

Be Thankful Colossians 3:12-17

Longer passages are not quoted in the study sheet, but they can be read in the accompanying transcript.

You can measure the _____ of a person not only by his attitude but even more so by his gratitude. Today, we're going to examine the _____ to be thankful. Psalm 119:105 says, "Your word is a _____ to my feet And a _____ to my path." The Word of God enlightens us about the most important _____: Where did I come from? Why am I here? What will happen to me when I die? What is sin? Can I go to heaven? How should I live? How can I draw close to God? I'm so thankful for my Bible!

Psalm 92:1-2 says, "It is good to give _____ to the LORD and to sing praises to your name, O Most High; To declare Your loving kindness in the morning and Your faithfulness by night." During the Thanksgiving holiday, we remember our _____ and express our thanks to God for them. But thanks should be on our lips _____ day. We can never say thank you _____ to family, friends, and especially to God. Thanksgiving is not just something that we do to be _____; it also blesses us. When thanksgiving becomes an integral part of your life, you'll find your attitude and life _____. You'll become more positive, gracious, loving, and humble.

We're all wholly _____ upon the God who created us for life. He provides all our _____. God's preparation of our universe allows us to breathe, to have fresh water, to have food, and to have night and day; this shows His _____ for us. Creation is not an accident. God made this world for our blessing, so we need to _____ God for all that He's done and to be thankful. The act of giving thanks leads to _____ hearts, minds, and lives. Giving thanks also will _____ us to take God and His ways seriously. Nothing is more important!

Our reading today comes from Paul's letter to the Colossians chapter 3, verses 12 to 17.

God has always _____ His people to be thankful. Paul urged the church to, "Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an _____ of thanksgiving" (Colossians 4:2). He had already given the reason for this; it's because of what the Lord Jesus has _____. He said, "Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude" (Colossians 2:6-7). He said walk as you were instructed and overflow with gratitude. Gratitude will make your life brighter and better. It will fill your life with joy.

The Christian life should _____ with gratitude. How do we do this? Colossians 3:15-17 says, "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father." Let Christ's peace be your _____, sing with thankfulness in your heart, and do everything in His name while giving thanks. These changes will

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lift your spirits and encourage your _____. Your focus determines your attitude and your _____. Hebrews 13:15 says, “Through Him then, let us continually offer up a _____ of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.”

It takes _____ to keep focusing your mind on God. Life is _____ changing, distracting, and often unfair. We can’t predict what misfortunes may lie ahead, but we can _____ our blessings that we now enjoy with confidence. We can _____ that we are victorious in Christ. We can be certain that God will keep His _____, for He Himself has said in Hebrews 13:5, “I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you.”

So, we must follow God’s teaching in 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18, “pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God’s _____ for you in Christ Jesus.” You mean in everything? Yes, in everything. In the _____ times and in the _____, give thanks. When life is unfair, give thanks for what you have in Christ; He’s been _____. Even if you suffer for the name of Christ, give thanks! **Read 1 Peter 4:12-14.** The “here and now” isn’t everything; the Lord will _____ those who love and serve Him.

Our struggles _____ us for something better, so be thankful even for struggles. “Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various _____, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in _____” (James 1:2-4). God is shaping and molding us for service in this life and for eternity, so don’t _____ when you face a struggle. Learn to be thankful for everything. Why?

First, when you’re thankful, you’ll _____ complaining and grumbling. Throughout their journey in the wilderness, the Israelites _____ against God. God counted their grumbling as a lack of trust; First Corinthians 10 regards grumbling as _____ as idolatry or sexual immorality. **Read Philippians 2:14-16.** When you complain, you _____ to appreciate what good the Lord has done for you.

Second, when you’re thankful, you’ll _____ being so anxious or worrisome. Philippians 4:4-7 says, “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. Be anxious for nothing, (that is, stop worrying about anything) but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” When we rejoice in the Lord and _____ our burdens and our cares to Him, He blesses us with _____. He’ll put a _____ around our hearts and minds! Start rejoicing over the things God has done for you, and life will _____ more positive and joyful. Proverbs 15:30 says, “Bright eyes _____ the heart; Good news puts fat on the bones.” Count your blessings, focus on the _____, and rejoice in Jesus Christ! Put away the _____ and focus on the good. Philippians 4:8 says, “Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence (that is, moral excellence) and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.” Let your mind make its _____ there. Think about them all the time.

