



Topic Living a life of Gratitude

Introduction

Today I want to start a two part series / I want to talk to you about something that many of us forget in our daily lives. This is something that we need to develop in our daily lives. It is something that will change the way we see the world and how we will act or react to every situation we face!

All of us are so ignorant of this one, Godly characteristic, or attitude, that we do not realise that this one attitude will change our lives for ever.

So I guess you are asking yourself, what is this attitude we should learn to develop? The answer is quite simple, it is called Gratitude or Thanksgiving!

We need to develop a life of continually being thankful or grateful about our lives, about our lives and our situations. Yes we might not be in an ideal situation in our lives but we are able to change the way we feel and act about it. We are able to find something to be thankful and grateful for, and that is what I want to talk to you about today.

How should we live?

So how do we live a life of Gratitude, Happiness and Thankfulness? The Bible is very clear how we should live our lives so let's look at the Word.

Ephesians 5:15-20 *¹⁵ Be very careful, then, how you live – not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the*



Lord's will is. ¹⁸ Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, ²⁰ always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

So firstly we need to be careful, actually it says be VERY CAREFULL, how we live our lives. Not unwisely but at a wise person. So this tells us that we have a choice, of how we can live our lives. We can either live it as God planned for us to live it above and beyond our problems and issues of life, or we can live it as everyone else does, totally defeated with very little hope!

So today we can choose to live our lives wisely or foolishly! My question to you is how do you want to live your life? You must make up your mind about this, either way we must make a choice!

With one choice there is foolishness and with the other there is wisdom. One is what we called living for the world and the other is living for God!

And the choice is yours! This part of scripture clearly tells you the difference. If you are living your life for the world, then sadly you are living a life without hope, without happiness, gratitude or thankfulness.

Clearly when you live like this, the Bible says you will be getting drunk with wine and that will lead to becoming involved in, or part of Debauchery.

So you might ask, Pastor what is Debauchery? The dictionary defines Debauchery as:

Debauchery is a noun meaning crazy partying and wild nights,



usually accompanied by a lot of alcohol. *Debauchery* is all about indulging in some of life's pleasures — overindulging, in fact. It stems from the Middle French word *debaucher*, which means to “entice from work or duty.”

So it means to excessive obsession with Drugs, Alcohol, sex, wild partying and not working, being enticed away from your family and their needs, your duties whether it is earning a living, making food or cleaning the house. You are enticed away from your natural duty to seek pleasure at the cost of those dear to you.

The solution is to live the Christian life

According to our text, instead of living our lives in worldly pleasures we should rather live by and be fill by the Holy Spirit and being grateful or thankful to God for EVERYTHING.

How was your week? Were you living a life for the world or were you living your life for God? When you Grateful and thankful to God for everything that happened this week or were you upset with everyone, feeling sorry for yourself, feeling betrayed or let down?

That is not the way God want you and me to live, He has planned and made a way for you and me to live in total victory and that way is total gratitude in EVERY area of your life.

Your car breaks, so what do you do? You can rant and rave, swear and curse and do other things but your car will not get fixed or you can thank God for it because even if you do not know where the money will come to fix it, or how you will fix it, you know that God will somehow provide.



Which is better? Which is healthier?

The Word of God

The second part to being thankful or living a life of gratitude is allowing God's Word dwell in you. Let it flow into every fibre of your being, every part of your life, this is exactly what Colossians tells us!

Colossians 3:16-17 *¹⁶ Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."*

It is so important to soak yourself in God's Word, because the Word of God is the Holy Spirit's toolbox to work in your life. Without the Word of God, the power of the Holy Spirit using it to help you is drastically diminished.

A commitment to God's Word will result in a better prayer life and as I have said before gratitude must form the basis of our relationship with God. When you start to live this type life, you will see a change in your life.

The reason why we are not happy at work, in our marriage, with our lives, with everything is because we have somehow, somewhere lost our gratitude and Satan is having a field day with you and I. Gratitude is the fuel that drives a Christian to do extraordinary things for God.

Think of Paul and Silas in prison singing in the book of Acts. Understand that, they had just been flogged, beaten but the



Roman soldiers, they were locked in a dungeon, in the deepest part, at the bottom of all the cells above them, in all the waste of the floors above. In this deepest despair, stink, pain – and remember they did nothing wrong! YET they were praising and worshiping God, they were grateful and thankful toward God for counting themselves worthy. That is the attitude God wants us to have.

As God says in His Word, in **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**

"16 Rejoice always, 17 pray continually, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

Conclusion

STOP looking at what you do not have. STOP looking at what you still need and want! STOP expecting others to do what God wants you to do and be grateful in every circumstance. STOP complaining and blaming God and others for what you do not have or think you should have

Tell the story of the Party at Michael

We need to start living a life of gratitude towards God for His daily provisions. We might now always have the things we want but we really need to start to focus on what we have, not what we do not have!

Only you can choose to be Thankful or Sad! Only you can be Grateful or mad, the choice is yours. We need to take our focus off what we do not have but rather be thankful for the things we do have.

What is the use of a brand new car if you do not have breath in



your lungs? What is the use of a million rand if you have a few minutes to live?

You and I should rather start to see the positive in everything, no matter how bad or inescapable our issues might seem, look for the positive in everything and when you do be grateful and not murmuring.

- You do not have extra money to buy takeaways for your family, instead of being unhappy and dissatisfied thank God for the food that you do have!
- You do not have nice cloths, thank God for the cloths you have!
- You a tired from working hard, thank God for the job you have!

Nehemiah 8:10 " *Nehemiah said, 'Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our **Lord**. Do not grieve, for **the joy of the LORD** is your strength.'* "

You see only you can have the JOY of the LORD, only you can chose His Joy or the worlds sadness! Which is it going to be? The Joy or the sadness – you decide!

God's JOY is your strength, and you cannot be grateful and thankful without JOY!

Remember there is a BIG difference between JOY and HAPPINESS? Happiness depends on happenings! You get a car and now you happy, you go to the garage and find this nice new car costs R1,000 to fill, now you are sad! You happiness depends on what is happening, of something is happening for you then you happy, but if something is not happening for you / to you then you are sad!



Joy is totally different, it does not depend on your happiness or events that happen to you or not, it is a state of being, it is a decision you make, it is an attitude you take no matter what your circumstances are, like Paul and Syllas.

And as we saw in Nehemiah, this JOY, the JOY of the Lord is your strength!

So I want to encourage you to find that JOY again, start to live a life where you STOP complaining about what you do not have and rather start being grateful and thankful for what you do have!

Remember Gratitude is something we develop, daily. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit we will be grateful and live the life of gratitude and thankfulness!

And lastly, Everything we do must be followed up by Thanksgiving! Amen!!!

Let's Pray