

November 20, 2022

Lessons in Gratitude For Disciples

Video Intro – Sermon Central

Today our focus is on Thanksgiving and specifically the idea of Gratitude. This week we celebrate the holiday of Thanksgiving. As I often say, we should celebrate this holiday every day of the year – ThanksLiving!

I hope that all of you have a wonderful thanksgiving time with either family and or friends this week. Many of us have fond memories of Thanksgiving holidays. But this can also be a challenging time for those who have lost loved ones. My prayers and sympathies go out to you if you are dealing with grief or regret this holiday season. Just remember that you are loved and that God will be there to help you if you will just seek Him. But also, don't be afraid to reach out to other friends and family for comfort and encouragement.

On a rather funny note, listen to this story... **The story is told** of a Family gathering at Thanksgiving. Mother and Dad went to one of the daughter's for the traditional feast. Knowing how gullible the daughter was, mom decided to play a trick. She told her that she needed something from the store. When the daughter left, mom took the turkey out of the oven. She removed the stuffing, stuffed a Cornish hen, inserted it into the turkey, and re-stuffed the turkey. She then placed the birds back in the oven. When it was time for dinner, the daughter pulled the turkey out of the oven and proceeded

to remove the stuffing. When her serving spoon hit something, she reached in and pulled out the little bird. With a look of total shock on her face, mother exclaimed, 'Patricia, you've cooked a pregnant bird!' At the reality of this horrifying news, the daughter started to cry. It took the family two hours to convince her that turkeys lay eggs!

As a Disciple of Jesus Christ it is vital and necessary for us to develop and practice this ThanksLiving, or as someone has phrased, We need to have an **Attitude of Gratitude**. There are many reasons why we as Disciples of Jesus should have this attitude, but in reality it only takes one... God tells us so in the Bible... one reference is this

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18...*Rejoice always, pray with ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

But just in case you would like to have some additional reasons and motivations for yourself or maybe to help encourage others to choose to live with an **Attitude of Gratitude**

I have two lists that should be more than enough. The first one is more of the general physical and mental health benefits, and the second gives us the spiritual benefits:

“**Here is a list** of the top ten benefits of gratitude from one online author¹;

- Gratitude has lasting positive effects on the brain.
- Gratitude boosts the immune system.
- Gratitude reduces stress, anxiety, and depression.
- Gratitude promotes optimism and positivity.
- Gratitude helps create and strengthen relationships.
- Gratitude reduces chronic pain.
- Gratitude improves overall sleep.
- Gratitude keeps us grounded in reality.
- Gratitude promotes exercise and healthy habits.
- Gratitude improves our overall self-esteem.

¹Taken from :http://blog.dralamountain.org/10-scientific-benefits-of-gratitude/?gclid=CjwKCAjwpqCZBhAbEiwAa7pXeWdTYFkaTT7hVX-zZJnm9osSQiZBKIRwtcBr8hoxMMrx9xajPGgWxoCtbsQAvD_BwE

➤ **Spiritual Benefits**

- It motivates us to look for God's purpose in everything.
- It helps us to submit to His will.
- It reminds us of our dependence.
- It helps us trust the Lord when we're confused.
- It gives our witness greater impact.
- It displaces our anxiety and frustration.
- It helps us focus on the Father instead of our circumstances.
- It energizes us in exhausting situations.

Adapted from Charles Stanley Intouch Ministries

Now, I believe there are at least three attitudes that steal away our gratitude.

Three things that keep us from being thankful.

1) **One is our pride.** This is the attitude that says, "Nobody ever gave me anything, I worked hard for everything I have." For years you studied hard and now it is finally paying off. With this kind of attitude, we feel that we have no one to thank but ourselves.

2) **Another attitude that keeps us from being thankful is a critical spirit or constant complaining.** Instead of being grateful, this person will always find something to complain about.

"A lady known as an incurable grumbler constantly complained about everything. At last her preacher thought he had found something about which she would be happy, for her farm crop was the finest for miles around. When he met her, he said with a beaming smile, 'You must be very happy Mary. Everyone is saying how healthy your potatoes look this year.' 'True they're pretty good, but what am I going to do when I need bad ones to feed the pigs.'"

3) **A third attitude that keeps us from being grateful is carelessness.** Someone once said that if the stars only came out once a year, we would stay out all night to watch them. But they are there every night and we have grown accustomed to them. The Israelites grumbled

because they had no food so God miraculously sent manna (a crust-like bread) to cover the ground each day except the sabbath day. Then they started to grumble because it was the same thing every day. They had a miracle - straight from God every day but were no longer satisfied. Because of pride, carelessness or a critical spirit we will never be truly thankful for all that God has given us.

Let's take a look at the story Jesus tells us in Luke 17:11-13. It gives us a great example of an Attitude of Gratitude.

Luke 17:11-13... *¹¹ Now on His way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. ¹² As He was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met Him. They stood at a distance ¹³ and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!" ¹⁴ When Jesus saw them, He said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed. ¹⁵ One of them, when He saw He was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. ¹⁶ He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked Him—and he was a Samaritan. ¹⁷ Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? ¹⁸ Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?" ¹⁹ Then He said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."*

Key points To Note: Lessons in Gratitude

➤ **Jesus Comes To Us, He Know, Cares And Seeks Us Out**

¹¹ Now on His way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. ¹² As He was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met Him.

