

Gratitude

Message 2 of 2 in the series: "Generosity & Gratitude"

A. Gratitude (thankfulness) is an important part of our relationship with God.

1. Gratitude is the appropriate response to God's goodness, generosity, and loving kindness. "As Jesus continued on toward Jerusalem, he reached the border between Galilee and Samaria. As he entered a village there, ten men with leprosy stood at a distance, crying out, 'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!' He looked at them and said, 'Go show yourselves to the priests.' And as they went, they were cleansed of their leprosy. **One of them, when he saw that he was healed, came back to Jesus, shouting, 'Praise God!' He fell to the ground at Jesus' feet, thanking him for what he had done.** This man was a Samaritan." Luke 17:11-16 (NLT)
2. Gratitude is a necessary act of worship. "Shout with joy to the Lord, all the earth! Worship the Lord with gladness. Come before him, singing with joy. Acknowledge that the Lord is God! He made us, and we are his. We are his people, the sheep of his pasture. **Enter his gates with thanksgiving; go into his courts with praise. Give thanks to him and praise his name.** For the Lord is good. His unfailing love continues forever, and his faithfulness continues to each generation." Psalm 100 (NLT)

"Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do. Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit, **singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves**, and making music to the Lord in your hearts. **And give thanks for everything to God the Father** in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Ephesians 5:17-20 (NLT)
3. Gratitude is a Biblical command. "**Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good!** His faithful love endures forever. Has the Lord redeemed you? Then speak out! Tell others he has redeemed you from your enemies." Psalm 107:1-2 (NLT)

IMPORTANT! We are commanded to give thanks to the Lord in ALL circumstances. "Rejoice always, pray continually, **give thanks in all circumstances**; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NIV)

IMPORTANT! We are commanded to be grateful not just for what God gives us, but for who He is. "**Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever.**" Psalm 136:1 (NLT)

"But you, O Lord, are a God of **compassion and mercy, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love and faithfulness.**" Psalm 86:15 (NLT)

"O Sovereign Lord! You made the heavens and earth by your strong hand and powerful arm. **Nothing is too hard for you!**" Jeremiah 32:17 (NLT)

4. Authentic gratitude must be freely expressed. "Jesus asked, 'Didn't I heal ten men? **Where are the other nine?** Has no one returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?' And Jesus said to the man, 'Stand up and go. Your faith has healed you.'" Luke 17:17-19 (NLT)

WARNING! Ingratitude is a characteristic of ungodly people. "There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, **ungrateful**, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—having a form of godliness but denying its power. **Have nothing to do with such people.**" 2 Timothy 3:1b-5 (NIV)
5. Gratitude is a needed mindset if we want to experience peace and contentment. "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, **with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**" Philippians 4:6-7 (NIV)

"Yet **true godliness with contentment is itself great wealth.** After all, we brought nothing with us when we came into the world, and we can't take anything with us when we leave it. So if we have enough food and clothing, let us be content." 1 Timothy 6:6-8 (NLT)
6. Gratitude is the opposite of pride. "For when you have become full and prosperous and have built fine homes to live in, and when your flocks and herds have become very large and your silver and gold have multiplied along with everything else, be careful! **Do not become proud at that time and forget the Lord your God**, who rescued you from slavery in the land of Egypt. Do not forget that he led you

through the great and terrifying wilderness with its poisonous snakes and scorpions, where it was so hot and dry. He gave you water from the rock! He fed you with manna in the wilderness, a food unknown to your ancestors. He did this to humble you and test you for your own good. He did all this so you would never say to yourself, 'I have achieved this wealth with my own strength and energy.' **Remember the Lord your God. He is the one who gives you power to be successful...**

Deuteronomy 8:12-18a (NLT)

7. Gratitude is a catalyst for generosity.

“And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others... **he will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you.**” 2 Corinthians 9:8 & 10b (NLT)

B. A month-long list of things we can thank God for every day regardless of our circumstances:

Lord, thank You for:

