

November 25, 2012

HEAVEN... THANK YOU! HELL ... NO! THANK YOU

While He was on the way to Jerusalem, He was passing between Samaria and Galilee. ¹²As He entered a village, ten leprous men who stood at a distance met Him; ¹³and they raised their voices, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" ¹⁴When He saw them, He said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And 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. ¹⁷Then Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But the nine—where are they? ¹⁸Was no one found who returned to give glory to God, except this foreigner?" ¹⁹And He said to him, "Stand up and go; your faith has made you well."

Luke 17:11-19

In the story of the 10 lepers, we see that only one of the 10 who were healed came back to worship and thank Jesus. Often times being thankful or giving thanks to our God is something we take for granted. What we don't realize is that without an attitude of gratitude, we cannot establish an intimacy with God. That without this, God's presence will not be felt in our life — and without His presence, we cannot be rested, distinguished or protected — and without any of these then we have no testimony.

The ugly truth is that more often than not we take this for granted. We think that we can continue to live the Christian life without being thankful — but that is a misconception. Because our thankfulness or lack of it speaks tons of our true spiritual condition.

It is easy to be thankful for the things that make us happy or give us comfort, but what of the things that makes us uncomfortable, those that give us pain or tears — can we be thankful for them as well? If we find it difficult to be thankful for all that we have — whether the good or the bad, then we do not fully understand our position in God. We do not fully understand who God is and what God's purpose for us is.

When we continue to not see anything in our life that we should be thankful for, then like the 9 lepers — we have merely been cleansed but not saved. It is only after we realize God's grace and mercy on our life and we return to Him the glory and we give thanks, it is only then that we are healed and made whole . . . It is only then that we become saved.

In Romans 1:18-22 it says: *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, ¹⁹because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. ²⁰For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. ²¹For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*

We are reminded that if we harden our hearts against God and we do not acknowledge and give thanks to Him, in spite of the knowledge and evidences of His power and divinity, then we will remain in our sin. . . And will remain unsaved.



380 S. Rosemead Blvd
Pasadena, CA 91107

Sundays
945 AM
Heart
Preparation

1000 AM
WORSHIP

Dgroup Schedules

Tuesdays
700 pm
1102 E Swanee Lane
West Covina, CA

Thursdays
730 pm
2617 N Parish Place
Burbank, CA

Fridays
700 pm
5124 Ashworth St
Lakewood, CA

Fridays
730 PM
4706 Ivar Ave
Rosemead, CA

Ungratefulness is a sure sign that one does not believe nor have faith in God. It is even enumerated as one of the characteristics of fallen men (2 Timothy 3:14)

But Christians believe that God is always at work. That He has a divine agenda, a divine plan and a divine purpose. And each of these components is determined by Him for our benefit and for our good. . . And for His glory. This is faith.

Faith is knowing God and His Word, and that is why we strive to study and understand the bible. But then knowledge alone is not enough. This knowledge has to be translated into action — we have to do it, and we have to live by it. That is faithfulness.

Romans 1:17 says: **For in it the righteousness of God is revealed [a]from faith to faith; as it is written, But the righteous man shall live by faith.**

When we have faith, then we will believe that whatever God gives us is part of His divine agenda — whether it makes us comfortable, whether it is something we like or something that makes us uncomfortable or maybe it is something we do not like. In all things and in all situations, we will continue to be thankful — this is the mark of our salvation.

It is when we can say “Thank you Lord!” even during the difficult and trying times because we know that God is continually at work and is continually in control. (Romans 8:28)

Rejoice always; ¹⁷pray without ceasing; ¹⁸in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Being thankful is a sign that we believe, that we have faith . . . that we are faithful. . . And that we are saved.

Giving thanks or being grateful is an attitude we must learn. Often it is easier and simpler to just grumble and complain. But that isnt what God is asking of us. We are told that “in everything” we have to give thanks. There are no accompanying exceptions to that command.

There are 2 kinds of Gratitude:

1. Worldly thankfulness

- Luke 18:9-12
- this is Selfish Thanksgiving.
- if like the Pharisee, we only give thanks for that things that we perceive are good in us as compared to others; when we think only of ourselves and that pride and self glory is at the heart of our thankfulness

2. Biblical thankfulness

- 1 Thessalonian 5:18
- when we are able to give thanks for everything, we are being humble and faithful; when we can accept in gladness whatever is being given to us — whether good or bad; whether big or small; whether easy or hard

We must realize that it isnt happiness that makes us grateful, rather it is our gratitude that makes us happy. The basis the refore of our gratitude is to always remember that wherever we are is because of God’s help — He has provided every blessing that we have.

Hindrances to Biblical Thankfulness:

1. Doubts about God
2. Selfishness
3. Worldliness
4. Critical Spirit
5. Impatience
6. Lukewarmness
7. Rebellion; anger towards God

For us to be able to overcome these hindrances in our lives, we have to believe. . . To have faith. . . to allow God to work in us so that we can become renewed, re-born.

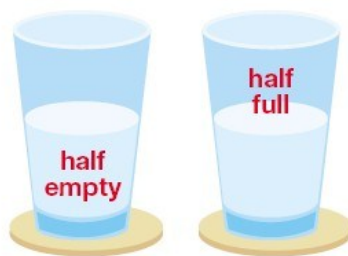
As a result, we can **Do all things without grumbling or disputing; ¹⁵so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world (Philippians 2:14-15)** because when Jesus returns, this is what He will look for — our faith. (Luke 18:8)

Discussion:

1. Agree or Disagree. Being thankful speaks volumes about one's spiritual condition. Why?
2. Are you a worldly or biblical thank-er? Why?
3. How comfortable are you giving thanks to God? How often do you do it?
4. What are the things you are readily able to give thanks for?
5. What are the things you are unable to give thanks for?
6. Are you able to give thanks even when you are hurting?

Works: Journaling task

A Glass of Gratitude.



Being thankful/ grateful is a matter of attitude or perspective. Similar to a half empty cup or a half filled cup. They refer to the same thing but are taken in different perspectives. Let us try to enumerate the negatives (half empty) and positives (half full) of our life. . . And maybe try looking at our negatives with a different perspective. Enumerate as many as you can.

Eg. Half full — I have a healthy happy family.

Half empty—I was recently diagnosed with a heart disease.

Perspective—I believe that this has happened because I am being reminded to slow down, to be less stressed out, and to take better care of myself and my health