

## What the Bible Says about Thankfulness

- We are commanded to be thankful
  - 1 Thessalonians 5:18
  - Ephesians 5:4
  - Ephesians 5:18-20
  - Philippians 4:6
  - Colossians 3:15-16
  - Colossians 4:2
- Thankfulness is part of our ministry to God (2 Corinthians 9:12)
- Thankfulness enables us to do all things to the glory of God (Romans 14:6)

## Benefits of Being Thankful

- It helps us to trust God
- It helps our intimacy with God
- It helps us to be joyful
- It helps with anxiety (Philippians 4:6-7)
  - Paul isn't saying that you just need to pray once and say thanks once and then your anxiety will go away. He's saying that if you develop a lifestyle of ongoing prayer and ongoing thankfulness, *then* you will have a peace that protects against anxiety
- It can even help with rejection issues
  - Giving thanks helps us to see the things God has done for us
  - It helps us to see that He really does care about us
- It helps us to be humble
  - Deuteronomy 8:17-19
  - When we thank God for the blessings He gives us, we're reminding ourselves that they came from Him and that without Him, we wouldn't have them
- It is edifying to others (1 Corinthians 14:14-18)
- Thanksgiving can make a difference in spiritual warfare (2 Chronicles 20:21)

## Understanding Thankfulness

- Thankfulness is realizing that someone did something for you, valuing/appreciating that they did it for you, and expressing that appreciation.
- Thankfulness is a choice

## Tips for Being Thankful

- Trust in God's sovereignty
  - That everything that happens only happens cause God allowed it to or caused it to
  - That God will work all things together for your good (Romans 8:28)
  - That God doesn't allow anything ultimately bad to happen to you
- Think about God's intentions
  - When God gives us good things it's because He loves us (Psalm 81:10; 1 Timothy 6:17)
  - If someone gives me a nice gift, I'll be thankful. But if I suspect that they weren't sincere and they only gave it to me because they want something in return, then I probably won't be thankful
  - So think about God's intentions when you enjoy your lunch. Think about how He really does want to bless you and He really does want you to enjoy good things
- Think about what you deserve
  - None of us deserve anything but God's unending judgement
  - The more that we realize that the only thing we deserve is God's unending judgement, the more we'll be inclined to thank Him for His gifts
  - If we have problems with not being thankful, we might also have problems with feeling like God owes us something.
- Have set times of giving thanks throughout the day
- Make lists of things you have to be thankful for (Psalm 9:1, 75:1)
- Be thankful to others (1 John 4:20)
- Practice it