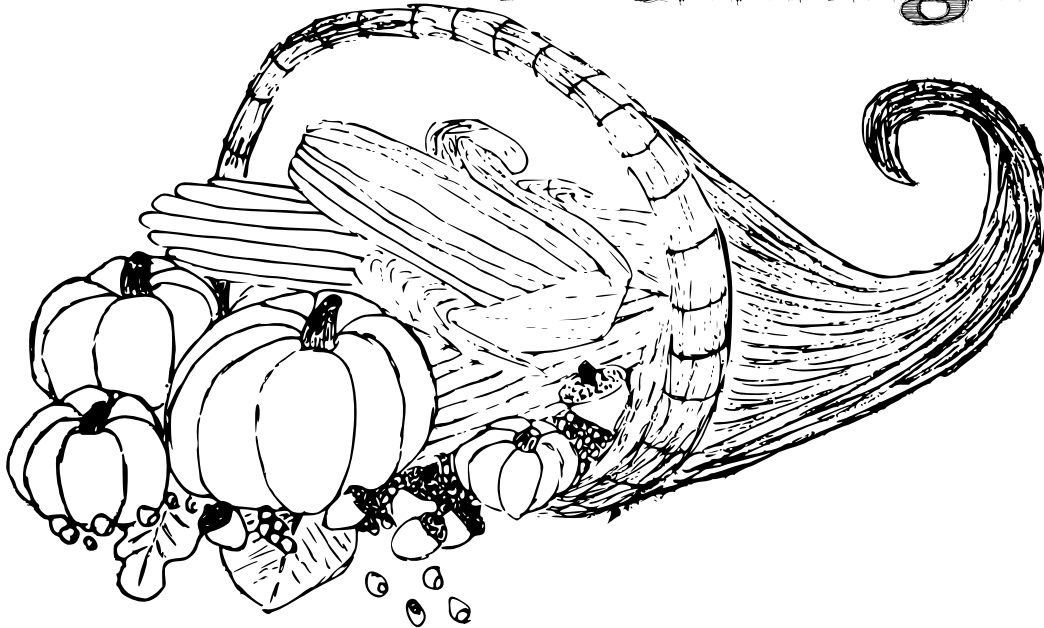


# The Thanks Giving Tree

By Nathan and Anna Rugg

# Count *Your* Blessings



## *Introduction*

**I**t is easy to go through life and miss the blessings all around us. Often we are focused on the things we don't like and wish were different in our lives, rather than thanking God for blessing us abundantly above anything we can ask or think.

If I don't have enough chocolate, I wish for more. If I do, I wish for less (pounds on the scale, that is). If we live in a house with central heat, we don't like the heating bill. If we don't, we don't like the cold. If we don't have enough time with our family, we wish for more. If we do, sometimes we wish for alone time.

Or we can try to change our attitude and tune our hearts toward God. Then we might find things to be thankful for all around us.

In our current house, if we look out our living room windows, we can see an ugly factory. But we can also see beautiful mountains. Which will we choose to focus on, in this life the beauty or the beastly.

Even if nothing seems to be going right in this world, if we truly know Christ, we know this world is not our home. Our true treasures lie elsewhere, and we can be thankful even if all we have is unseen blessings.

## *How to Use This Book*

This book is divided into seven sections each with a scripture reading, thoughts on thankfulness, discussion questions, and suggested hymns and activities. We tried to include a variety of levels for the questions and activities so that this book would be applicable for a wide range of ages. The acorn symbol indicates easier questions and activities, and the tree symbol indicates harder ones. We designed each section to be for an individual day, but, of course, you can go as fast or slow as you like.

Also, you can use as much or as little of the book as you want, whatever draws your heart toward thankfulness and God. And if all you use is the scripture references as a jumping off point to read out of your own Bible and have your own reflection or discussion, that is great too. After all, only the Word is infallible, and we are far from it.

Thank you for taking time to read these words and desiring to cultivate thankfulness in your life.

## *Printable Resources*

We have also created a variety of printable resources to go along with this short book. You can use these to complete some of the activities if you like.

- There is a Thankful Tree printable that you can fill in blessings on as many leaves as you want and display it in your home.
- There are also individual leaves that go along with each day's theme and blank ones for you to write on yourself. Write things you are thankful for on them, and remind yourself of your blessed life. Afterwards, you could hang them on a paper tree or on real tree branches in a vase.
- We have also included a variety of decorative printables to inspire a thankful spirit. You could print these out and display them around your house if you wish.
- You can also use the half and quarter page printables as greetings cards to thank people for blessing you or for just being themselves. Or you could use these cards for upcoming holidays.

However you choose to use this book, we hope it will be a blessing to you and those around you.

