

2014 Ladies' Spring Bible Class
Characteristics of a Servant's Heart
Lesson 4: A Heart of Thankfulness

Col. 3:15-17 "And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. **And be thankful.** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, **with thankfulness in your hearts to God.**" (ESV)

1. **Attitude of Thankfulness**

- **"Attitude of Gratitude"** -- God does so much for us and our indebtedness to Him is enormous. Yet, we rarely or infrequently offer thanks for what he has done. An attitude of thankfulness is not confined to a day or season or special event in our lives—we must have a thankful attitude every day and every hour. (Eph. 5:20)
- **A Spiritual Weapon** – Paul gives the Thessalonians three clear practices to help personal and spiritual growth – Each day we should experience joy, peace and thanks. (I Thes. 5:16-18) Thanksgiving to God is an important spiritual weapon that God has given us to maintain our spiritual wholeness – to maintain our joy and peace and confidence in Him.
- **Attitude of thankfulness can be life changing** – become a more positive and caring person. Become a better Christian, wife, mother and friend to others.

2. **Thankfulness for Physical Blessings**

- **Daily necessities** – We need to be thankful to God for providing for our daily needs and watching over us. (Phil. 4:19; Matt. 6:25-34)
- **Adversity in life** – We need to follow the example of Job and praise God even after he lost all his physical blessings. (Job 1:20-22)
- **Be thankful in difficult times**— We are to be thankful even during difficult situations. Christ will get us through those difficult times. No matter what life may send our way, Christ is with us. (John 16:33; Heb. 13:5)
- **Give God the glory** – we should not forget to be thankful when good things come our way. In the example of the ten lepers, all ten asked Jesus to have mercy on them. All ten recognized they had been healed but only one turned back and glorified God. (Luke 17:11-19)

3. **Thankfulness for Spiritual Blessings**

- **All spiritual blessings are in Christ** (Eph. 1:3) and the list of spiritual blessings for which we should be grateful is endless
- **God has withheld nothing from us**; no one has more to offer—others may have physical skills or earthly possessions, but not more blessings.
- **Grateful** that we can be His children (I John 3:1-3)
- **We have forgiveness from sin** – we can never deserve or earn this gift and we should be thankful for it. We should show our gratitude for this gift and express this gratitude daily. Christ paid the penalty for our sin (Rom. 5:8)
- **We have the gift of eternal life** (Rom. 6:23)
- **Paul and Silas in prison** -- praised God from their prison cell in Philippi (Acts 16:22-30). They were doing the Lord's will and the Lord's work yet trouble still came into their lives. They were falsely accused and cast into innermost cell of prison yet they had the ability to turn to Christ in time of need (Heb. 4:15-16) and He hears our prayers (I John 5:14-15). God may place us in a situation so we can be an example and help others.

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4. Application

- We must raise our children with an attitude of gratitude
- We must give thanks daily as a family
- We must show our gratitude in the way we live
- We must share with others the Spiritual blessings that are given to us from God

Conclusion

We cannot say we are thankful for God's blessings and then constantly complain. We cannot say we are thankful for salvation and continue to walk in sin. We cannot say that we are thankful for the church and never attend. Thankfulness is revealed by the way we act. Our behavior demonstrates our gratitude toward God. We choose our behaviors and every day we make a choice to be grateful or ungrateful.