

Grace Notes: growing our faith through music by Coni Ferland

Give Thanks Henry Smith

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Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One
Give thanks because he's given Jesus Christ his son.

And now, let the weak say "I am strong", let the poor say
"I am rich because of what the Lord has done for us."

Give thanks!

Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One
Give thanks because he's given Jesus Christ his son.

John 1:14-17 "And Christ became a human being and lived here on earth among us among us and was full of loving forgiveness and truth. And some of us have seen his glory – the glory of the only son of the heavenly Father! John pointed him out to the people, telling the crowds, 'This is the one I was talking about when I said "someone is coming who is greater by far than I am – for he existed long before I did!" We have all benefited from the rich blessings he brought to us – blessing upon blessing heaped on us! For Moses gave us only the law with its rigid demands and merciless justice, while Jesus Christ brought us loving forgiveness as well.'"

The Living Bible¹

Psalm 9:1 "O Lord, I will praise you with all my heart and tell everyone about the marvelous things you do."

The Living Bible¹

Why do you think the writer said to "give thanks with a grateful heart"? Does gratefulness make a difference when you say thank you? How?

Does the fact that "Christ became a human being and lived here on earth among us among us" have an impact on how you view Him? On your relationship with Him? In what ways?

And now, let the weak say "I am strong", let the poor say
"I am rich because of what the Lord has done for us."

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 "His weak human body died on the cross, but now he lives by the mighty power of God. We too, are weak in our bodies, as he was, but now we live and are strong, as he is, and have all the power to use in dealing with you."

The Living Bible¹

Luke 1:50-53 "From one generation to another he shows mercy to those who honor him. He has stretched out his mighty arm and scattered the proud with all their plans. He has brought down

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the mighty kings from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away with empty hands.” Good News Translation²

Paul reminds us that it was Jesus’ weak (human) body that died on the cross, but that His divinity lives on. Do you feel that you live in Christ’s strength (divinity)? Why do you feel that way?

Luke 1:50-53 is part of Mary’s song of praise. Even in a time of Roman occupation, Mary pointed out that God shows favor not to the wealthy and powerful, as people do, but to the lowly, the hungry, the poor. What difference can that distinction make to the way you view people? Do you gravitate to those with the things humans value – power and money? What makes you do that? Why do you think God lifts up the lowly, feeds the hungry as Mary says? Does this impact the way you see those that society views as “less than”? The way you interact with them? If not, why not? What difference could adopting God’s attitude of acceptance make in modern society?

Give thanks!

Psalm 100 *“On your feet now—applaud God! Bring a gift of laughter, sing yourselves into his presence. Know this: GOD is God, and God, GOD. He made us; we didn’t make him. We’re his people, his well-tended sheep. Enter with the password: “Thank you!” Make yourselves at home, talking praise. Thank him. Worship him. For GOD is sheer beauty, all-generous in love, loyal always and ever.”* The Message³

Do you have an “attitude of gratitude”? How does that effect your life? How would it feel to “*make yourselves at home*” in God’s presence? Could that impact the way you view your life? In what ways?

*“Oh, how grateful and thankful I am to the Lord because he is so good.
I will sing praise to the name of the Lord who is above all lords.”*

Psalm 7:17 The Living Bible¹

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