

Thankfulness - Nov. 29, 2020

This is thanksgiving season. So we are talking about being thankful. Thankfulness makes us attractive to God, and to others.

Thankfulness is a recognition of someone's kindness to us. It is acknowledging someone's generosity and goodness to us. It is appreciation. It is gratitude, - Because of you I have this, and this...

Can you imagine giving nice things to people all the time, And they totally ignore you, and never give you thanks. How does God feel after lavishing humanity with so many good things, And mankind refusing to thank him, or even acknowledge Him?

Romans chapter 1:21-22 - the first step in backsliding is unthankfulness.

“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools... We know the downward plunge in Romans 1. Starts with unthankfulness. A refusal to acknowledge God, and his goodness.

God delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage

Was Israel thankful for being delivered out of Egyptian bondage? No! God did miracle after miracle to release Israel from bondage. He even opened up the Red Sea, and destroyed the Egyptian army. But Israel is known for constant complaining and criticism of God. Unthankfulness leads to one's destruction. It ruins a person.

Much of America has become unthankful, and does not acknowledge God. Unthankfulness is the reason America has drifted into terrible confusion.

The words - thankful, thanks, and thanksgiving, are found 110 times.
And many other synonymous expressions in scripture.

We're told in Psalm 100:4 to “Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.”

He has been so good to us, and we need to acknowledge this all the time.
Every day when I sit in my warm Home, I thank God.

It's cold and wintry outside, thank you Lord for a warm comfortable home.

Thank you Lord for food to eat, thank you for helping me pay all my bills.

Thank you most of all Lord, for the knowledge of salvation.

What a privilege to know the real meaning of life.

And to have such a bright future, when we know the Lord.

1Co 2:9* But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

We should thank God all the time. In the good times and the difficult times.
This is what the book of Job is all about.

Being thankful, keeping our spirit right, even in difficult times.

This is the real test of our character. How we react in times of trouble.

Are we only fair weather friends. Only thank him when things are going well

The real proof of our character is, —

Thanking God in the good times and in the difficult times.

After Job lost everything. Job 1:20-22

“Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, And said, Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.”

Job was offering the sacrifice of Thanksgiving.

“I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD.” Psalms 116:17, KJV.

It is easy to thank the Lord when everything is going well.

But when things are difficult, it becomes sacrifice of Thanksgiving.

After passing this first test, of losing everything, still maintaining integrity.

Now God allowed his health to be removed. Body covered with boils.

His wife responded with hysteria. But Job said to her:

What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive [trouble, distress]? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.” Job 2:10, KJV.

Job still blessed the Lord in the difficult times. This is real character.

**Another example of offering the sacrifice of thanksgiving / Praise
Acts 16:23-26, KJV.**

“And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one’s bands were loosed.”

This right response to injury released the power of God.

Our response to difficulties is so important.

Here they are with their backs bleeding, totally humiliated.

Cast the depths of the dungeon. Singing and thanking God at midnight.

What a wonderful response to difficulties.

**We have a choice to make: to humble ourselves / receive the grace of God.
Or to harden our hearts and become bitter.**

A thankful spirit is a tremendous key to victory.

Being thankful is a very important subject. A matter of victory or defeat.

Are we a thankful person? Or a complainer? Israel complained....

Do we always look at the negative, the Gloomy?

Thankfulness brings the victory. It brings a positive confession.

Thankfulness comes from the Spirit of truth. God has been so good to me.

I cannot even imagine all the good things He yet has in store for me.

**Consider Psalms 92:1-2. "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD,
and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High: To shew forth thy
lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night,"**

This makes us attractive to God. Complaining makes us unattractive.

For moment put yourself in God's place: He gives lavishly to mankind .

So often, there is never a thank you, or acknowledgement of his goodness.

So God it is mercy, has to withdraw His blessing, to get man's attention.

Many years ago, a lady in church said, you've never done anything for me.

Many times I've visited her children home, I traveled hundreds of miles,

To visit her dying father, to help him get ready for heaven.

You've never done anything for me - she was a welfare Lady.

Often, people on welfare only take and never give. Totally unthankful.

When people are given everything, they're not thankful.

This is a problem with the welfare system. It produces unthankfulness.

You don't appreciate something if you never pay a price for it.

When I was a young boy, we often didn't have much food to eat.

I had to work for every nickel. When I had food, I was thankful.

When you were given everything freely, you are not thankful.

We are To continually offer the sacrifice of Thanksgiving

The priests of the Old Testament were to continually offer sacrifice, Morning and evening. We also should give thanks day and night, always.

1 Chronicles 16:39, 40. - "... Zadok the priest, and his brethren the priests, before the tabernacle of the LORD in the high place that was at Gibeon, To offer burnt offerings unto the LORD upon the altar of the burnt offering continually morning and evening, and to do according to all that is written in the law of the LORD, which he commanded Israel;"

We are told in first Thessalonians 5:18, to give thanks always.

1Th 5:18* In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

In the good times, and in the difficult times, we are to give thanks.

This is the will of God. And it keeps bitterness out of our heart.

This is the key to handling a wounded spirit.

Thankfulness overcomes all bitterness and criticism.

We are to magnify God, not our problem.

We are told in Deuteronomy 23:5, God can turn a curse into a blessing:

De 23:5 Nevertheless the LORD thy God would not hearken unto Balaam; but the LORD thy God turned the curse into a blessing unto thee, because the LORD thy God loved thee.

We need God's perspective: God can use an irritation or injustice, and make it work for our benefit. He did for Joseph, in Genesis 50:20.

Joseph said to his brothers, you meant all those things for evil,

But God meant it for good. Romans 8:28 all things are working together for good. Ecclesiastes 3:11, God will make everything beautiful in his time.

2 Co 4:17* For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

Ro 8:18* For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Isa 54:17 No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.

Our expectations must be in the right place. Psalm 62:5 says:

Ps 62:5 My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.

The Lord is our hope, our expectation, our future.

So we are to thank him continually, for all things.

God uses good things and difficult things to develop us.

Rather than being bitter toward our offenders, we need to pray for them.

Luke 6:27, Job 42:10. The Lord ended Job's trial, when he prayed for his friends who had so misjudged him.

Lk. 6:28* Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.

Thankfulness, and right response to offenses, is good for our mental and spiritual health.

People get themselves into a pit, by a wrong response to injuries.

Thankfulness gives us good spiritual and mental and emotional health.

Let's give thanks to the Lord in all things. In the good times and difficult times. God bless you.

