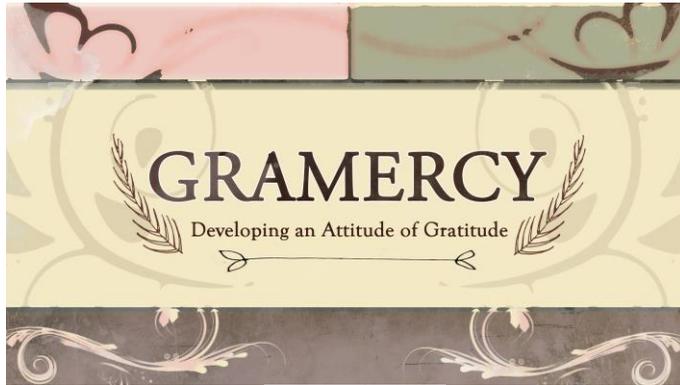


Gramercy:

“Thankful in...”

Part 3



*“Be thankful
...in...*

*all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you
who belong to Christ Jesus.”*

1 Thessalonians 5:18

A. God commands me to “be thankful” ...

1. To be thankful is not an act of the emotion but rather an act of the will.
2. To be thankful is acknowledging God knows what is best for my life.
3. To be thankful is to remind me that all God’s commands are always for my benefit.
4. To be thankful is to surrender to God’s highest purpose for my life.

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” Romans 8:28

B. God commands me to an impossible list...

“Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.” 1 Thessalonians 5:18

1. Always be joyful.
2. Never stop praying.
3. Be thankful in all circumstances.
4. God’s will is never the easy path!

“He took some bread and gave thanks to God for it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, ‘This is my body, which is given for you. Do this to remember me.’” Luke 22:19

C. The danger of withholding gratitude...

1. When I withhold gratitude, I run the risk of bringing darkness to my life.

“For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.”

Romans 1:21

2. When I withhold gratitude, I run the risk of bringing bitterness into my life.

“Look after each other so that none of you fails to receive the grace of God. Watch out that no poisonous root of bitterness grows up to trouble you, corrupting many.” Hebrews 12:15

3. When I withhold gratitude, I run the risk of bringing judgment on myself.

“Don’t grumble about each other, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. For look—the Judge is standing at the door!”

James 5:9

4. When I withhold gratitude, I run the risk of becoming a grumbler!

“These people are grumblers and complainers, living only to satisfy their desires. They brag loudly about themselves, and they flatter others to get what they want.” Jude 1:16

D. Gratitude...

1. Reminds me that God is near!
2. Energizes me.
3. Helps me be totally dependent on God.
4. Brings my will into submission to God’s will.
5. Changes anxiety to peace.
6. Brings joy to my life.
7. Shifts my focus.

8. Gives me an eternal focus.

9. Is a witness to the world around me!

“But thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ’s triumphal procession and uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere.”

2 Corinthians 2:14

Look at Paul’s writing to the Colossians while he was in prison...

Chapter 1...

“and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light.”

Chapter 2...

“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him,⁷ rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.”

Chapter 3...

“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.¹⁶ Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.¹⁷ And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”

Chapter 4...

“Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.”

Your assignment for the third week is:

- 1) Write brief notes of appreciation to many in your lives...with Gramercy business cards or thank you cards!
- 2) Encourage those in your life who are demonstrating the joy of Christ, even though their circumstances appear difficult.

Matthew Henry, the famous commentator, was once mugged by robbers and they took his wallet. He wrote these words in his diary: "Let me be thankful first, because I was never robbed before; second, because, although they took my wallet, they did not take my life; third, because, although they took my money, it was not much; and fourth, because it was I who was robbed, not I who robbed."

I heard about a guy who suspected his wife was going deaf. He walked into the room one day to find her looking the other way, so to test his theory he whispered, can you hear me? Nothing. He got a little closer, can you hear me? Still nothing. Got a little closer, can you hear me now? Again nothing. Finally he was right behind her, and spoke in a half-whisper, can you hear me now? The wife replied, *for the fourth time, yes!*

See we can be like that, thinking the problem is with God: He's not speaking, He's not working. Henry Blackaby says that when someone asks why God isn't working in their life; they are asking the wrong question. The question is why am I not seeing where God is working in my life?