

November 19th, 2017

How To Be Thankful In All Things

Terry Baldwin



[VIDEO]

JOKE:

Ungrateful lady at the beach who had a little child with her. She was too close to the water, and a big wave came in. By the time the water went back into the sea, she realized her son was missing.

She looked all around for her little boy and cried out: "Melvin...Melvin...where are you, Melvin?" She realized he had been swept out to sea. So she prayed, "Oh, dear and merciful Father, please...please...take pity on me and return my beautiful child. I will promise eternal gratitude to you...I'll never cheat on my income tax again. I'll be kind to my mother-in-law. I'll give up smoking...Anything...Anything... only please grant me this one favor and return my son."

Just then the next wave washed in, and there he was, safe and sound.

Then she looks up to God and says, "But he had a hat!"

Perhaps you've lost your **JOB** recently, **HEALTH**, or **LOVED ONE**

- Some circumstances can be very hard..... **But even so....**
 - **We all have much to be thankful for!**
-

Story of a man who has every right to be Bitter... but Wasn't

- In Prison Cell... Bed was cold stone floor
- Dark, Dank, Cramped
- Iron shackles
- Separated from Friends
- Unjustly Accused and treated Brutally
- Forgotten in jail
- **INSTEAD** of complaining... Sang songs of Praise and Thanksgiving!

.....This man was **PAUL**

Earlier, when Paul had been imprisoned in Rome, he wrote....



[Ephesians 5:19-20, NIV]

“Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ”

Think of it.....

- Always giving thanks.... Not once a year!
 - It was **DAILY** reality that changed Paul’s life
 - Giving THANKS made Paul a joyful person in every situation



Thanksgiving to God for all His blessings, should be one of the most distinctive marks of the believer

Leprosy was a terrible disease....

- It disfigured
- It permanently cut them off from normal society
- Every leper yearned to be healed

[Luke 17.11-19 NIV]

Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. 12 As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance 13 and called out in a loud voice, “Jesus, Master, have pity on us!”

14 When he saw them, he said, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went, they were cleansed.

15 One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. 16 He threw himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan.

17 Jesus asked, “Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? 18 Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?” 19 Then he said to him, “Rise and go; your faith has made you well.”

- NOTE:
- They ALL cried out to Jesus
 - 9 left without a Thank You!
 - Preoccupied only with themselves
 - Spirit of ingratitude
 - Only one Returned...

- Praising and Thanking Jesus.....
HE RECOGNIZED JESUS WAS GOD!

Ingratitude is a sin, just as lying or stealing



[Romans 1.21 NIV]

For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.

What happens when you have Spirit of ingratitude....

- Hardens Hearts and Hurts Relationship
- Ingratitude makes us Bitter / Selfish / Dissatisfied
- An ungrateful heart is cold towards God and
- Indifferent to God's mercy and love
- A person who lacks GRATITUDE forgets how dependent he is on God for everything

Thankfulness is the natural outflowing of a Christian's heartthat is attuned to God

- Psalm 147:7 says, "Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving" ...*Why we Worship*
- Paul wrote, "Be thankful" (Colossians 3:15, NIV).
- A spirit of thanksgiving is always the mark of a joyous Christian.

Why should we be thankful?

Because God has blessed us, and we should be thankful for each blessing.

4 Reasons to be Thankful to God...



Thank God for the Material Blessings That He Gives You

We seem never to be satisfied with what we have—rich or poor, healthy or sick.

But what a difference it makes when we realize that everything we have has been given to us by God!

King David prayed: *“Wealth and honor come from you alone ... O our God, we thank you and praise your glorious name! ... Everything we have has come from you”* -1 Chronicles 29:12-14 NLT

Billy Graham tells story:

- *Visited a man who was wealthy and successful.*
- *He confessing that he was miserable inside. Wealth had not been able to fill the empty place in his heart.*
- *Few hours later, visited another man*
- *Although he didn't have much, he had learned to be thankful for everything that God had given him.*

Paul said, *“I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want”* (Philippians 4:12, NIV)

STORY: Eating as fast we could so as to eat mom and dad's food.... didn't enjoy ours!

A spirit of thankfulness makes all the difference.

Are you constantly preoccupied with what you don't have?

Or have you learned to thank God for what you do have?



