

“Be Ye Thankful”

Introduction. Every day should be a day of thanksgiving on the Christian’s calendar. In fact, we are taught by command to be thankful (Colossians 3:15). It is the will of God that we be thankful (1 Thessalonians 5:18), and we must do the will of God to enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, gratitude is not optional.

Jesus, David, Daniel, Anna, and Paul all had thankful hearts. We should be deeply concerned with how to overcome ingratitude. Thus, this lesson will investigate how we might be able to develop the attitude of gratitude.

I. **Remember To Never Forget**

- A. Forgetfulness is a foe of gratitude (Psalm 103:2). Though Joseph befriended him, the butler forgot him (Genesis 40:23). Only one of ten cleansed lepers remembered not to forget (Luke 17:11-19).
- B. How different were the men of Jabesh-gilead who never forgot Saul’s kindness (1 Samuel 11:1-15; 31:1-13).

II. **Count Your Blessings**

- A. So often we fail to remember the things with which we are so remarkably blessed. How often we sing but how seldom we practice, “Count your many blessings, name them one by one, and it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.” We have been blessed in two great ways:
 - 1. We have been blessed spiritually (Ephesians 1:3).
 - 2. We have been blessed materially (Matthew 5:45; James 1:17).
- B. One of the most consoling thoughts to me is to consider how much better off I am than the rest of the world. All of us who are blessed to live in this country are wealthy by the world’s standards. Truly, this should help us be content (1 Timothy 6:8; Hebrews 13:5).

III. **Express Your Gratitude**

- A. We can express our gratitude by giving thanks.
 - 1. We are instructed to “give” thanks; not “feel” or “think” thanks (1 Thessalonians 5:18; Ephesians 5:20; Psalm 107:1-2).
 - 2. God is a Father who desires and longs for His children to express their love and gratitude (James 4:5).
- B. We can express our gratitude by living righteously.
 - 1. Along with telling the Lord how thankful we are, we must also live so as to reflect thankfulness (Psalm 116:12).
 - 2. We ought to resolve to give the Lord our love, talents, money, time, and our all.

- C. We can express gratitude by not taking common blessings for granted.
 - 1. Often we are so thankless because we are so thoughtless. In our thinking, it is easy to let the commonplace and ordinary blessings of life be forgotten and unappreciated.
 - 2. Because of the wonderful advancements of technology, we have so many appliances and conveniences that we never stop to consider what our lives would be like if we did not have them.
- D. We can express gratitude by not overemphasizing the luxuries of life.
 - 1. If we do not come to fully understand Jesus' saying in Luke 12:15, we will never be content.
 - 2. By constantly dwelling upon the nice things of life that we desire, we will never learn to be thankful for what blessings we do have.

IV. ***Do Away With Murmuring And Complaining***

- A. Instead of remaining continually grateful for their deliverance from Egypt, how soon did Israel start to murmur and complain (Exodus 15:24; 17:3; Numbers 14:2).
- B. We must avoid duplicating this spirit (1 Corinthians 10:10). Though Paul was imprisoned, he still was thankful (Ephesians 5:20; Philippians 2:14).
- C. It has been said that some people who should be humbly grateful have become grumbly hateful. Into which group do you fall?

Conclusion. God considers ingratitude so detestable that He catalogs it with the most vicious of vices and the most tragic of transgressions (Romans 1:21; 2 Timothy 3:1-5). Always remember that everything we have comes from God (James 1:17; 1 Corinthians 15:10).

A child who has been pampered by an overindulgent uncle bringing him candy each day will cry the day the uncle forgets the candy. Why? The child is more interested in the gift than in the giver. Let us never separate God from His gifts. George Herbert prayed, "Our Father, Thou has given us so much, do please, give us one more thing ... a grateful heart."