



The Benefits of Gratitude – Message 1

Warm-up

Name someone you know who makes your life better. Explain.

Overview

As Thanksgiving approaches, we're starting the *Grattitudes* series, a look at the benefits of having a grateful attitude in life.

Word & Application

Read Ephesians 5:19-20 and Thessalonians 5:15-18. Gratitude is a positive emotion of appreciation or thanks. Gratitude shows us that God is the One we should honor, a truth that is essential for our faith. There are at least three attitudes that can steal away our gratitude. One is *pride which* is essentially self-worship. *Critical or complaining spirit* is another. A third attitude is a *familiarity* that can cause us to take things for granted.

Now that we've identified the attitudes that hinder a grateful heart, let's look at how nourishing gratitude in our hearts can positively affect us.

Three Benefits of Gratitude

- 1. Gratitude increases your happiness and productivity.** **Read Philippians 4:4.** Gratitude is an intentional, courageous undertaking. It challenges our assumptions of what God's faithfulness looks like in good and bad times. If we are only grateful during good times, our response hinges on God's gifts to us causing our gratitude to become conditional and weak. Conversely, when giving thanks in trials, we can increase our joy and reduce resentment and stress.
 - Why should your gratitude not be contingent on what you have in the bank or closet? Do you express thanks to others when they help you? How?

2. Gratitude shifts our perspective. We gain God's perspective when we:

- Thank God for the blessings.

Read Psalm 30:11-12. Showing our gratitude shouldn't be limited to miracles or special events. The Father is honored when we thank Him for His faithful provision of our daily needs. King David knew the importance of gratitude and spoke of it in **Psalm 92:1**.

In your daily life, how faithful are you to thank God for the blessings He's given you? What could you do to express your gratitude to Him regularly?

- Thank God in the burdens.

Read 2 Corinthians 12:10. Do you come to Christ only when you feel that things are going great in your life? Holding on to God in our struggles and fears while having gratitude means we are maturing in Him.

How does ingratitude show a lack of trust? How can you be grateful when life has its setbacks and frustrations?

3. Gratitude enhances your relationships.

Read Psalm 44:8 and Psalm 30:12. Our gratitude for what God has done for us should inspire us to seek the good in others. When we do, we earn trust and honor from the people God brings into our lives.

- Why is gratitude an important quality in the Christian life? In what ways do you struggle to be thankful? How can an attitude of thanksgiving set the tone for your life and relationships?

Life Challenge

Read Colossians 3:15-16 and Colossians 4:2. Think about God's goodness towards you. Then, choose one of the following options:

- Create a "Gratitude List" of the many blessings God has given you.
- Pray aloud and offer thanksgiving to God for all He's done and will continue to do in your life.

Prayer

Lord, teach me to offer You a heart of thanksgiving and praise in all my daily experiences. Teach me to be joyful always, to pray continually and to give thanks in all of my circumstances. Pray for the specific needs of the group.