

### **We Give Thanks for God's Gift of Creation – Genesis 1:26-31a**

Have you ever caught yourself grumbling about the weather? “It’s too hot.” “It’s too cold.” “It’s too rainy. “It’s too sunny.” “It’s too snowy.” Yet how wonderful are God’s gifts of nature and creation! The Lord created the world and everything in it specifically for the use and blessing of his most special creation – mankind. When the Lord created man and woman, he created them differently than the rest of creation. God didn’t just say, “Let there be people,” but instead he took special care and effort to make us his own. So now as God’s special creation, we get to enjoy the countless blessings that come to us through God’s creation every day. God created this world for us! For the sunshine and warmth, the rains and snows, and all of God’s creation, we give thanks!

*Hear now a lesson from Genesis 1...We sing Hymn 260 – Let All Things Now Living*

### **We Give Thanks for God's Gift of His Word – Luke 10:38-42**

Mary knew it. Martha knew it too, but she let herself get distracted from it. Jesus had for both of them **“the one thing needful”**—his holy, life-changing, heaven-opening Word. Jesus has that **“one thing needful”** for you too. So what do you do with it? Do you take the opportunities to sit at Jesus’ feet time and again or do you let the busyness of the world around you or the demands of your daily life distract you from the **“one thing”** you need the most? Praise God that he did not get distracted from giving us that **“one thing needful!”** Praise God that he still gives us opportunity after opportunity to sit at his feet and simply enjoy his Word. So let’s pause for a moment and join Mary at the Savior’s feet, for there we find life. For the life-changing Word, we give thanks!

*Hear now a lesson from Luke 10...We sing Hymn 279 – O Word of God Incarnate*

### **We Give Thanks for God's Gift of Family – Colossians 3:12-21**

Why did God create the family? God created the family to nurture and help you grow both physically and spiritually. When God established the family at creation, he gave each member—father, mother, and child—a certain role to carry out in love towards the other members of the family. The same is to be true of our families today. The only way we can properly carry out our roles is when family and marriage are centered on Christ and his love for us. We even see the same thing in our church family. It only works as God intends it when that spiritual family is centered on Christ. For our families of every shape and size, we give thanks!

*Hear now a lesson from Colossians 3...We sing Hymn 502:1-3 – Lord of the Home*

### **We Give Thanks for God's Gift of Life – Acts 17:22-28a**

You and I have a tendency to take for granted any number of God’s gifts, but one of the most taken-for-granted gifts is his gift of life. You typically don’t think about breathing...until it becomes difficult. You typically don’t think about moving...until you can’t move as well. God’s gift of life is one of those gifts that you and I take for granted unless it’s in danger. Yet you wake up in the morning. Yes, your back might be sore. Your knees might feel creaky. Your health might be so-so, but the Lord has given you another day of grace. You woke up, didn’t you? You’re breathing, aren’t you? Another day of grace added on to an entire lifetime of grace. Every breath you take is a blessing from God—another opportunity to come to the knowledge of the truth and live under the Savior’s grace. For daily breath and daily grace, we give thanks!

*Hear now a lesson from Acts 17...We sing Hymn 234:1,3,5 – Praise to the Lord, the Almighty*

### **We Give Thanks for God's Gift of Possessions – Deuteronomy 8:10-18**

As I look out, I see we have a roof over our heads, fine clothes on our backs, warmth from the cold, and plenty of food will certainly be on our tables tomorrow. Who gave us all these things? The Lord—our faithful and gracious God—gave us all these things and more. Trust me—the list is endless! Now God could simply give you and me only the bare necessities, but how much more has he provided for each and every one of us because he cares for us! All these possessions, these treasures still belong to him. In grace, he entrusts them to us expecting us to be faithful stewards of all the Lord grants us. For all our “stuff,” we give thanks!

*Hear now a lesson from Deuteronomy 8...We sing Hymn 611 – For the Fruit of His Creation*

### **We Give Thanks for God's Gift of Salvation – Ephesians 2:1-10**

When you hear Paul's words in Ephesians 2, they take your breath away, don't they? He lays out how absolutely impossible it was for us to earn our way into heaven or pull ourselves up there by our bootstraps, yet **"God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ."** Wow! Takes your breath away, doesn't it? In these ten short verses, Paul lays out everything we need to know about God's gift of salvation—our faults, God's forgiveness, the faith he plants in our hearts, and the fruits of faith that adorn our daily. What a **"gift"** of grace that comes only through our Savior Jesus Christ! That gift helps us through the storms and gales of life, and will bring us home to heaven one day! For the gift of salvation that is more precious than all the wealth in the world, we give thanks!

*Hear now a lesson from Ephesians 2...We sing Hymn 392 – Not Unto Us*

### **Our Christian Response to God's Blessings – Luke 17:11-19**

"Now what do you say?" We've taken a brief look at some of the biggest gifts of grace that God has given us. So what do you say? You and I could be like the other nine lepers in the lesson we're about to read. They were healed. They were beneficiaries of God's grace, but their first and only thought was of themselves. They were healed after all, but there was no thankfulness. When you and I receive blessings of grace from our Savior's hand, we tend to think of how great those blessings are for us and for our lives and for our loved ones. We're quick to ask and happy to receive, but even quicker to forget to say "thank you" for God's blessings. Yet in spite of our forgetfulness and thanklessness, Jesus still lived a life of perfect thankfulness in our place and then he paid for the guilt of our thanklessness to give us, who deserve nothing, absolutely everything. So let's respond like the Samaritan leper with thankfulness and praise to our gracious Lord who has given us everything! For all his gifts, let us always be quick to thank!

*Hear now a lesson from Luke 17...We sing Hymn 615 – We Thank You for Your Blessings*