

AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

How To Remain Thankful Always

Foundation Statement: If you're going to avoid being unthankful u must refuse to talk about, think about, & focus on what you are not, what you don't have, & what you can't do.

I. Be thankful-That's expressing; that's action

- A. Thanksgiving is not something you think, it's something you express (Colossians 3:15)
 - 1. Most people think they are thankful, but rarely express their thanksgiving to God
 - 2. If you are a thankful person with a thankful heart, then thanksgiving will be coming out of your mouth (Matthew 12:34)
- B. When you are thankful
 - 1. You appreciate what was done (value what was done)
 - 2. You acknowledge God did by grace (you didn't deserve it or earn it)
 - 3. You express thanksgiving
- C. Satan wants you to be unthankful-His command would be "be ye unthankful"
 - 1. When you're in faith you're abounding therein with thanksgiving (Col 2:7)
 - a. Faith is the victory; If he can get you in unbelief he can keep you from victory
 - 2. One of Satan's main attempts against the believer is to get them in unbelief
 - a. Unbelief & being unthankful are connected; if u are unthankful you're not in faith
 - b. One of the main ways the enemy gets u in unbelief is by getting u 2 be unthankful
- D. After all God has done for us how could we ever be unthankful
 - 1. If we know what makes it work then we can avoid it working in our lives

II. Whether u are thankful or unthankful is determined by what u allow yourself to focus on

- A. Thankfulness has nothing to do with what you have or don't and everything to do with what you allow yourself to focus on
 - 1. No matter how good one has it they can find something to complain about-Pr 27:20
 - a. EX: If I had this I'd be thankful-If ur not thankful in the least u won't be in the much
 - 2. No matter how bad someone has it, they can find something to be thankful for
 - a. It's all determined and based on what you are allowing yourself to look at
 - b. EX: They guy who has to walk five miles for water everyday can look at the long walk or he can look at the fact that can walk (SCRIPTURE SEARCH)
- B. Satan wants you to look at, think about and focus on what you are not, what you don't have and what you can't do b/c if you do, you will be unthankful (Genesis 2:17, 3:1-6)
 - 1. Look at all that they had

- a. 1:28-They're created in God's image, they're blessed, they're covered in His glory, they walk and talk with God daily, God is mindful of them, they have authority
 - b. 2:8-This Garden that they are in is a perfect place of pleasure, delight, & luxury
 - c. 2:16-God says you can eat of every tree in this Garden for free-That's grace
 - 1) They didn't deserve it or earn it, it was a gift & they should've been thankful 4 it
 2. 3:1-Satan gets them to focus on the one tree they can't eat
 - a. They had everything except 4 this tree & that's what he wants them 2 focus on
 - 1) That's one tree; how many trees do u think were there? They can't have one
 - b. Why would the enemy want them to start thinking about this one?
 - 1) B/C if he can get them to focus on what they don't have, they won't be thankful for what they do have and in turn they'll be kept from having more
 - c. 6-She starts to think about and give her attention to the one tree they don't have
 - 1) When she is thinking about that tree is she being thankful for all the other trees?
 - 2) When you are unthankful 4 what u have u undermine ur faith to receive more
 - d. Their lack of thanksgiving connected them to destruction
 3. Here we are we have it all: We are created in God's image, we've been redeemed from the curse, we are a joint-heir with Jesus who has inherited all things, we are saved, filled with God's spirit, seated at the right hand of God, have authority & power over the enemy, we have God's peace, God's joy, God's faith, God's love, we are the righteousness of God & you're focused on the one thing YOU don't have
- C. People become ungrateful when they start focusing on what they are not, what they don't have, and what they can't do
1. If you're going to operate in faith & thanksgiving you can't allow yourself to talk about, think about, and focus on what you are not, what you don't have, or what you can't do; Only allow yourself to think about & talk about who you are in him, what you have in him & what you can do in him
 2. 2 Corinthians 4:18-You might see it, but refuse to look at it
 - a. 8,9-He won't allow himself to focus on what's happening around him
 - 1) He's won't focus on "troubled" he focuses on "we're not distressed" – He won't focus on "perplexed" he focuses on "we're not in despair" – He won't focus on "persecuted" he focuses on "not forsaken" – He won't focus on "cast down" he focuses on "not destroyed"
 - 2) This is a BIG BUT in these verses
 - b. 13-The spirit of faith has thanksgiving with it; he is thankful
 - 1) He's thankful that he's not distressed, despaired, forsaken, and destroyed
 - c. 15-That grace would come to us through thanksgiving and when you see that grace at work you and us both would give more glory to God (2 Cor 1:11)

