



# SABBATH KEEPING YOUTH

A Newsletter by The Church of God International

November/December 2006

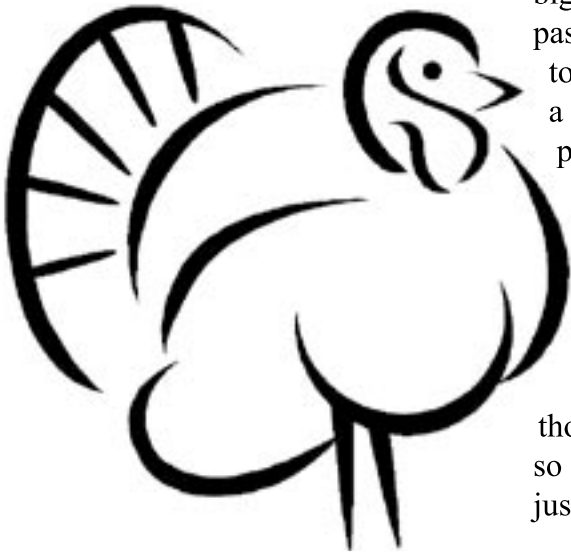
## Thanx with a Smile

*“O Lord, my God I  
will give thanks  
forever!”  
Psalm 30:12*

When you were a toddler your parents taught you to say “thank you.” As you got older they started using those infamous words, “what do you say?” Hopefully you always followed up with a big “thank you!” Now that you’ve passed the stage of being told what to say, how do you respond when a friend gives you a birthday present or the lady at the bank gives you a sucker? What do you say to God after He helps you on a test at school? The correct answer is, “thank you!” God wants it to be more than just polite words. He wants those words to come from a heart so full of His love that thankfulness just spills out. You can always spot

truly thankful people because they have a giant smile spread across their face.

When you’ve spent your quiet time with God and your heart is happy, that’s when thankfulness comes easy. Psalms 107:1 says, “Give thanks to the Lord for He is good; His love endures forever.” A thankful heart gives thanks not just for gifts, but also for the love of God and others. The great thing about a thankful heart is that it leads to peace and joy beyond anything you can imagine. So, open your Bible and look for scriptures about being thankful. Spend November giving thanks 24/7! It will change your life!



## The Parents' Corner

It’s tough teaching children that thankfulness is more than good manners. A thankful heart is a happy, peaceful, and loving heart. In addition to modeling a thankful heart use the ideas listed below to build the character of thankfulness in your kids.

From now to the end of the year, keep a journal of the things your family has to be thankful for. Leave the journal where everyone will see it. When someone has something to be thankful for they write it in the journal and date it. At the end of the year read the journal at dinner and give thanks together as a family. Make it a contest to see who can write the most entries or the most unusual entry.

As a family, give someone a gift that meets a need and do it anonymously.

Have each family member write something for which they are thankful for on a slip of paper. Tuck each slip inside a diner roll. Bake the rolls, serve for dinner, and have the recipient of each roll read their slip of paper. It’s





## Spirit of Thanksgiving

By DeAnna Brooks

I'm not certain. Maybe my eyesight has just grown dim. The passing of years tends to do that. But I am hard-pressed to see the "attitude of gratitude" walking around much these days. You remember it. That "thanks, Mom!" that put a glow on her face when we sat down to dinner. Her day had been careworn and busy and never ending. But when it was time to eat, well, the food was there. Whether abundant or lean. And our, "Thanks!" putting a smile on her face, was both our rewards.

It was the simple things that brought joy. That fruit of appreciation that can't be purchased in any store. In fact, if we lived with Old Mother Hubbard today, she might find those cupboards downright bare.

Nope! Gratitude seems to have been replaced. And I don't think

I care much for its usurper. Old Mr. Grumble and his best friend Mr. Disgruntled III live in my town. They walk down my streets.

And in fact, if I were honest, they are unwelcomed guests way too often in my own home. The DVD's skip. The microwave splashed the soup. The car won't fit in the garage...it's overflowing...again. And, oh yeah, there's no room in the freezer.

Be honest! When was the last time you expressed genuine appreciation? Or were the recipient of a heartfelt, 'thank you'? Usually it's the wrong label, or not the right color, or you discover later they traded in your gift for the 'upgraded' model.

We complain bitterly about taxes, having 'missed' the blessing of a roof overhead, protecting us from the cold. Or we gripe about the price of gas, 'cause after all, our two-plus cars, and let's not forget the RV, are such gas-guzzlers.

The Spirit of Thanksgiving seems to have passed to another dimension. And I can't say that I blame it. We live in a country where our

socks are blessed off, and we just won't see it!

Well, now, wait a minute. I think we had a reminder call not so many months ago. That bright clear morning that shook the earth when two fireballs erupted over the New York skyline. We grabbed our children, held them tightly, and thanked God we were together.

