



## Why Give Thanks Before Meals?

Lesson 4

**Why "Give Thanks" Before Meals?** It's a biblical WITNESS *ThanksLiving!*

"Saying grace" or "giving the blessing" refers to the practice of thanking God for your food before eating.

"Saying Grace" is probably one of the most practiced and least THOUGHT about and TAUGHT about habit of Christians.

**How to Daily Grow from Just "Saying Grace" to "Living Grace"**

*"Saying Grace" can be meaningful and not mechanical!*

### 1. FOCUS Is Everything When Saying Grace!

*Matthew 14:15-21; Mark 8:6-7*

**Both Jesus and Paul Made "Saying Grace" a Holy Habit.**

*Matthew 14:19; 15:36; 26:27; Mark 6:41; 8:6-7; 14:23; Luke 9:16; 22:17, 19; 24:30 John 6:11; 1Corinthians 11:24; Acts 27:35; 1Timothy 4:1-5*

**Four Ways to Stay Focused When "Saying Grace"** *Matthew 14:19-20; Mark 8:6-7*

#### 1. Focus on GOD the Giver of Every Good Gift.

*"He took...and looking up to heaven" Matthew 14:19*

**Why Did Jesus Look Up?**

- Point to God as the OWNER of everything. *Psalm 24:1*
- Point to God as the GIVER of every good gift. *James 1:17*
- Point to God as His FATHER who gives everything to His Son. *Matthew 7:11*

#### 2. Focus on GRATITUDE to God for what He has given.

*"He **blest**" Matthew 14:19; "and **gave thanks**" Mark 8:6*

#### 3. Focus on GRACE from God to bless what He has given.

*"**gave thanks** (to God)...and having **blest** (the fish)" Mark 8:6-7*

#### 4. Focus on GENEROSITY to share with others what God has given.

*"and **broke** and **gave** the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples **gave** to the multitudes." Matthew 14:19*

**Why Break Bread?**

- Broken to be SHARED with others! *John 6:11*
- Broken to be BLESSING to others! *Matthew 14:19*

### 2. FREEDOM Is Essential When Saying Grace!

### **Four Reasons Freedom Is Essential**

1. **WHATEVER** we do (or don't do) should be done for God's glory with a grateful heart.

*Romans 14:5-6; 1Corinthians 10:31-32*

2. We have freedom in the **FORM** our "saying grace" takes.

*Romans 14:7-12; 1Corinthians 10:33*

3. We should not **JUDGE** one another or show contempt for how others choose to "say grace" or not "say grace."

*Romans 14:10, 12-13*

4. "Saying grace" should be done at **ALL** times as a part of *ThanksLiving*.

*Ephesians 5:20; Colossians 3:17; 1Thessalonians 5:18; Hebrews 13:15; 1Timothy 4:1-5*

### **Two Simple Ways to "Say Grace"**

- By **PRAYING** before, or during, or after our meal.
- By **MEDITATING** on Scripture before, during, or after our meal.

*"The earth is the LORD'S, and all its fullness, The world and those who dwell therein." Psalms 24:1*

*"giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," Ephesians 5:20*

*"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." Colossians 3:17*

*"in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." 1Thessalonians 5:18*

*"But he answered, 'It is written, 'Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Matthew 4:4*

*"Give us this day our daily bread." Matthew 6:11*

*"Praying before we eat with a grateful heart makes us more like Jesus, it brings pleasure and glory to God, and it recalibrates our minds on the love He has for His children, the gifts He provides us with, and the people He gives us to enjoy those gifts with." – Cole Douglas Claybourn*

## **3. "Saying Grace" FLOWS from Receiving and Living Grace!**

*Matthew 6:9-13; Matthew 6:24-34*

*Perhaps "Saying Grace" is best understood as **PRaising** God for answered prayer!*

### **"Saying Grace" Is "Living Grace" When It...**

1. Flows from our daily **SUBMISSION** to the sovereign lordship of our God. *Matthew 6:10, 24*

**"YOU are the CREATOR KING Not ME. I NEED You, so I STOP and SAY THANK YOU!"**

*You are the ONE who ultimately created this, because man does not live by bread alone, but every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.*

2. Flows from our daily **TRUST** in the loving provision of our heavenly Father. *Matthew 6:25-32*

**"YOU are the PROVIDER Not ME! I RECEIVE from You, so I STOP and SAY THANK YOU!"**

*You are the ONE who ultimately provided this, because my heavenly Father knows what I need before I even ask!*

3. Flows from our daily **HOPE** in the coming kingdom of our risen Lord, Jesus Christ. *Matthew 6:6:10, 13, 33-34*

**"YOU are my DELIVERER Not ME! I FOREVER GRATEFUL to You, so I STOP and SAY THANK YOU!"**

*You are the ONE who ultimately meets my greatest needs and gives me my greatest satisfaction. You and Your Kingdom are more important to me than even the food I eat, because Your Kingdom is not eating and drinking but righteousness, joy, and hope in the Holy Spirit (Rom. 14:17)!*

### **Giving Thanks Before Meals Is a Biblical Witness to ThanksLiving!**

*"Do you stop to pray and thank God before eating? I'm not trying to impose a legalistic standard upon you. Instead, I'm trying to commend a profitable and time-tested way to train your heart and your tongue to thank God for what He has provided for you. And in doing so, it reminds you that this same God has provided for all of your needs in Christ." – Erik Raymond*