- d. 16-Outward man perishes, but we're not looking at it; our inward man is renewed
- e. 17-The affliction is there, but we're not looking at it; we look at the eternal glory
- f. 18-We see things, but we don't look at it; we look at the eternal unseen
 - 1) If you focus on changing things, you'll always be changing
- g. If the Apostle Paul would've looked at that stuff that was happening, he would've been unthankful, felt sorry for himself & been open to destruction
- 3. EX: One part of your body hurts and that's all you're looking at, while all your other body parts work good, but you don't know it

III. Whenever you see someone looking at the right thing, thanksgiving will always follow

- A. John 11:1-4, 41-44-What Jesus put his eyes on led to him being thankful
 - 1. 3,5 (AMP)-They were his dear friends and he held them in loving esteem
 - 2. 4-Jesus speaks words of faith and this is supposed to come to pass
 - 3. 14-Jesus knew Lazarus was dead before he got there (Didn't move him to tears)
 - 4. 15-Jesus speaks faith words over this situation again
 - 5. 17-When he gets there he finds out he's been dead four days (Didn't cry)
 - 6. 20-You see bitterness in Mary here; she wasn't busy she was sitting
 - a. She's the one who sat at Jesus' feet and chose the needful thing
 - 7. 21-She is blaming Jesus
 - a. 6-He could have been there two days sooner
 - 8. 23-He speaks words of faith again
 - 9. 32-She's blaming Jesus
 - 10. 33-When he saw their weeping Jesus was agitated (not pleased)
 - a. There's not faith and there's no thanksgiving
 - 11. 35-These were his dear friends and they're blaming him for his friends death
 - 12. 36-They thought he wept over Lazarus; they were wrong
 - 13. 38-Jesus is agitated and their unbelief and lack of thanksgiving
 - a. Again-This isn't the first time he's groaned and their unbelief
 - 14. 39-40-This is a stern exchange
 - 15. 41-Jesus could have a nice sized pity party right here
 - a. He's being blamed his dear friends; His spent time ministering to these people and they have no faith; A person who he was close to and loved dearly is dead; He spoke something & it looks like it didn't come to pass
 - 16. 41-He lifted his eyes to Heaven – The thanksgiving principle
 - a. He knows he's going to have to stay in faith & thanksgiving & to do that he had to get his eyes on something else

