

Intro: "In the old Anglo-Saxon tongue 'thankfulness' means 'thankfulness.' Thinking of all God's goodnesses draws forth gratitude." Steve Halliday

Thankfulness – Reasons to be filled with praise & thankfulness

1. We are God's beloved children (v. 1)

1 John 3:1a; Matthew 7:11; Luke 11:13

2. We Can Be Confident of Our Eternal Hope

...because Christ gave His life to secure our future with God (v. 1)

"How completely satisfying to turn from our limitations to a God who has none. Eternal years lie in his heart. For him, time does not pass, it remains; and those who are in Christ share with him all the riches of limitless time and endless years." A.W. Tozer

"Our pilgrimage to heaven is not a journey toward the end of time, but to another kind of time. And time travelers we shall be until we arrive... at the beginning."

Joni Eareckson Tada

The amazing grace that is ours in Christ

Grace is when God gives us good things that we don't deserve. **Mercy** is when He spares us from the bad things we do deserve. **Blessings** are when He is generous with both.

God is good all the time!

We have been given the Holy Spirit as a pledge guaranteeing our inheritance (Ephesians 1:13 & 4:30)

1. We have been made into a family.

1 Peter 2:10

2. We have been commanded to "give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." (v. 20)

1 Thessalonians 5:18; Colossians 3:15-17; Philippians 4:6

If God really works in everything, why don't we thank Him for everything? *Why do we accept good from His hand — and not bad/difficult?* (Job 2:10)

– Do we deny His hand? If I only thank Him when the fig tree buds (Habakkuk 3:17-18)— is this *selective faith? Practical atheism?* Because to thank God in all is to refuse Satan's relentless lure to be god-like in all.

Giving thanks is only this: making the canyon of pain into a megaphone to proclaim the ultimate goodness of God. Our thanks to God is our witness to the goodness of God when Satan and all the world would sneer at us to recant.

That which I refuse to thank Christ for, I refuse to believe Christ can redeem. Source unknown

Romans 8:28-29

The opposite of thankfulness: grumbling – critical spirits – complaining

A few suggestions on how to be more miserable:

Worry every single day about something. It won't add a cubit to your stature, but it will give you plenty to think about. Count your troubles. Do it at the breakfast table, so that you can make everyone else miserable too. Pity yourself. Do this especially if no one else is pitying you.

Don't be compassionate. If you do, you may end up neglecting your own troubles that would be a waste. Don't let Bible reading and prayer get in the way of what's really relevant. After all, focusing your sights on things unseen is too eternal; rather be relevant and get caught up in the here and now. Joni Eareckson Tada,

If one should give me a dish of sand and tell me there were particles of iron in it, I might feel for them in vain with my finger. But let me take a magnet and sweep through it and how would that draw to itself the most invisible particles by the mere power of attraction! The unthankful heart, like my finger in the sand, discovers no mercies.

But let the thankful heart sweep through the day, and as the magnet finds the iron, so it will find, in every hour, some heavenly blessings—only the iron in God's hand is gold. O.W. Holmes, Encouragement Bible, p. 125

Thankfulness - THINKING about the reasons we have to be thankful – Philippians 4:8

Thankfulness is a Matter of Thankfulness and Choice:

Frustration is nothing more than a thought, yet it can turn a beautiful day into a miserable experience when you continue to hold it in your mind.

Worry is nothing more than a thought, and even so it can hold you captive as surely as a cage made of steel bars.

Confidence and **determination** are just thoughts, too, and when you continue to think them you can achieve incredible things.

Happiness is a thought as well, one that can bring magnificent beauty and fulfillment during those times you choose to hold it in your mind.

The next time you are **frustrated, worried, angry** or **annoyed**, remember that it's because you have decided to be so. You can just as easily decide to be **confident, positively determined, patient, understanding, peaceful** and even **happy**. source unknown

A Truth to Remember: We have far more to be thankful about than we do to be worried about or to complain about. The question is what do we CHOOSE to think about.

A Challenge to Consider: Do you have a Philippians 4:8 list ready to combat the difficult and painful thoughts that come your way?

One thing I heard this morning was...