# *1: Giving Thanks to a Good God*

## **Psalm 136:1–26**

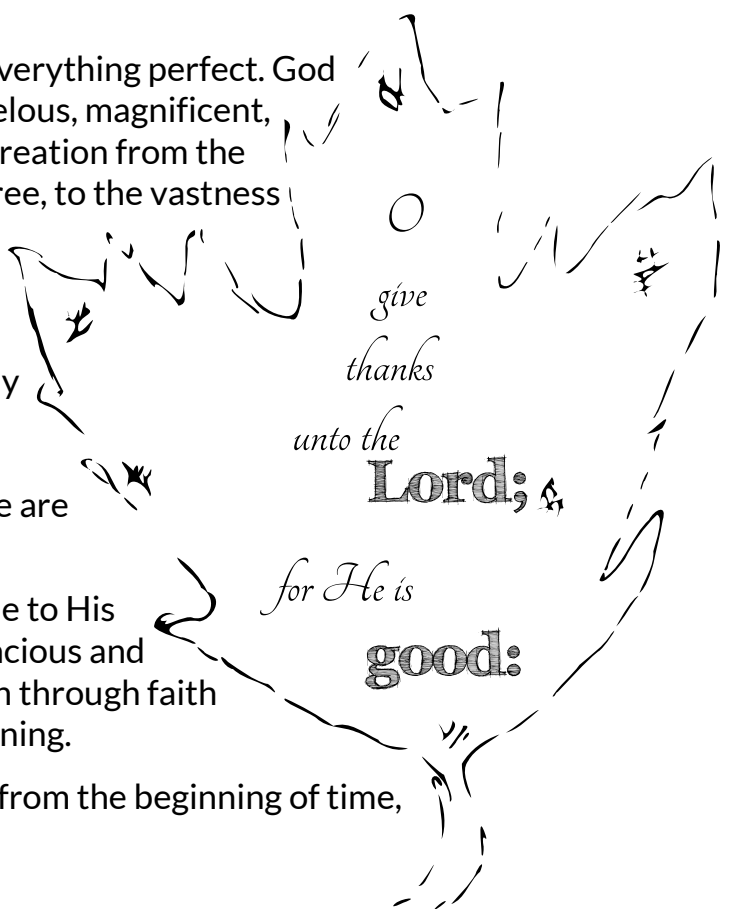
- <sup>1</sup> O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.  
<sup>2</sup> O give thanks unto the God of gods: for his mercy endureth for ever.  
<sup>3</sup> O give thanks to the Lord of lords: for his mercy endureth for ever.  
<sup>4</sup> To him who alone doeth great wonders: for his mercy endureth for ever.  
<sup>5</sup> To him that by wisdom made the heavens: for his mercy endureth for ever.  
<sup>6</sup> To him that stretched out the earth above the waters: for his mercy endureth for ever.  
<sup>7</sup> To him that made great lights: for his mercy endureth for ever:  
<sup>8</sup> The sun to rule by day: for his mercy endureth for ever:  
<sup>9</sup> The moon and stars to rule by night: for his mercy endureth for ever.  
<sup>10</sup> To him that smote Egypt in their firstborn: for his mercy endureth for ever:  
<sup>11</sup> And brought out Israel from among them: for his mercy endureth for ever:  
<sup>12</sup> With a strong hand, and with a stretched out arm: for his mercy endureth for ever.  
<sup>13</sup> To him which divided the Red sea into parts: for his mercy endureth for ever:  
<sup>14</sup> And made Israel to pass through the midst of it: for his mercy endureth for ever:  
<sup>15</sup> But overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea: for his mercy endureth for ever.  
<sup>16</sup> To him which led his people through the wilderness: for his mercy endureth for ever.  
<sup>17</sup> To him which smote great kings: for his mercy endureth for ever:  
<sup>18</sup> And slew famous kings: for his mercy endureth for ever:  
<sup>19</sup> Sihon king of the Amorites: for his mercy endureth for ever:  
<sup>20</sup> And Og the king of Bashan: for his mercy endureth for ever:  
<sup>21</sup> And gave their land for an heritage: for his mercy endureth for ever:  
<sup>22</sup> Even an heritage unto Israel his servant: for his mercy endureth for ever.  
<sup>23</sup> Who remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy endureth for ever:  
<sup>24</sup> And hath redeemed us from our enemies: for his mercy endureth for ever.  
<sup>25</sup> Who giveth food to all flesh: for his mercy endureth for ever.  
<sup>26</sup> O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy endureth for ever.

**G**od is good. In the beginning, He made everything perfect. God filled this earth with good things, marvelous, magnificent, incredible, awe-inspiring things. Looking at creation from the tiniest microorganism, to a simple budding tree, to the vastness of the universe, all of these things speak of the glory of God.

God made the sun exactly the right distance from the earth. God made the air have exactly enough oxygen so we can survive. God made clear tissue in front of our eyeballs and extra thick tissue on the bottoms of our feet. These are all reasons to thank our Designer.

God is also just. He must judge sin to stay true to His perfect nature. But He is also abundantly gracious and merciful, providing a perfect plan of salvation through faith in His Son and giving new mercies every morning.

God's loving kindness is demonstrated to us from the beginning of time, throughout forever.



### *Questions:*



What are some things the Psalm writer was thankful to God for?

What are some things that you are thankful for?



How does God demonstrate His magnificent mercy to us?

### *Suggested Hymns:*

Joyful, Joyful (page 19)

This is My Father's World (page 20)

### *Suggested Activities:*



Draw something about God or something that He has made or done for you that you are thankful for.



Try to make a list of at least 10 things about God or His goodness that you can be thankful for.