- b. If he would have looked at that tomb, the people blaming him and their unbelief he could've gotten to the place where he was feeling sorry for himself, saying this doesn't work, why didn't God do it
- 17. You activate thanksgiving by lifting your eyes to God, to Jesus, to the Word; when you get your eyes on who you are in him, what you have in him, & what you can do in him and all that he's done for you, it will activate thanksgiving in your life
 - a. I'm going to activate the thanksgiving principle by getting my eyes off of this
- B. Matt 14:1-John the Baptist had been beheaded; Jesus went to be alone & the people followed him. He healed the sick, he's been preaching all day, his body is probably tired, he's probably hungry, not mention all the emotions he's still having to deal with about John, and there's no food to feed the people; He could've felt sorry 4 himself
 - 1. He had two pieces of fish and five loaves of bread, but he didn't allow himself to think about what he didn't have
 - 2. In pressure situations we see our Master look at something else, not the pressure
 - a. When he got his eyes off of what he didn't have it activated thanksgiving and his thanksgiving connected him to victory
 - b. The way you activate thanksgiving is you get your eyes on who you are in him, what you have in him, what you can do in him & all that he's done for you
- C. Romans 4:16-21-The Father of faith and thanksgiving
 - 1. 16-Inheriting the promise is through faith-Faith has thanksgiving with it
 - a. To receive the promise you're going to have to be thankful beforehand
 - 1) Faith precedes manifestation and therefore so to does thanksgiving
 - b. Unthankfulness will keep you from inheriting the promise
 - 2. 17-Abraham took the promise by faith by calling things that be not
 - 3. 18-His eyes were fixed on what he was and had in God
 - 4. 19-He didn't think about what he wasn't, what he didn't have, what he couldn't do
 - 5. 20-He's thankful because he put his eyes on the right thing (Luke 17:15-16)
 - 6. 20-The more He thanked God the stronger his faith got
 - a. If you'll get your eyes on the right thing and remain thankful you'll receive the grace to stand in faith as long as you need to for the promise to show up
- D. If u get your eyes on the wrong stuff you're going 2 be unthankful & open 2 destruction
 - 1. I've been in bondage for 6 years & I can't get free; You haven't yield to it in 6 days
 - 2. I've been praying for my husband all these years and he's still not saved; he's alive
 - 3. I've been tithing and giving for all this time and we can barely pay the light bill

IV. The more you focus on the wrong stuff, the more unthankful you'll become, & the darker your life will get

- A. Romans 1:21-The more unthankful you are the darker your life gets
 - 1. 20-This is talking about people who reject that there is a God, but it applies to us too
 - 2. 21-You know all the good stuff that happened in ur life was God, but were u thankful
 - a. James 1:17-If it's good it came from God
 - 3. 21-They didn't glorify him, they didn't give him thanks (Luke 17:15-16)
 - 4. 21-They became something in response to their being unthankful
 - a. 21-Vain imagination-The more unthankful u are the dumber you get
 - b. 21-Darkness came into their heart and life
 - c. 21-31-When you are unthankful your life gets dark; stress, anger, worry, bad attitude, disobedience, strife, talking about people, ill-will, proud, unsociable, judgmental, no mercy; All this stemmed from them being unthankful
 - 5. How would you get to a life so dark? You allowed yourself to focus on what you are not, don't have, can't do, you became unthankful & gave darkness place
- B. Matthew 6:22-If you'll keep your eye on the word you'll be thankful and full of light
 - 1. You got to have a single eye be thankful and you'll have light in your life

V. Thanksgiving will effect your attitude

- A. Thanksgiving is the activator of peace-Philippians 4:6-7
 - 1. 4-Rejoice always and again I say rejoice (Be glad)
 - 2. You make your requests known to God in every thing by 1) Prayer-Believing you received 2) Supplication-Passionate 3) Thanksgiving-Thank you I have it
 - a. AND-That will connect you to peace that passes all understanding
 - 3. Thanksgiving is the activator of peace that passes understanding
 - a. U can't thank God 4 ur victory & worry it's not going 2 show up at the same time
 - b. If peace is absent, thanksgiving is not coming out your mouth
 - 1) Peace will be on guard as long as thanksgiving is coming out of your mouth
 - c. When your attitude is bad (frustrated, angry, worrying) it's b/c you have no peace & you have no peace b/c you are not being thankful
 - 1) The fact that you have no peace is evidence that you're not being thankful
 - 2) A long face is the result of an unthankful mouth
 - 3) Being miserable is the result of being unthankful
 - 4. 8-Don't focus on what you're not, what you don't have, what you can't do b/c if you do you're not going to be thankful and you're going to have no peace
 - 5. 11-He learned how to be content in every state

- a. Content isn't "not desiring more"; Content is not needing more to be happy
 - 1) It's fine to believe for more & to believe for better, but if you can't be content w/o it, that's not okay; If you're unhappy b/c you don't have it that's wrong
 - 2) My happiness and contentment is not postponed until I get it; I'm content now
- b. If you learn to not allow yourself to think about what you don't have and only think and talk about what you do have, you'll always be content

