

Character Qualities: Gratefulness

1 Thess. 5:18

Our next lesson in our character qualities series is timely. Today we'll learn about a quality that is severely lacking in our discontent culture: Gratefulness.

¹⁸in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Today we will talk about having an attitude of gratitude.

Intro: Define Gratefulness.

Gratefulness vs. Unthankfulness:

Making known to God and others in what ways they have benefited my life (I Corinthians 4:7)

Gratefulness is the opposite of unthankfulness, complaining, discontent, and ingratitude.

What would you consider to be the ratio that you hear others expressing gratitude versus complaining? _____

Your children? _____

You? _____

I. Examples

Job 1:21 And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked I shall return there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD."

Job's words – and gratefulness during difficult times – really boil down to trust.

It is difficult but necessary to give thanks when something bad has happened to us. What difference does it make? _____

But often we don't even give thanks when something good has happened!

Luke 17:11-19 ¹¹And it came about while He was on the way to Jerusalem, that He was passing between Samaria and Galilee. ¹²And as He entered a certain village, ten leprous men who stood at a distance met Him; ¹³and they raised their voices, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" ¹⁴And when He saw them, He said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And it came about that as they were going, they were cleansed. ¹⁵Now one of them, when he saw that he had been healed, turned back, glorifying God with a loud voice, ¹⁶and he fell on his face at His feet, giving thanks to Him. And he was a Samaritan. ¹⁷And Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But the nine-- where are they? ¹⁸Was no one found who turned back to give glory to God, except this foreigner?" ¹⁹And He said to him, "Rise, and go your way; your faith has made you well."

What is the significance of the fact that the one thankful man was a Samaritan?

Is it possible that oftentimes those who are the outcasts, rejects, and "lower class" individuals (less to be proud of) are more likely to be thankful? And those who think they are something less likely?

What are some examples of when you have (or haven't) given thanks for a difficult situation in your life?

II. Why Be Grateful?

What are some reasons we should be grateful? God says to. It is good for our health, it is a witness to others, it encourages others, we deserve death and hell

III. When Should We Be Grateful?

When should we be grateful? When God gives a blessing. When He doesn't. When we pray – thanking Him for what He has done. When we pray – anticipating His answering our prayer.

1 Cor 4:7 For who regards you as superior? And what do you have that you did not receive? But if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

What does this passage have to do with gratefulness? _____

Php 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

Why should we be thankful when we pray? _____

IV. How Can You Raise Grateful Children?

"How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child."

From Shakespeare's *King Lear*, 1605

What are your ideas to accomplish this? Everyday "little" blessings, teaching them to say, "thank you." Take the gift away – consequences of ingratitude

Our children's lack of gratefulness is likely a reflection of our own.

Conclusion: How do you increase your gratefulness?

Ask: Are you a generally grateful person?

How can you add gratitude to your character and life?