

## Remembering God's Blessings

One thing to know- quality of life is connected to being thankful

One thing to do-make a real effort to recall and remember the goodness of God

- What is thanksgiving
- Why important
- What to do

### **Psalm 69:30**

I will praise God's name in song and glorify him with **thanksgiving**.

### **Psalm 95:2**

Let us come before him with **thanksgiving** and extol him with music and song.

### **Psalm 100:4**

Enter his gates with **thanksgiving** and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.

We want to do this today.

**Ps 23**

**Ps 139**

## We Get Accustomed to Our Blessings

Warren Wiersbe, *God Isn't In a Hurry*, (Baker Books; Grand Rapids, MI, 1994), pp. 77-78

I have felt for a long time that one of the particular temptations of the maturing Christian is the danger of getting accustomed to his blessings. Like the world traveler who has been everywhere and seen everything, the maturing Christian is in danger of taking his blessings for granted and getting so accustomed to them that they fail to excite him as they once did.

Emerson said that if the stars came out only once a year, everybody would stay up all night to behold them. We have seen the stars so often that we don't bother to look at them anymore. We have grown accustomed to our blessings.

The Israelites in the wilderness got accustomed to their blessings, and God had to chasten the people (see Num. 11). God had fed the nation with heavenly manna each

morning, and yet the people were getting tired of it. "But now our whole being is dried up," they said, "there is nothing at all except this manna before our eyes!" (v. 6).

Nothing but manna! They were experiencing a miracle of God's provision every morning; yet they were no longer excited about it. Nothing but manna!

One of the evidences that we have grown accustomed to our blessings is this spirit of criticism and complaining. Instead of thanking God for what we have, we complain about it and tell him we wish we had something else. You can be sure that if God *did* give us what we asked for, we would eventually complain about that. The person who has gotten accustomed to his blessing can never be satisfied.

Another evidence of this malady is the idea that others have a better situation than we do. The Israelites remembered their diet in Egypt and longed to return to the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic. They were saying, "The people in Egypt are so much better off than we are!" Obviously, they had forgotten the slavery they had endured in Egypt and the terrible bondage from which God had delivered them. Slavery is a high price to pay for a change in diet.

### What is thanksgiving?

It is recognizing the good God has done, is doing, and will do in our lives. It is the trigger to remember what God has done and has asked us to do.

Can we easily come up with those things we can be thankful for? What are those things we can be thankful for?

God is interested in the best for our lives. Thanksgiving is the heavenly coloured paint that we paint our black and white lives with. It is the definition that helps us see meaning in our lives. It uncovers the gems we have in our lives put there by God for us to find.

It is the fuel we need for each day's work and what we need in order to do the lord's work and keep going.

### Benefits

When we are thankful to him, we understand that the things we are doing as a believer have purpose and value and are necessary to get done. Each new thing God asks us to do will become one more thing we do for him that we are grateful that He helped us do. It fuels us on. We are happier when we are thankful. We treat others better when we are thankful. We see others in a better light. It is harder to be negative. It is easier to be positive.

## **Romans 1:20**

For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine **nature**—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

**Understand something.** God does help us. He wants us to be thankful because He loves and cares for you. He will keep encouraging us to be this way. It keeps you in better health.

### How to get started

**Start by:** looking at things that got done that you weren't very good at. The good things that happened that surprised you, the things you had nothing to do with, the bad that could have happened but didn't; the good that did happen but shouldn't have happened, the good you got but others did not, the bad others have but you don't have, the abilities you have that you didn't earn, the abilities you learned that are really valuable to you now, and the people in your life. You are not alone, their good qualities, how they make you a better person, how they brighten your life, how they help sharpen your life and skills, the joy and love they bring your life even if only in small ways. The things in your life, the family in your life. This exercise is not to focus on what you think you don't have but what you do have, and all the good God has placed in your life.

I have known people who have really honed their skills in seeing the negative things in their lives and it just rots them away and brings more of the same to them.

Nehemiah talks to God about Israel,

### **Nehemiah 9:17**

They refused to listen and failed to **remember** the miracles you performed among them. They became stiff-necked and in their rebellion appointed a leader in order to return to their slavery. But you are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love. Therefore you did not desert them,

This doesn't mean that we are naive but that we use the good God has given to us as fuel to grow in our lives and to welcome the Lord to do more in and with our lives. We need to embrace Him and what He does in our lives.

Everything good comes from above.

### **James 1:17**

Every **good and perfect** gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

Thankfulness helps us see all this. It helps us see even something good that may be hidden inside something bad.

### **Romans 8:28 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>28</sup>And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who <sup>(a)</sup>have been called according to his purpose.

### **Ps 23**

We learn more from trouble times than from good times. What good have you seen in your life that has come from troubled times? What ability did you get from going thru a tough time? What understanding did you get from it?

**2cor 1:3-5-comfort others by our experience.**

### **Psalm 42:6**

My soul is downcast within me; therefore I will **remember** you from the land of the Jordan, the heights of Hermon—from Mount Mizar.

The psalmist was realizing the good land God had given Israel many years ago and that it represented the promise God made to them.

### **Psalm 63:6**

On my bed I **remember** you; I think of you through the watches of the night.

Naturally humans are not thankful. Don't think this exercise is easy or automatic. It never is. The devil uses his voice and God uses His.

## **Romans 8:6-7 New International Version (NIV)**

“The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so.”

Our fleshly nature is another voice and so these three work for your attention and loyalty. Who will you listen to? The only voice who cares for your person is God. The others think selfishly and will try to keep your focus away from being thankful. They know it will help you. Thankfulness helps keep us stable in both good and bad times. Bad times and good times can both have something good happening in them. It may be the sheer understanding that God is still in control that may be the thank you that you have until later when more good is seen.

Moses tells Israel

### **Deuteronomy 4:10**

**Remember** the day you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, when he said to me, “Assemble the people before me to hear my words so that they may learn to revere me as long as they live in the land and may teach them to their children.”

### **Deuteronomy 5:15**

**Remember** that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.

### **Deuteronomy 8:2**

**Remember** how the LORD your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years, to humble and test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands.

### **Deuteronomy 8:18**

But **remember** the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today.

### **Deuteronomy 24:9**

**Remember** what the LORD your God did to Miriam along the way after you came out of Egypt.

Israel is reminded again

**Joshua 23:4**

**Remember** how I have allotted as an inheritance for your tribes all the land of the nations that remain—the nations I conquered—between the Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea in the west.

**1 Chronicles 16:11-13 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>11</sup>Look to the LORD and his strength;

seek his face always.

<sup>12</sup>Remember the wonders he has done,

his miracles, and the judgments he pronounced,

<sup>13</sup>you his servants, the descendants of Israel,

his chosen ones, the children of Jacob

**Conclusion**

**There is a theme here and it is remember**

Thankfulness takes training but it is worth it to develop. Let God help you develop it and show you thru the review of your life now that you really do have a lot to be thankful for. I challenge us all today to start writing down a record of this and see where it goes. God is in that too and urged Israel to do the same many times because he knew they needed it and so do we.

**1 Thessalonians 5:18** [Full Chapter]

give **thanks** in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

**Ephesians 1:16**

I have not stopped giving thanks for you, **remembering** you in my prayers.

Don't stop being thankful and make a record for review as it can only do you good and strengthen what you have in Jesus helping you realize He continues to give you goodness regardless of the circumstances. Amen