1. filling my life with good things. (Psalm 103:1-5)
2. sacrificing Jesus to pay the penalty for all my sins on the cross. (John 3:16, 1 John 2:2, 1 Peter 3:18)
3. giving me abundant life filled with hope, meaning, and purpose. (Jeremiah 29:11, John 10:10, Ephesians 2:10)
4. adopting me into in Your family. (Romans 8:15-17, Ephesians 1:5)
5. sending the Holy Spirit to teach, guide, counsel, and empower me. (John 14:15-18 & 26, Acts 1:8)
6. changing the way I think. (Romans 12:2, 1 Corinthians 2:10-16)
7. maturing me spiritually through the trials and problems I face. (Romans 5:3-5, James 1:2-4)
8. making me a little more like Jesus every day. (Romans 8:29, Philippians 3:12-14)
9. holding me by the hand so that even when I stumble, I won't fall. (Psalm 37:24)
10. loving me unconditionally. (John 3:16, Romans 5:6-8 & 8:38-39)
11. leading me along the best pathway for my life. (Psalm 1:6 & 32:8-9)
12. correcting, teaching, and equipping me for every good work through the Bible. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
13. showing me which path to take as I trust Your understanding and not my own. (Proverbs 3:5-6)
14. watching over me as I come in and go out. (Psalm 121)
15. giving me rest for my soul. (Psalm 23:1-3, Matthew 11:28-29, 1 Peter 5:7)
16. protecting me from the evil one. (Isaiah 41:10, 1 Corinthians 10:13, 2 Thessalonians 3:3)
17. keeping me in perfect peace as my mind stays fixed on You. (Isaiah 26:3, Philippians 4:6-7)
18. Your goodness and mercy that follow me all the days of my life. (Psalm 23:6)
19. giving me a spirit of power, love, and a sound mind. (2 Timothy 1:7)
20. enabling me to think about things that are pure, true, excellent, and worthy of praise. (Philippians 4:8)
21. developing in me the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23)
22. causing all things to work together for my good and Your glory. (Genesis 50:20, Romans 8:28)
23. always working in better ways than I can imagine. (Isaiah 64:4, Ephesians 3:20)
24. giving me spiritual gifts so I can serve You as a part of Christ's body. (1 Corinthians 12)
25. always being more ready to listen than I am to pray. (Psalm 116:1-2, Matthew 7:7-11)
26. commanding Your angels to guard and protect me. (Psalm 34:7 & 91:11-12)
27. preparing a place for me in heaven so I can be with You forever. (John 14:1-3)
28. giving me the desire and the power to do what pleases You. (Philippians 2:13)
29. always being with me/never leaving or forsaking me. (Deuteronomy 31:6-8, Matthew 28:20)
30. godly friends who help and counsel me. (Proverbs 18:24, Galatians 6:1-2, Hebrews 10:24-25)
31. generously providing all I need with enough left over for me to share with others. (2 Corinthians 9:8-11)

John Schmidt • 11-23-25 • john@centeringlives.com

Connect Group Questions:

1. Read Luke 17:11-19. Why do you think only one of the 10 lepers who had been healed returned to thank Jesus? Why is it so easy for us to forget to say “Thank you” to God for all of His blessings?
2. Allow each person in your group to pick one of the items on the month-long list of things we can be thankful for. Ask them to read the associated Scripture passages and then share with the group why they are grateful to God for the blessing they chose.
3. Discuss the following ways that gratitude/thankfulness is an important part of our relationship with God:

- Gratitude is a necessary act of worship. (Psalm 100, Ephesians 5:17-20)
- Gratitude is a Biblical command. (Psalm 107:1-2, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)
- Gratitude is a needed mindset if we want to experience peace and contentment. (Philippians 4:6-7, 1 Timothy 6:6-8)
- Gratitude is a catalyst for generosity. (Matthew 6:33, 2 Corinthians 9:8-11)

4. Why must gratitude be freely expressed in order to be authentic?

5. Why is gratitude the opposite of pride? (Deuteronomy 8:12-18, 2 Timothy 3:1-5)

6. Quotes worth considering:

"Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it." William Arthur Ward

"We would worry less if we praised more. Thanksgiving is the enemy of discontent and dissatisfaction."

Harry Ironside

"It must be an odd feeling to be thankful to nobody in particular. Christians in public institutions often see this odd thing happening on Thanksgiving Day. Everyone in the institution seems to be thankful 'in general.' It's very strange. It's a little like being married 'in general.'" Cornelius Plantinga