➤ **We Must Look to Jesus, Recognize Him as the Only Source of Our Help & Healing**

^{12b} ten men who had leprosy met Him. They stood at a distance ¹³ and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!"

➤ **We Must Be Intentional and Active in Showing Our Thanks and Gratitude**

¹⁴ When Jesus saw them, He said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed.

¹⁵ One of them, when He saw He was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. ¹⁶ He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked Him—and he was a Samaritan.

➤ **We Must Recognize the Thanks, Praise & Faith Connection To Healing & Salvation**

¹⁷ Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? ¹⁸ Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?" ¹⁹ Then He said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."

Following is an excerpt from a message by John MacArthur on this topic... <https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/42-220/ten-men-healed-one-man-saved>

“And in verse 19 the story reaches its wonderful ending. "And He said to him," He knew what he wanted, "Rise, go your way, fulfill the law, go back to the priest, your faith" different faith, greater faith, “has saved you.” The English is misleading. Many translations say, "Has made you well." Everybody was made well, all ten were made well. That's not a definitive ending to the story. The verb is not the word for “healed,” *iaomai*, which is used earlier in the story in verse 15. It's not the word for “cleansed,” *katharizo*, which is used also back earlier in the story in vs 14”

It's the word <4982> σώζω *sozo* to save **Usage:** bring...safely(1), cured(1), ensure salvation(1), get(1), get well(2), made...well(6), made well(5), preserved(1), recover(1), restore(1), save(36), saved(50), saves(1), saving(1).

“It is the word for “salvation.” In the gospels it's used for that and in the epistles it's the word that's used for “saved” and “salvation.” It's translated that way, and I don't know why translators treat it arbitrarily. There are some contexts in which it can mean something less than salvation, but in the context where that's obvious it should be translated that way. For example, in Luke 7:50 Jesus forgives the sins of a woman and He said to the woman, "***Your faith has saved you.***"

Same word, your faith has saved you. Here it's very obvious that this man has come back and he has come penitently, worshipfully and the Lord has healed his soul and given him salvation. It should then be translated as it is in chapter 7, verse 50: "***Your faith has saved you.***" This refers to a second miracle uniquely for this man.

What's the point of all this? There's a... There's a big point here, big picture. As I said, you see in this man trust and gratitude and humility and commitment and love and praise and worship, all components of a faith that's way beyond the other nine, right? It's a faith that embraces Jesus as God, as Lord. It's a faith that bows humbly in recognition of one's lowliness in His presence. It's a faith that Jesus says saves.

But it's not just a story of an individual, it's a parable. Of what? I can't help but look at the nine and believe that the Spirit of God would want me to see in those nine the general attitude of the Jews toward Jesus. They are representative of the general attitude toward Jesus. Give us healing, give us food, deliver us from demons, do miracles, but do not expect worship. Do not expect praise, adoration, thanks. Do not expect us to acknowledge you as God. Listen, this man fell down glorifying God. I believe He knew God was in Jesus. Obviously his theology wasn't fully developed. Then he worshiped, and knowing that worship belongs to God. And he knew God was the source of his miracle and he thanked Jesus, he thanked Him as well as worshiped Him. He came back with the right attitude. So while the ungrateful nine illustrate the general attitude of the Jews, we'll take everything You

give, we'll take all the benefits, we'll take all the miracles, just don't expect worship. The one Samaritan is a picture of the outcasts, the remnant, the ten percent, like Isaiah 6, the tenth that will believe the doctrine of the remnant. The grateful Samaritan is a picture of the outcast who believed. Might be a Samaritan like the Samaritan woman in John 4, might be Jews who were tax collectors and sinners, the riff-raff, the scum, the thugs, the lowlifes, the prostitutes who surrounded Jesus and of whom He said He'd come to call the sinners not the righteous. Everybody heard the message. Everybody enjoyed the benefit of Jesus' power. Everybody basked in the wonder of His teaching and His miracles. But only a few came, fell at His feet, glorified Him as God, worshiped Him, humbled themselves, and offered Him thanks. The majority, they were the takers. Small group were the ones who gave Him worship. The majority were content with fixing their life up a little bit, superficial, temporal. Small group wanted Him to change their souls, transform their hearts.

Well the warning here is that you can experience the goodness and common grace of God and you do, the whole world does. He makes the sun rise on all of us, the rain to fall on the just and the unjust. He's good to all men. You can be blessed by God in an earthly physical way. He is a Savior temporally of all men. You can be even blessed to hear the stories of Jesus and gospel truth and you can say I'll take what I get, I'll take my life I like it the way it is. OK, God gave it to me, I thank God for it. You hear people say that all the time, thank God that I'm healthy, thank God that I

have my children, thank God for my job, etc., etc. And you can walk away right into eternal hell. Or you can come back and fall on your face before Jesus Christ and embrace Him as your Master and Savior. And the miracle that He did for that one man, He will do for you this day". <https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/42-220/ten-men-healed-one-man-saved>

What about YOU!

Will you choose to let the Attitude of Gratitude lead you to Praise God, Have A Deeper Faith and Experience His Healing and Salvation