We appreciated our neighbor, saying, "Hello!" for the first time in three years. We called our parents just to tell them we loved them. And gratitude bloomed again! Even for the simple things.

Let's not forget what that day of horror made us remember. We have everything to be thankful for. Even the aches and pains, and yes, those gray hairs, remind us that a gift has been placed in our hands. This day! Filled with blessings! And if that knock on your door turns out to be Mr. Grumble? Well, just give him a swift kick in the pants. Or, better yet, introduce him to the Spirit of Thanksgiving!

Source: [www.faithwriters.com](http://www.faithwriters.com)

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## Giving Cheerfully

### 2 Corinthians 9:3-15

**G**enerous and generously are described in the dictionary as giving freely, charitable, open handed, free, unselfish, abundant and philanthropic.

Paul wrote a letter to the Corinthians to encourage them in the hopes that their faith would increase. In chapter 8 Paul had written about the importance of being generous. He reminded the Corinthians to remember how much Jesus had done for them. It is also a reminder for us. Jesus gave His own life for us. There is no one who has given that much so generously and because of this we need to be generous. Paul continues this topic in chapter 9.

Paul reminded the Corinthians of the financial gift they had committed to giving to the church in Jerusalem. Paul sent a few men ahead of him to make sure the gift was ready. He wanted it to look like a real gift and that people were not giving under pressure at the last minute. Paul did not want himself nor the Corinthians to be embarrassed. He also wanted them to be generous. "So I thought I should ask these brothers to go to you before we do. They will finish getting in order the generous gift you promised so it will be ready when we come. And it will be a generous gift-not one that you did not want to give." 2 Corinthians 9:5

Many times people worry about giving generously to God and not having enough left over to meet their needs. Paul assured the Corinthians that God will meet their needs if they are giving generously. He said, "the person who plants a little will have a small harvest, but the person who plants a lot will have a big harvest. Each one should give as you have decided in your heart to give. You should not be sad when you give, and you should not give because you feel forced to give. God loves the person who gives happily. And God can give you more blessings than you need. Then you will always have plenty of everything-enough to give to every good work." 2 Corinthians 9:6-8 Don't let a lack of faith keep you from giving generously.

What matters the most is our attitude when we give and not how much we give. God wants us to give with a cheerful heart. Paul tells the Corinthians that they will receive a special blessing from God when they give generously. "God is the one who gives seed to the farmer and bread for food. He will give you all the seed you need and make it grow so there will be a great harvest from your goodness. He will make you rich in every way so that you can always give freely. And your giving through us will cause many to give thanks to God" 2 Corinthians 9:10-11 God gives us resources to use to help others. We are supposed to use these resources to produce more crops. When we use what God has given us to help others then He will provide us with even more to give. Then we can continue to give and help others.

Paul also emphasized the spiritual reward for those who give generously. "This service you do not only helps the needs of God's people, it also brings many more thanks to God. It is proof of your faith. Many people will praise God because you obey the Good News of Christ-the gospel you say you believe-and because you freely share with them and with all others. And when they pray, they will wish they could be with you because of the great grace that God has given you. Thanks be to God for his gift that is too wonderful for words." 2 Corinthians 9:12-15 When we give we should not expect to become wealthy from it. Those who receive your gifts will be helped and then in return will give thanks to God. That is what it is all about, giving thanks to God. We also need to give thanks to God for blessing us and giving us the resources to be able to go out and help others.

God wants us to be happy and joyful about what we are giving. He does not want us to be selfish and only concerned with our well-being. As we go and help others generously, we will be blessed. Then turn to God and say "THANK YOU!"

Fill in the circles to make words. The middle letter of each word becomes the first letter of the following word. To find out what Paul tells us is the result of generosity – add the circled middle letters to the lines below.



(1) O E O L D  
 E V Y  
 L I G M E N T  
 E C T I E  
 I N M A N  
 I H T  
 R M E  
 Y  
 O C E  
 N E R  
 I H T  
 L I T E R

H E R E M  
 R A N U T A N  
 H S T  
 R E R  
 I S (1) A N T



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### Don't Just Say "Thanks!" Show It!

- Start practicing your "thankful heart" right now! Here are a few ways to show others just how thankful you are. Remember, a thankful heart is a happy heart, so wear a smile and have fun.
- Nothing says "thank you" like a cupcake!
- When other family members are busy, take care of their chores.
- Hugs and kisses never fail, except after you've eaten a pickle.
- Write a letter to someone who works at church. Tell them how much you appreciate all they do for others.
- Leave a "thank you" note for your mail carrier.
- Spend 5 minutes thanking God for all the wonderful things He's given you; especially your smile.
- Make a card for each of your family members telling them why you are thankful they are part of your family. Slip it under their pillow right before they go to bed.
- Make thankful place mats. Decorate one place mat for each family member. Have each person write several things on their place mat for which they are thankful.
- Make a special cake for your grandparents. Hide little notes inside telling them why you love them and thanking them for being the best grandparents in the whole world.

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