

“Thank You”
Words We Long to Hear
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Philippians 1:3-7
November 1, 2020

Paul writes a “thank you” letter from _____ while facing opposition and death. (*Philippians 1:18b-21*)

Gratitude is not a matter of circumstance, but a matter of the _____. (*Philippians 4:12-14*)

Would you rather receive a “Thank you” by text, email, call, handwritten note, or small gift?

Our “Thank you” is authenticated when we _____. (*2 Corinthians 9:7-8*)

It is impossible to be truly grateful and _____ at the same time.

Grateful people are _____ and live longer.

“We always receive infinitely more than we give, and that gratitude is what enriches life.”
– Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Three Truths about Gratitude

1. Gratitude is a matter of the _____ and cannot be forced.
2. One of the ugliest and most embarrassing words to describe someone is _____.
3. Gratitude is multiplied when it is practiced in _____.

Jesus’ Teaching on Gratitude (*Luke 17:11-13*)

On the way to Jerusalem, _____ lepers approached Jesus and asked for mercy.

Jesus _____ them and told them to go show themselves to the priests. (*Luke 17:14a*)

Jesus asked them and asks us to “walk it out” _____ the miracle. (*Luke 17:14b*)

“As they went, they were made clean.”

_____ to Jesus brings healing and wholeness into our lives.

When _____ of them saw that he was healed, he _____ back. (*Luke 17:15*)

The one threw himself at Jesus’ feet and _____ him. (*Luke 17:16a*)

Gratitude closes the loop with God and others.

And the one was an _____: a Samaritan, non-Jewish, and probably non-religious. (*Luke 17:16b*)

Jesus asks three questions:

1. Were not _____ made clean?
2. Where are the _____?
3. Did _____ return to praise God except this foreigner? (*Luke 17:17-18*)

Jesus _____ and sends the one. (*Luke 17:19*)

Lessons

Unexpressed gratitude is no gratitude at all.

Ten were healed that day, but one was saved! He came into a saving _____ with Jesus.

Why? Because unexpressed gratitude is _____.

Heaven is a place of eternal praise and _____ – not to you – but to God.

Do you have any practice at that? Are you prepared to participate in heaven?

Action Step: Think of someone who has blessed you and _____ to them and _____ them. If they have passed, thank their family and thank God for the blessings you have received.

Daily Reading and Reflection November 2-6, 2020

Monday, November 2 – Read and reflect on Philippians 4: *“Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.” – Philippians 4:6*

We can be thankful for gifts we receive, or think fondly and joyously over time spent with cherished loved ones. We may feel grateful and relieved when someone waves us into their lane in the midst of traffic. These are all circumstantial moments when we say, “Thank you” in response to a positive change in our external environment. This is different than living a grateful life. Gratitude comes from the heart. As we grow in our relationship and prayer life with God, we discover more and more that the source of our gratitude is God. When we spend our days centered in this truth, we find that we move through our world at peace, regardless of circumstance.

Tuesday, November 3 – Read and reflect on Psalm 106: *“Praise the Lord! O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever.” – Psalm 106:1*

Many of the Psalms recall the history of God and the Israelites. You will find verses telling of Israel’s disobedience, their wandering from the ways of God, and the abandonment of their faith. Rarely, if ever, do we find verses such as these that aren’t bracketed or bookended by reminders of God’s faithfulness and goodness. No matter how far we stray from God, God remains faithful to God’s covenant made with us through Jesus, which means there is always hope.

Wednesday, November 4 – Read and reflect on Luke 17: *“He prostrated himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan.” – Luke 17:16*

On Sunday, Pastor Mark shared the story of the ten lepers who were healed by Jesus. The Scripture notes that only one person out of the ten returned to Jesus to offer thanks. It goes even further to draw our attention to the fact that the one who gave thanks was a Samaritan – someone outside the family of faith of Israel, someone reviled by the Jewish people. What does this say to us about the heart of God? It shows us that God offers healing and grace even to those who don’t practice gratitude, and it shows us that God blesses those who are grateful. As Pastor Mark said, “Gratitude closes the loop with God and others.” In response to God’s goodness and grace, we are naturally compelled to offer our thanksgiving.

Thursday, November 5 – Read and reflect on Ezra 3: *“They sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the Lord, ‘For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever toward Israel.’ And all the people responded with a great shout when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid.” – Ezra 3:11*

The books of Ezra and Nehemiah recount the return of the Israelites to Jerusalem from exile and their efforts to rebuild the Holy Temple. For the Jewish people, the Temple was the dwelling place of God. When they were sent into exile and the Temple destroyed, it was as if God’s presence among them had vanished. In today’s Scripture reading, Israel has returned home and begun construction on a new Temple, once again singing the praises of God who has never left them – the same praises we read about in Psalm 106: *“O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever.”*

Friday, November 6 – Read and reflect on John 6: *“Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted.” – John 6:11*

The miracle of feeding the five thousand is such a rich Scripture, filled with lesson after lesson that reveals to us the nature of God’s heart. In today’s reading, we get a glimpse of Jesus presiding over the last supper, and a peek into what life is like in the Kingdom of Heaven. The people and disciples have gathered together what few bits of bread and fish they have and present it to Jesus. Jesus blesses it, gives thanks to God, and then all who were hunger ate their fill. On Sunday, Pastor Mark said, “Heaven is a place of eternal praise and thanksgiving – not to you – but to God.” When we practice gratitude today, we’re practicing for life in the Kingdom of Heaven, where miracles and blessing abound.