



A Heart of Thanksgiving

Gratitude the Seedbed of Joy, Part 2

Introduction/Review

- Last week has our third study in our current series *A Heart of Thanksgiving* on “Gratitude the Seedbed of Joy.” In last week’s study we considered what a thankful heart looks like by studying the connection between “Grace” and “thanksgiving.”
- First, we saw that the Greek word translated “grace” (*Charis*), 8 different times in the New Testament is also translated either “thank,” “thanks,” “thanked,” or “thankworthy” by the translators of the KJB.
- Second, we observed by considering the definition of the English word the close connection between “grace” and “thanksgiving.”
- Grace—1) **Favor**; good will; **kindness**; disposition to oblige another; 2) **the free unmerited love and favor of God**, the spring and source of all the benefits men receive from him. In short, **grace is unearned favor and kindness from God that we do not deserve.**
- Thank—“to express **gratitude for a favor**; to make acknowledgments to one **for kindness bestowed.**”

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- Thanks—“expression of gratitude; an acknowledgment made to express a sense of favor or kindness received. Gratitude is the feeling or sentiment excited by kindness; thanks are the expression of that sentiment.”
- Thankfulness—“expression of gratitude; acknowledgment of a favor.”
- Thanksgiving—“rendering thanks for good received. 1) The act of rendering thanks or expressing gratitude for favors or mercies or good.”
- Third, we looked all the major Greek words in the New Testament associated with the giving of thanks and noted that they all come from the Greek word *Charis* (Grace).
 - *Charis*—“grace,” “thank,” “thanked,” “thanks be to God,” “thankworthy”
 - *Eucharistia*—“thanksgiving” (Phil. 4:6)
 - *Eucharisteō*—“give thanks” (I Thess. 5:18)

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- Fourth, based upon all these observations we offered the following definition of the heart of thanksgiving:
 - The heart of thanksgiving allows the unearned, unmerited, favor, kindness, and grace of God to stir up the sentiment of gratitude for all that God has done for us on our behalf and then it expresses that sentiment by giving thanks to God for his grace. A heart of thanksgiving is literally taking the grace of God and living it out daily in the details of life.
- Fifth, we studied how gratitude and thanksgiving is the seedbed of joy by considering the example of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - Luke 22:19 (1107)—“gave thanks” (*Eucharisteō*).
 - Matthew 26:27 (1038)—“gave thanks” (*Eucharisteō*).
 - Hebrews 12:2 (1303)—why did Christ endure the cross? For the joy set before him. Christ could give thanks to God despite pain, anguish, suffering, and separation because he knew the joy it would produce to have made satisfaction for sin.

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- Matthew 26:27 (1038)—Christ “gave thanks” for the privilege of shedding his blood “for many for the remission of sins.” In his earthly ministry according to all the information that God had revealed up to this point who was Christ dying for? Israel and any Gentile that would come through Israel.
- Matthew 1:21 (994)—“save his people from their sins.”
- Matthew 20:28 (1027)—“to give his life a ransom for many.”
- We learn later through the revelation of the mystery given to the Apostle Paul that much more was being accomplished at the cross in terms of the eternal plan and purpose of God.
- I Timothy 2:4-7 (1275)—Paul reveals in “due time” that Jesus Christ gave himself “a ransom for many.” Paul is the “due time” testifier of all the Christ accomplished on the cross.

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- Ephesians 2:13-18 (1251)—it is based upon the “blood of Christ” (v. 13) and “by the cross” (v. 16) that the body of Christ can be formed. Without the crosswork there would be not body of Christ.
- Ephesians 3:1-11—we learn through the revelation of the mystery given to the Apostle Paul that we made participants in the eternal purpose of God. The plan that God had before the world began.
- Colossians 2:14-15 (1264)—Jesus Christ satisfied the righteous requirements of the law upon the cross. By doing so he spoiled principalities and powers putting them to open shame and triumphing over them. What could bring greater joy to the heart of God than to look upon and consider the total and complete triumph that purchased by his son upon the cross.
- I Corinthians 2:7-8 (1213)—had Satan and his henchmen known about the mystery they never would have nailed Christ to the cross. They would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

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- Matthew 26:27—so here we are on the eve of the execution of the determinate council and foreknowledge of God (Acts 2:23) and Christ “gave thanks” for what was about to occur. Why did he do it, “for the joy set before” (Heb. 12:2). How much joy was accomplished through the work of the cross? In this movement knowing all he was about to endure Christ set the example for us and “gave thanks.”
- I Corinthians 11:23-26 (1222)—the observance of the Lord’s Table is to be done according to Paul, “in remembrance of me.” By observing the Lord’s Table we offer back to God the Father the same thanksgiving giving that the son offered in gratitude and with full knowledge of all that Christ accomplished upon the cross. It is here, in the work of Christ that we are to find our joy.
- Colossians 3:15 (1265)—Paul is literally telling the Colossians and by extension us to be *Eucharisteō*. To have the same mindset and attitude that Christ had on the eve of his death.

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- I Thessalonians 5:18 (1270)—in everything give *Eucharisteō*. God's will is for us to have the same mental and hearth attitude that Christ demonstrated for us. To be able in the midst of the circumstance and situation be able to find something to be thankful for.
- Philippians 4:6 (1260)—this life of continuous prayer (I Thess. 5:17) that we are to be living as members of the body of Christ does not and cannot function outside the realm of giving thanks. Paul tells to make our request know unto God with “thanksgiving” (*Eucharistia*). The ungrateful heart is not capable of offering prayers with “thanksgiving” because it fundamentally believes that God is not good and is hardened from seeing the goodness of God and is evil.
 - “Evil is that—a hole in the goodness of God. Evil is all that lacks the goodness of God, a willful choice to turn away from the full goodness of God to that empty of His goodness.” (Voskamp, 88)

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- Psalm 100:4 (647)—“The only real payers are the one mouthed with thankful lips. Because gratitude usher into the other side of prayer, into the heart of the God . . . Prayer to be prayer, to have the power to change anything must first speak thanks . . . Prayer without ceasing is only possible in a life of continual thanks.” (Voskamp, 60)
- Colossians 2:7 (1263)—a life lived with knowledge of and in gratitude for all Christ has done on our behalf ought to be abounding with “thanksgiving” (*Eucharistia*).
- Ephesians 4:29-31 (1254)—Ann Voskamp in her book *One Thousand Gifts* of why we choose to kill joy in our lives with bitterness and ingratitude.
— Read quote.

Reflection and Application

- 3 key ideas that resonated with me.
- 2 ideas I need to study further.
- 1 truth I can begin applying immediately.