

Thanksgiving- A Way of Life

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I. Introduction.

A. For the pilgrims, thanksgiving was a way of life.

B. The Bible references giving thanks 140 times. Thanksgiving is a very important value to the Christian life.

II. There are a couple reasons that thanksgiving is important.

A. Thanksgiving is the recognition that we are dependent on God in every facet of life.

1. Health and life. (Job)

2. Materially. (Deuteronomy)

3. Spiritually. (1 Corinthians 4:7ff)

B. Thanksgiving is the recognition of God's goodness in providing for us. (Luke 17:11ff; John 21:25)

1. We are quick to forget that God has answered our prayers and thank Him.

2. God notices when we give thanks and when we do not give thanks.

III. One of the roots of moral failure is the refusal to give thanks to God. (Romans 1:21ff)

A. Thanksgiving must characterize our lives. (Ephesians 5:20; Colossians 2:7)

B. We are one of the most blessed nations in the history of the world, but we are so slow to give thanks for what we have.

C. Let us be characterized by thanksgiving on a daily basis, not just at Thanksgiving. (Psalm 92:1-2; Daniel 6:10)

IV. There are several suggestions for cultivating a thankful heart.

A. Heart change is the work of the Holy Spirit. (Philippians 2:13)

B. Memorize scripture about giving thanks. (Luke 17: 17-18; Romans 1:21; Psalm 92:1-2; Daniel 6:10)

C. Begin and end the day with thanksgiving.

D. Expand your mealtime thanksgiving.

E. Write down your prayer requests and then write down His answers.

F. Make a list of things that you are permanently thankful for and thank God for them.

G. Don't let your circumstances alter your attitude of thanksgiving. Paul mentions giving thanks 7 times in Colossians while he is in chains.

Application questions:

1. Why do you think the refusal to give thanks to God leads to moral failure?

2. Why do you think it matters to God that we give thanks when He responds to our prayers?

3. Ask a friend to join you in choosing one of the suggestions Jerry gives and try to practice it faithfully for a month. Take note and talk about how cultivating thankfulness affects your daily attitude.
