

# THE FIRST 15

Thursday, November 28, 2024

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Today is Thanksgiving Day and we are exploring what the Bible says about gratitude and thankfulness.

## OPENING PRAYER

*Blessed and Holy Lord God, in the morning my heart sings of Your faithfulness. I welcome Your gentle presence and rest in Your goodness. I breathe slowly and deeply, quieting the voices of my busy mind and listening for the message You have for me today. I pause to remember and count my many blessings. I rejoice with gratitude for Your steadfast love and faithfulness. You have given me so much and I am filled with thanksgiving. Amen.*

## SCRIPTURE

***Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations. Psalm 100:1-5***

## REFLECTION

Psalm 100 is a Psalm of thanksgiving encouraging the believer to stop and praise God with a heart of gratitude. What Psalm could be better for the fourth Thursday in November - Thanksgiving Day? Perhaps today you will be gathering with family and friends, cooking a turkey, preparing a favorite family dish, baking a pumpkin pie, setting a table, tuning into a football game, making a long distance phone call or traveling to the home of a friend. Whatever your preparations for today's celebration, stop and reflect on the message of this ancient Psalm.

Primarily, the Psalm tells us about the nature of God. This is who God is. The Lord is good. He is good in His plans, good in His grace, good in His forgiveness, good in His covenant and good in every aspect of His being. God is good all the time and all the time God is good. We can trust Him and have faith in His goodness. We can stand firm on it. God made us and we are His. We are the sheep of His pasture and we can count on Him to watch over us and look out for us.

God's love endures forever. His love is beyond comparison to human love. His love will not fade, wane, diminish, be unreliable or inconsistent. His love will never leave you. His love will never fail you. God has been faithful in the past, He is faithful in the present and He will be faithful in the future. His faithfulness will continue to all generations. To *all* generations - that means your children, and your children's children, and their children. He will hold all the people of all those generations close to His heart and carry the little ones like a good shepherd carries the lambs in His arms (Isaiah 40:11).

Additionally, the Psalm invites us to respond to God's goodness. Psalm 100 includes a series of seven invitations combined with a reason for our response. (1) Shout for joy to God. Don't sit around being quiet about it, make some noise about God's goodness. (2) Worship Him with gladness. (3) Come before Him with joyful praise. Enter into His presence singing. (4) Know that He is God. Know that He made you and you are His beloved child. (5) Enter His presence with gratitude and praise. (6) Give thanks. (7) Honor His name.

As your Thanksgiving day begins, unfolds, and eventually ends, amid the hustle and bustle of preparation, celebration and conversation, keep the ancient words of Psalm 100 near to your heart and go through your day with thanks and praise.

**Ask:** How have I experienced God's goodness in the past? How can I anticipate God's goodness in my future? How can I practice the sevenfold invitation of the Psalm during my Thanksgiving Day and every day?

**Pause and Pray**

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

*Lord God, You are holy, You are mighty and You are very, very good. I shout for joy! I worship You with gladness in my heart. I come before you with joyful songs on my lips. I know that You are God. You made me, created me, and formed me in my mother's womb. I am Yours and You are mine. You care for me as a sheep in Your pasture. Thank You for Your love that endures forever. Thank You for Your faithfulness that continues through all generations. Please bless my family. Bless my children, and their children, and their children throughout the years to come. Thank You. Amen.*