” John 14:1-3
5. **We have reservations for a vacation/inheritance that is “Out of this World” --** “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.” 1 Peter 1:3,4
6. **In a world where nothing is sure, we have the “Sure Word of Prophecy” and the standard of Truth --** “We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:” 2 Peter 1:19
“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.” John 17:17
7. **If we let Him, God holds our hand, so we cannot be “utterly cast down” --** “The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.” Psalm 37:23,24
8. **Nothing can separate us from our Best Friend --** “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?... For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Rom. 8:35, 38,39



FILL YOUR CUP FULL OF GRATITUDE AND THERE WILL BE NO ROOM FOR COMPLAINING

PROFITABLE TRADITIONS

Cultivate the joy of learning—Play the Examination Game. Pick a letter of the alphabet and have everyone in the room write a word that starts with that letter on a small piece of paper. The word may have to do with science, grammar/language, history, geography, Bible, etc. (For a Sabbath variation—just choose Bible words.) For example, for the letter L, choices might include Lüderitz, Luther, Lapidary, Latin, Luke. Collect all those papers in a basket.

Now, have someone draw out one paper at a time and read the word to the group. On a larger piece of paper, have each of the members of the group write the question that matches each answer, giving a time limit of one minute for each question. Also have them follow the question with the answer. For example, “What is a seacoast city in Namibia, Africa? Lüderitz -- Who is the Reformer who nailed the 95 Theses to the door of the church? Luther— What art pertains to cutting stones? Lapidary -- What is the language of the ancient Romans? Latin – What is the name of the third book of the New Testament? Luke. When you are finished, compare and see how many questions you got right. Enjoy learning the facts that you did not already know.

God's Amazing Creatures

Koalas live in Australia. Unlike most animals, the koala actually has a fifth digit or "thumb" on its front paws making its paws look a lot like our hands. This "thumb" is useful for climbing trees which is helpful since koalas mainly eat eucalyptus leaves. Koalas sometimes store their food in their cheek pouches before it is ready to be chewed. Koalas may sleep up to 20 hours a day and spend only 4 hours a day in moving around. Like the kangaroo, the koalas can carry their babies in a pouch, but sometimes they carry them on their back too. Koala babies are very thankful for their mother's warm pouch or a piggyback ride. We should learn to be thankful too-- just like the baby koalas.



		<p>Memory Text "Do all things without murmurings (grumbling) and disputings (arguing)": Philippians 2:14</p> <p>"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." 1 Thess. 5:18</p>
<p>Patience liked to go to the park. One day, on the way home, Patience's daddy stopped at the park. He said, "You can play for 10 minutes, and then we have to go home for supper." Patience smiled and said, "Thank you Daddy for letting me play at the park and thank you for making sure I get supper too." Patience</p>	<p>Passion liked to go to the park too. One day, on the way home, Passion's mommy stopped at the park. She said, "You can play for 15 minutes, and then we have to go home for supper." But instead of being thankful, Passion grumbled because she didn't get to stay at the park longer. She was so naughty that they had to leave the park early. Passion was sad and she made Jesus sad too. She wished she had</p>	



Little Runner's Health Tip

Oscar the Ostrich likes to run. It helps him to be healthy. Exercise, like running and playing, is good for boys and girls too.