

## Thankfulness

Joseph Carty / General

Holidays / Thanksgiving Day; Thankfulness; Praise / 1 Chronicles 16:34

There is no such thing as being too thankful and content. Yet, in the consumer-centric world that we live, thankfulness and contentment seem to be an elusive commodity.

- Thanksgiving is great holiday.
  - reminds us to be thankful
    - and content.
- 
- Christmas not as fun.
  - Sometimes pretend
    - to be thankful
      - for gifts...
- 
- Things people say...:

8. Well, well, well, now, there's a gift!

7. No, really, I didn't know that there was a Chia pet tie! Oh, wow!  
It's a clip-on too!

6. You know, I always wanted one of these! Jog my memory—what's it called again?

5. You know what?—I'm going to find a special place to put this!

4. Boy, you don't see craftsmanship like that every day!

3. And it's such an interesting color too!

2. You say that was the last one? Am I glad that you snapped that baby up!

1. Nothing...

- God has given us
  - so many gift...
  
- Perhaps we
  - can be guilty
    - treating His blessings
      - the same way...

Paul says:

Colossians 2:6–7 ESV

Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

- One charge we
- have been give
- as Christians is to:
  - “abounding in thanksgiving”
- Some days,
- it seem easier than others.
- Again Paul teaches:

Ephesians 5:20 ESV

giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Emerson said that if the stars came out only once a year, everybody would stay up all night to behold them. We have seen the stars so often that we don't bother to look at them anymore. We have grown accustomed to our blessings.

- Our frequent problem,
  - we don't see the
  - blessings we have.!
- Consumerism steals contentment.
- We are bombarded with
  - continuous ads
  - "you will be happy.
    - with this product."
- Many ways,
  - we have bought into
  - the lies of the ads!
- We keep forgetting

- happiness
- joy
- peace
- don't come from
  - physical objects.

Talk with Louie

No reason why

not me

not my daughter.

Grace of God.

1 Samuel 12:24 ESV

Only fear the LORD and serve him faithfully with all your heart. For consider what great things he has done for you.

- Today we ponder,
- what has God done for me?

- Creation
- Salvation
- Peace
- Family – Biological
- Family – Spiritual
- Home
- Health
- Safety
- Transportation
  
- This is the reality
- every day!
- Not once per year!

The Bible says:

Psalm 118:24 ESV

This is the day that the LORD has made;

let us rejoice and be glad in it.

- Every day
  - is the day that
    - the Lord has made!
- God's mercies are new
  - every single morning.
- Each day has something
  - to praise God for!

Psalm 107:1 ESV

Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,

for his steadfast love endures forever!

- What is our issue?

- Thankfulness tied to
- contentment.

## Contentment

- Jealousy, envy , and depression
- is the enemy of
- contentment.
  
- It's no wonder
- depression is on rise
- in our society...
  
- Depression and despair
- partially connected to
- low frustration tolerance
- stinking thinking



- Greatest treatment
- for depression:
  - CBT...
- Why?
  - teaching ourselves
  - to think differently.

Matthew Henry, the famous Bible expositor, was once accosted by thieves and robbed of his pocketbook.

He wrote these lines in his diary:

Let me be thankful, first, because I was never robbed before; second, because, although they took my purse, they did not take my life; third, because, although they took my all, it was not much; and fourth, because it was I who was robbed, not I who robbed.

There's always something to thank God for.<sup>9</sup>

–Curtis Hutson, Great Preaching on Thanksgiving

- Thankfulness

- is a life choice.
  
- It's not based
  - on life dealing use
  - a perfect circumstance.
  
- Thankfulness is choosing
  - to be happy with
    - what we do have.
      - (Contentment)

1 Thessalonians 5:18 ESV

give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

- Notice the phrase
  - "all circumstances."

- This is a great
- challenge from God.
- Be thankful
  - in all circumstances.

