



Walk by Faith

2 CORINTHIANS 5:7

The Invitation

An Invitation to Gratitude

Thanksgiving Sunday

- Marked difference between grateful and ungrateful people
- Ungrateful people demonstrate:
 - entitlement – I deserve, my right, am owed....
 - discouragement – lack of appreciation, taking from
 - discontent – never enough, root of coveting
- Grateful people demonstrate:
 - encouragement – thanking & encouraging
 - appreciation – of things, people, blessings
 - blessing – being joyful about what you enjoy

In our relationships this has a huge impact.

- Parenting when children ungrateful
- Workplace where benefits or hours change
- Spouses where effort is not noticed or appreciated

When we are interacting with Thankful people

- their joy is affecting for those around them
- inspired to serve others & make a difference
- bring healthy attitudes and appreciation for what is

This is a truth from Scripture to consider and interact with deeply – has deep effect on relationships and legacy.

1. Scripture Is Really Clear

a) God is to be celebrated

- expects his creation to operate with thanksgiving

Psalm 100 “Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth! Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into his presence with singing!³ Know that the LORD, he is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.⁴ Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name!⁵ For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.”

b) Clear Desire of God for His children

- in the middle of instructions on how we relate to & treat one another we hear

1 Thess. 5:16-18 “¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray without ceasing, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

c) Clear Instruction & Practice in Early Church

Col. 2:6-7 “Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, ⁷ rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.”

- example of the practice and witness in Acts

Acts 2:46-47 “⁴⁶ And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.”

- instructed to exchange wrong talk for thanksgiving

Eph. 5:4 “⁴ Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.”

*Scripture clear from design, instruction and example –
thanksgiving is instructed

2. Not My Natural Inclination

- not the 'natural' bent of our hearts
 - difficult for us not to 'take for granted' things in our lives
 - to live as thankful takes attention, intention & practice
- a) Hearts can easily drift

Romans 1:21 “²¹ For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.”

- in my words – worship & prayer critical in this matter. Without the re-alignment of my heart regularly I can drift away

b) Take for Granted those closest to me

- the 'one another' statements in scripture describe life in the family. Look at the environment we are called to create with brothers and sisters

Eph. 5:19-20 “¹⁹ addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, ²⁰ giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,”

- consistent instruction for Christ followers, to rejoice, give thanks, encourage one another, build up – in every situation we are facing because of what God has and is doing for us.

c) When I Cry Out to God

- I am bent to begin with my discomfort, needs and desperate requests.

Phil. 4:4-7 “⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. ⁵ Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; ⁶ do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

* God calling us to be thankful, and knowing it is not my natural drift – takes attention and intention to change.

3. When I Practice Gratitude...

a) reminded – foundation of my gratitude

- God's love and action on my behalf

Rom. 8:31-34 “What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? ³³ Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.”

b) re-aligned – who God is and what He is doing

- placed here intentionally - Ps 139:13-16, Acts 17
- planned for my participation – Eph. 2:10
- given gifts, empowered me by Holy Spirit – Eph. 4
- redemptive in all circumstances – Rom. 8
- holding me, able to sustain in everything – Rom. 8
- returning for His church – 2 Peter 3:13

c) changes my response to circumstances

- share with joy and generosity
- serve with love and eager participation
- seeking to serve, others, my city – wanting to bless

So What?

Giving an Invitation – requires a response

Join us in becoming a people who practice gratitude, and create environments blessing others and glorifying God

1. Will I surrender to the Lordship of Christ?

- be intentional and obedient regarding gratitude

2. Check my Heart for Drift

- what would those close to me say if asked?
- what does my money & time reflect?
- does my speech and action reflect a heart of gratitude, reflecting my Father & family?

3. What does an Intentional Shift look Like?

- regular worship – reminded of the who & what of God
- renewed prayer – intentional about thanksgiving to God in the midst of asking and crying out
- choosing a response:
 - conversations you participate in - speech
 - topics you dwell on & are hopeless about - perspective
 - directing back to God – able and involved even when we don't see it
- accountability - to family and close friends for your practice of gratitude