B. 1 Samuel 1:5-19

- 1. 6-She has no peace, she's weeping, not eating; she's miserable & she's not thankful
 - a. This went on for years and this is not okay
- 2. 8-She had a great husband, she's got a double portion, she was alive and breathing and well, but she's unthankful b/c she's got her eyes on what she doesn't have
- 3. 10-She's bitter, angry, heavy, & discontent – NO PEACE
 - a. She's praying, but there's no faith in it
 - b. If ur putting off you're happiness, joy, peace until victory shows up ur not content
 - c. She's not content b/c she's supposed 2 have this baby, it's God's will 4 her & it's not happening
 - 1) She just has 2 have what God as 4 her & that attitude is not ok-Not thankful
 - 2) In the violence & intensity of our faith the opportunity is there to get so caught up in what you're believing for that you get unthankful for all God has done
- 4. 11-She's trying to get it not by grace, but by a deal
- 5. 15-She's sorrowful of spirit & she feels justified in being this way b/c she doesn't have what she's supposed to – NO PEACE
 - a. 15-She thinks this wailing and crying is being spiritual
- 6. 16-This abundant grief and complaining produced no baby
- 7. 17-Go in peace and (connection) you'll get what you asked
- 8. 17-She took his Word as the Word of God and that was all she needed
 - a. 18,19-She's not sad, she's eating, her countenance has changed b/c she believes what God said, She's worshipping God
 - b. She didn't have to make a deal; she had to get in faith and thanksgiving so God could be gracious to her

C. 1 Kings 21:5

- 1. 1-Ahab is the King living in the palace; he's probably got hundreds of vineyards
 - a. He's got so much to be thankful for
- 2. 3-Naboth said the Lord won't allow me to do what
- 3. 4-He has no peace, he's not being thankful, he's dark, he's down

- a. He got that way because he got his eyes on the one thing that he didn't have and it caused him to be unthankful and robbed him of his peace
- 4. 5-Never pet a pouter: This is the worse thing that she could do for him
- 5. He was unthankful and it got darker and darker
 - a. 9-13-Lying comes out of this
 - b. 14-Killing came out of this
 - c. 15-Stealing came out of this
 - d. 18-Naboth's wife and children just lost their husband and Father and Ahab's down there taking their land

D. Psalm 42:1-11

- 1. 3-He's crying day and night; he's down; He's not being thankful and this is not okay
- 2. 4-He starts looking at the good things and it changes His whole attitude
 - a. What he looks at turns this whole situation around
- 3. 5-You'll have to talk to your soul
- 4. 5-I will yet praise Him
 - a. I'm not going to murmur, tumult, be troubled and down and in despair
- 5. 6-When ur soul is trying 2 despair u need to remember how good God has been 2 u
- 6. 8-He gets in faith
- 7. 9-Why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?
 - a. You can be under attack and not being despairing (2 Corinthians 4:8-9)
- 8. 11-It looks bad and things aren't going great, but that's no excuse for you to murmur, tumult, be troubled, and in despair soul
 - a. Expect God to do good things in the middle of this
 - b. I will praise Him-I'm not going to wait for this good stuff to happen before I start saying thank you
 - 1) I will YET praise him; This stuff won't stop me from giving thanks
- 9. 11-God is the health of my countenance
 - a. Some believers need to get delivered in their face/countenance; they need to get victory in their countenance
 - b. If you're not winning in your face, you're not winning inside & u won't win outside
 - c. When he started thanking God his countenance changed; his attitude changed
 - d. When you're not thankful your face show it

E. A bad attitude stinks-2 Corinthians 2:14

- 1. A thankful attitude smells good to God; an unthankful attitude stinks
- 2. Their offering smelt good to God; thanksgiving is sacrifice that smells good (Ph 4:18)