If one should give me a dish of sand and tell me there were particles of iron in it, I might look for them with my eyes and search for them with my clumsy fingers and be unable to detect them. But let me take a magnet and sweep through it, and it will draw to itself the almost invisible particles. The unthankful heart, like my finger in the sand, discovers no blessings. But let the thankful heart sweep through life, and as a magnet finds the iron, so it will find in every day some heavenly blessing.<sup>7</sup>

—Henry Ward Beecher, quoted in Encyclopedia of Sermon Illustrations

- I'm sure that you can
  - think of moments
    - when nothing seems good.
- One truth about hardships
  - it could always be worse.

- We can be thankful
  - that it is not worse.
  
- Paul was a man,
  - that was familiar
    - with hardships.
  
- We think of him,
  - missionary to Gentiles
    - as someone who
      - always had success.
        - but couldn't be
          - further from the
            - truth...

2 Corinthians 6:4–10 (ESV)

... As servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger;

--

by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise.

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We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.

- They went through
  - so much for the gospel.
  
- Yet notice,
  - “yet always rejoicing”

Philippians 4:11–13 ESV

Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I

can do all things through him who strengthens me.

- What is the secret?
  - way to be content?
    - life seems good or bad?
- Trust God
  - He is able.
  - Choose to be thankful!!

Proverbs 19:23 ESV  
The fear of the LORD leads to life,  
and whoever has it rests satisfied;  
he will not be visited by harm.

- Who is content?
  - those who have
    - “the fear of the Lord.”

A gardener had been especially careful in tending one particular rose, which was very fair to look at. But when he went one morning to his favorite rosebush, he found that the flower, of which he had taken such care, was gone. He was very upset, for he thought that some bad boy had stolen into the garden and taken away his best flower.

He was complaining very bitterly of his loss when someone said, "The master has been down in the garden this morning, and he has been admiring this rosebush, and he has taken away that fine bud of which you were so proud." Then the gardener was delighted that he had been able to grow a flower that had attracted his master's notice. Instead of mourning any longer, he began to rejoice.

So should it be with anything on which we have set our hearts. Let each one of us say to our Master, "My Lord, if it pleases you to take it, it pleases me to lose it. Why should I complain because you have taken from me what is really your own?"<sup>2</sup>

—C. H. Spurgeon, quoted in 300 Sermon Illustrations from Charles Spurgeon

- It's funny how
  - a change of perspective
  - can change our mood.
  
- Probably the greatest example
  - of such a life is Job.

- He went through
- so much hardship.
- Did ask God, why?
- Yet refused
  - to curse God
  - get angry.

Job 1:21 ESV

And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."

- These words
- come from a place
- deep trust in God.
  
- Doesn't understand the why...
- But trust God.



- Thankfulness is about
- re-framing our thoughts
- in the light of truth.

I heard of a fellow who wished to dispose of his home. He called his real estate agent and said, "I want to run an ad in the paper to sell my home. Get rid of it as quickly as you can. I'm tired of this old place."

The agent said, "Tell me something about your home so I can run a good ad."

The man told him how many rooms it had. It had carpet. There were expensive shrubs in the yard. He told about some fruit trees in the back yard and many other advantages. He described the house in detail.

When he finished, the agent said, "I'll read it back to you and you tell me how it sounds."

He read the ad—about this beautiful three-bedroom home with two baths, a good stand of grass, fruit trees in the backyard, new roof, central air-conditioning, a remodeled carport for two cars. He kept on reading until the owner stopped him.

"Wait a minute! Wait a minute! Stop. That house is not for sale. All my life I've been wanting a place like that, but I didn't realize I had one until now!"<sup>12</sup>

—Curtis Hutson, Great Preaching on Thanksgiving

## Appeal

- This holiday season
  - my pray for you
  - is the same.
  
- Not necessarily for
  - huge physical blessings.
  
- But rather.
  - That we may see
    - more clearly
      - blessings we already have!

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