

November 25, 2018

## “Thanksgiving”

### “Rather Than a Day or a Season, Make It a Lifestyle”

“Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.” 1 Thessalonians 5:18

#### A. Gratitude is commanded...

“Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.” 1 Thessalonians 5:18

1. Gratitude is not a feeling.
2. Gratitude is an act of the will.
3. Gratitude is a commandment.
4. Gratitude is transformational to our world.

“Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow.”

#### B. Gratitude is in our original design...

“And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful.” Colossians 3:15

1. The benefits of gratitude:
  - a. Gratitude improves physical health.
  - b. Gratitude improves psychological health.
  - c. Gratitude enhances empathy and reduces aggression.
  - d. Grateful people sleep better.
  - e. Gratitude improves self-esteem.
  - f. Gratitude increases mental strength.
  - g. Gratitude opens doors to relationships.

“And give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Ephesians 5:20

2. It is a prescription for worry.

“Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all He has done.”

Philippians 4:6

3. It is a prescription for grumbling.

“Do everything without complaining and arguing, so that no one can criticize you. Live clean, innocent lives as children of God, shining like bright lights in a world full of crooked and perverse people.” Philippians 2:14-15

4. It is a prescription for discontentment, envy, and jealousy.

“Don’t love money; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, ‘I will never fail you. I will never abandon you.’”

Hebrews 13:5

#### C. Gratitude is re-focusing your thoughts from what you don’t have...to what you do have...

1. Realizing and learning that God is in control of your life and your circumstances.

“I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little.” Philippians 4:12

2. Giving thanks for all that comes into your life and trusting God to control your life.

“And give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Ephesians 5:20

3. Letting gratitude guide your conversation and your actions.

“And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.”

Colossians 3:17

4. The only worship you can offer God that is pleasing and acceptable is a heart full of thanksgiving.

“Since we are receiving a Kingdom that is unshakable, let us be thankful and please God by worshiping Him with holy fear and awe.” Hebrews 12:28

#### D. When we express thanks...

1. It benefits the receiver.

“We always thank God for all of you and pray for you constantly.” 1 Thessalonians 1:2

2. It benefits the giver.

“It is good to give thanks to the LORD, to sing praises to the Most High.” Psalm 92:1

3. It benefits the witnesses.

“It is good to proclaim Your unfailing love in the morning, Your faithfulness in the evening,” Psalm 92:2

4. It creates an atmosphere of contentment.

“Let us come to Him with thanksgiving. Let us sing psalms of praise to Him.” Psalm 95:2

#### E. Ways to be thankful...

1. Think of three good things at the end of each day.
2. Send three gratitude messages a week.
3. Find what is good in your day.
4. Practice positive self-talk.

5. Remember those who have blessed your life and the blessings you have received.
6. Start a gratitude journal.
7. Write a thank you letter (possibly read it face to face).
8. Make a gratitude visit.
9. Accept a gift with gratitude and pay it forward.
10. Think and pray for new ways to develop an attitude of gratitude in all of your life!

“Gratefulness is the key to a happy life that we hold in our hands, because if we are not grateful, then no matter how much we have we will not be happy — because we will always want to have something else or something more.” — Brother David Steindl-Rast  
“Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it.” William Arthur Ward

#### GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD

Worship Leader: Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good.

Everyone: His love endures forever.

Worship Leader: Give thanks to the God of gods.

Everyone: His love endures forever.

Worship Leader: Give thanks to the LORD of lords.

Everyone: His love endures forever.

Worship Leader: Give thanks to the God of heaven.

Everyone: His love endures forever.

Worship Leader: Give thanks to the LORD, call on His name;

Everyone: Make known among the nations what He has done.

Worship Leader: Sing to Him, sing praise to Him;

Everyone: Tell of all His wonderful acts.

Worship Leader: Glory in His holy name;

Everyone: Let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice.

Worship Leader: Look to the LORD and His strength;

Everyone: Seek His face always.

Worship Leader: Remember the wonders He has done,

Everyone: His miracles, and the judgments He pronounced.

Worship Leader: Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad;

Everyone: Let them say among the nations, “The LORD reigns!”

Worship Leader: Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good;

Everyone: His love endures forever.

Worship Leader: Then all the people said

Everyone: “Amen” and “Praise the LORD.”

Psalm 136:1-3; 1 Chronicles 16:8-12, 31, 34, 36b