

# THANKFUL

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Matthew Henry was a man who lived in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and is well-known for a commentary he wrote on the entire Bible. One night Matthew Henry was robbed. That very night he prayed: "*I thank Thee, first, because I was never robbed before; second, because although they took my purse, they did not take my life; third, because although they took my all, it was not much; and fourth, because it was I who was robbed, and not I who robbed.*" What an incredible attitude to have towards such an unsettling event. There are many things for which we are to be thankful. Paul exhorted the Colossians to be thankful for the peace and unity that exists in the body of Christ (Col. 3:15). Paul instructed the Ephesians thusly, "*Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*" (Eph. 5:20). Paul thanked Jesus Christ for the gift of the gospel (1 Tim. 1:12). Paul also thanked God often for the Christians whom he had taught on his various missionary journeys (1 Cor. 1:4; Eph. 1:16; 1 Thess. 1:2; 2 Thess. 1:3, et al). We are to be thankful for our daily blessings of sustenance (1 Tim. 4:4). Our Saviour gave thanks for the cup and the bread as He instituted the observance of the Lord's Supper (Matt. 26:26-27). Paul wrote, "*Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift*" (2 Cor. 9:15). That "unspeakable gift" is salvation and certainly we are to show our ongoing gratitude for the selfless sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Indeed, when we pause to reflect on how well God takes care of us we are reminded of just how much we have to be thankful for. I imagine that most of us find it more difficult to be in a thankful mode for the trials and tribulations that come our way as sojourners in this life. However, upon deep reflection we can find cause to thank God even for the adversities because we can draw closer to God as a result of our awareness that we depend on Him for daily survival (2 Cor. 12:7-10). Sir Moses Montefiore, the Jewish philanthropist, had as the motto of his family, "**Think and Thank.**" In the old Anglo-Saxon, thankfulness means "thankfulness." Thinking of all God's goodness draws forth gratitude. Let us stop and think each day, and when we **think** we will **thank** God for His ability to "**do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think**" (Eph. 3:20). Perhaps the following poem will prompt us to even greater thankfulness each day that we live-

Count your blessings instead of your crosses;  
Count your gains instead of your losses.  
Count your joys instead of your woes;  
Count your friends instead of your foes.  
Count your smiles instead of your tears;  
Count your courage instead of your fears.  
Count your full years instead of your lean;  
Count your kind deeds instead of your mean.  
Count your health instead of your wealth;  
Count on God instead of yourself. [Poem Selected]