Thank God for the People in Your Life

Easy to take people for granted....

or **Complain and become Angry** because they do not meet our every wish

- We need to give thanks for those around us—
 - Spouses / Children / Relatives / Friends / and others who help us

STORY: Billy Graham received a letter from a woman who began by saying:

- How fortunate she was to have a kind, considerate husband.
- She then used 4 pages to list all his faults!
- **How many marriages and relationships grow cold and eventually are shattered because of the sin of ingratitude?**

Do you let others know that you appreciate them and are thankful for them?

- The Christians in Corinth were difficult people but Paul began his letter to them:

"I always thank God for you" (1 Corinthians 1:4, NIV)

.....Thank God for those who touch your life.



Thank God in the Midst of Trials and Even Persecution

Many parts of the world it is dangerous even to be a Christian because of persecution.

- We can thank God, because He promised to be with us and He will help us.

- He can use times of suffering to draw us closer to Himself: *“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance” (James 1:2-3, NIV).*

- Story of Daniel and king Darius the Mede... *But when Daniel learned that the law had been signed, he went home and knelt down as usual in his upstairs room, with its windows open toward Jerusalem. He prayed three times a day, just as he had always done, giving thanks to his God. (Daniel 6:10, NIV)*

- The Bible commands in 1 Thessalonians 5:18 *Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you who belong to Christ Jesus. -1 Thessalonians 5:18*

WHY??.... We can Thank God in these times because...

- He has overcome this world...
- We wouldn't if world overcame Him..

I don't know what trials you may be facing right now, but God does, and He loves you and is with you.

Develop a spirit of thankfulness even in the midst of trials and heartaches.

Brittney & Chase Thompson... She writes:

The devil has been trying very hard to ruin me this week.. our dryer blew up and basically caught fire. Today, my dad let us borrow his brand new truck and trailer, and somehow it fell off the hitch and slammed into Dad’s truck..... so now a new washer and dryer and a deductible to be paid just in time for Christmas. I’d really like to sell our old washer (only because we bought a new matching set) that way I can put it towards this weeks adventures, but not having much luck there either. I get stressed easily and even more easily aggravated, ...BUT, despite his efforts, the devil will not win!

Nice try, but this is Jesus territory and regardless of the trials we have encountered we are alive (agitated) but Alive and give it all to Christ!!!

The God of peace will soon crush satan under our feet. The grace of our lord will be with us!!! Romans 16:20

“God has given us the greatest Gift of all—His Son, who died on the cross and rose again so that we can know Him personally and spend eternity with Him in heaven.”



Thank God Especially for His Salvation in Jesus Christ

God has given us the greatest Gift of all—JESUS

- Who died on the cross and rose again **so that we can know Him personally**
- And spend Eternity with Him in heaven:
- *“Thanks be to God for his indescribable **gift!**” -2 Corinthians 9:15, NIV*

SALVATION

- If we believe and receive Jesus, we’re no longer enemies
- God’s wrath on sin was poured out on Jesus.... not us!

All we need to do is reach out in faith and accept Christ as our Savior and Lord:
(John 3:16, NIV)

- Have you opened your heart to Jesus Christ?
- If not, turn to Him with a simple prayer of repentance and faith, and thank Him for what He has done for you.
- And if you do know Christ
- We should not let a day go by without thanking God for His mercy and His grace to us in Jesus Christ

In many countries a special day is set aside each year for thanksgiving. But for the Christian every day can be a day of thanksgiving, as we are “always giving thanks to always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 5:20, NIV).

Do you know the joy of a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ? If you’ll turn to God, He can take away your bitterness and give you the spirit of true thankfulness.

Maybe show video, maybe not



[**VIDEO: GRATITUDE CHAIR**]



[**Happy Thanksgiving**]

There are up to 9 other nations that celebrate in some way a day of Thanksgiving...
But America Thanksgiving is different in that we are called to seek GOD and PRAY...

October 20, 1864

Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, do hereby appoint and set apart the last Thursday in November next as a day which I desire to be observed by all my fellow-citizens, wherever they may then be, as a day of thanksgiving and praise to Almighty God, the be-nef-icent Creator and Ruler of the Universe. And I do further recommend to my fellow-citizens aforesaid that, on that occasion they do reverently humble themselves in the dust and from thence offer up penitent and fervent prayers and supplications to the Great Disposer of Events for a return of the in-es-tim-able blessings of peace, union, and harmony throughout the land which it has pleased Him to assign as a dwelling place for ourselves and for our posterity throughout all generations.

SING SONG: "Jesus, Thank You"