



LWML CNH CHRISTIAN LIFE LINE

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THANKSGIVING HYMNS

*Enter His gates with thanksgiving; go into His courts with praise.
Give thanks to Him and praise His name.*

Psalm 100:4

Thanksgiving is here once again. Time with family and friends, turkey and all the fixings. We look forward to this day of giving thanks, but we as Christians give thanks throughout the day every day for all His gifts and blessings.

There are many beautiful hymns and songs that are sung during this season. The stories behind these hymns are interesting as well. Two of them are shared below.

Come, ye thankful people, come, raise the song of harvest home; all is safely gathered in,
ere the winter storms begin. God our Maker doth provide for our wants to be supplied;
come to God's own temple, come, raise the song of harvest home.

All the world is God's own field, fruit as praise to God we yield; wheat and tares together sown
are to joy or sorrow grown; first the blade and then the ear, then the full corn shall appear;
Lord of harvest, grant that we wholesome grain and pure may be.

For the Lord our God shall come, and shall take the harvest home; from the field shall in that day
all offenses purge away, giving angels charge at last in the fire the tares to cast;
but the fruitful ears to store in the garner evermore.

Even so, Lord, quickly come, bring thy final harvest home; gather thou thy people in,
free from sorrow, free from sin, there, forever purified, in thy presence to abide;
come, with all thine angels, come, raise the glorious harvest home.

[Public Domain – LSB 892]

We say thanks before meals. How about after meals? The composer of this hymn, Henry Alford, stood and offered his gratitude to God before and after his meals and also at the end of each day. He was indeed one of the “thankful people” he writes about in this hymn.

This hymn was written in rural England in the mid-nineteenth century, when the life of the village during the winter depended on the bounty of the autumn harvest. While the first stanza of this hymn rejoices over the harvest, the last three stanzas expound on the reminder this image gives of the Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds in Matthew 13. The hymn concludes with a prayer that the final harvest at His Second Coming would happen soon. This song is also about completed work, work done well, aching muscles, full barns, sun-reddened faces, and meals aplenty. *[excerpt from hymnary.org/text]*

Now thank we all our God with heart and hands and voices, who wondrous things has done,
in whom his world rejoices; who from our mothers' arms has blessed us on our way
with countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.

O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us, with ever joyful hearts
and blessed peace to cheer us, to keep us in his grace, and guide us when perplexed,
and free us from all ills of this world in the next.

All praise and thanks to God the Father now be given, the Son and Spirit blest,
who reign in highest heaven the one eternal God, whom heaven and earth adore;
for thus it was, is now, and shall be evermore.

[Public Domain – LSB 895]

This hymn is one of the most popular throughout Germany along with “A Mighty Fortress is Our God.” During the Thirty Years’ War, refugees fled to the walled city of Eilenberg, Germany, for protection, but soon were overrun by the Swedes and Austrians. Hunger, plagues, and death were chronic problems in the crowded conditions. Martin Rinkart, the author, pastored these people and his own family as best as he could. When he prayed, “guide us when perplexed” in this hymn, he was not talking about minor inconveniences. In 1637, at the height of misery, Rinkart was the only clergyman left in the city; some days he performed 40 or 50 burial services – one of which was for his wife. Johann Cruger was introduced to these words while the war still raged and composed a majestic tune. We too can thank God even during the most trying times, and know that God is with us “in this world and the next.” *[excerpt from The Complete Book of Hymns by William J. Peterson and Ardythe Petersen, Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois, 2006]*

Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift. (II Corinthians 9:15)

Happy is the man who puts his trust in the Lord. (Proverbs 16:20)

And be sure of this – that I am with you always, even to the end of the world. (Matthew 28:10)

Nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:30)

Know ye that the Lord He is God, it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves, we are His people and the sheep of His pasture. (Psalm 100:3)

Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth, serve the Lord with gladness, come before Him with joyful singing. (Psalm 100:1-2)

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. (Psalm 46:1)

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (I John 1:9)

Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth My Word and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life. (John 5:24)

I am the Resurrection and the Life; He who believes in Me shall live even if he dies. (John 11:25)

Now may the Lord of peace Himself continually grant you peace in every circumstance. The Lord be with you all. (II Thessalonians 3:16)

Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised. (II Chronicles 16:25)