Third, when you're thankful, you'll _____ more humble and less prideful. Remember, God is the _____ of every blessing. James 1:17 says, "Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from _____, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow." This is why the Lord asks us to _____ to God, "Give us this day our daily bread" (Matthew 6:11). You may work a job and think it all _____ on you, but remember God is at the source of every blessing.

Moses reminded the Israelites as they were about to enter the promised land – **read Deuteronomy 8:11-14**. Pride _____ to forgetfulness. He urged them in verse 18, "But you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who is giving you _____ to make wealth, that He may confirm His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day." God is the source of all that we possess, all we are, and all we _____ to be. First Corinthians 4:7 asks some arrogant people, "For who regards you as superior? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you _____ as if you had not received it?"

Some folks focus on their own _____ and their own righteousness. When a person gives thanks to God _____ for what he possesses within himself, he's actually bragging about himself more than thanking God. The Lord Jesus _____ the arrogant person with the person who recognizes his total need and dependency on God. Look at Luke 18:11-14. "The Pharisee stood and was praying this to _____: 'God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.'" This man wasn't really praying or thanking God; he was reading his _____.

"But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the _____!' I tell you, this man went to his _____ justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted." Gratitude to God, knowing that we have an _____ need for God, removes our pride and makes us more humble.

Fourth, when you're thankful, you'll be more gracious to _____. The Lord Jesus taught us to pray, "And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" (Matthew 6:12). Giving thanks for God's _____ leads us to be willing to forgive others. Ephesians 4:31-32 says, "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be _____ to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you." A gracious person who knows the kindness of the Lord realizes the _____ of being kind to others. He opens his heart and his wallet to help those in need and doesn't _____.

Fifth, when you're thankful, you'll _____ your love. We're thankful the Lord Jesus willingly and lovingly sacrificed Himself upon the _____. "We love, because He _____ loved us" (1 John 4:19). Giving thanks helps me _____ my focus on the Lord and on what really matters. Gratitude for what Jesus did is at the _____ of our conversion. Gratitude leads us to be committed disciples who want to _____ the Lord in all that we do. We can't look deeply at the cross and then _____ as if nothing matters. Our thankfulness will not let us.

Does the cross matter to you? Surprisingly, some act as if the cross never _____; and others live as if it didn't _____. Perhaps you remember when Jesus healed the ten lepers. "As He entered a village, ten leprosy men who stood at a distance met Him; and they raised their voices, saying, 'Jesus, Master, have _____ on us!' When He saw them, He said to them, 'Go and show yourselves to the priests.' And as they were going, they were _____. Now one of them, when he saw that he had been healed, turned back, glorifying God with a loud voice, and he fell on his face at His feet, giving _____ to Him. And he was a Samaritan" (Luke 17:12-16),

When people _____ to remember God, honor Him, or thank Him, they lose sight of the blessing of living as God's people. An ungrateful person will _____ apathetic and callous toward God. When people lose sight of God, they also lose sight of morality and _____. They don't realize that when they stop honoring God, they start dishonoring themselves.

Romans 1:21-24 described the pagan Gentiles this way: "For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give _____, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. Therefore God gave them over in the _____ of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them."

Giving thanks matters. When you love God, you want to _____ Him with all your heart. Psalm 50:23 says, "He who offers a _____ of thanksgiving honors Me; And to him who orders his way aright I shall show the salvation of God." Truly giving thanks comes from our hearts and shows in our _____. Thanksgiving leads to thanks-living. Are you thankful?

I look forward to going to heaven and _____ Jesus. The first thing I want to do is say to Him "Thank you. Thank you for dying for me. Thank you for shedding your blood to cleanse me from all my terrible sins, so that I could live with you." But I don't have to _____ till I go to heaven to express my thanks to God. I can do it now by getting _____ with Him and by worshiping Him. I don't want to miss a _____ Lord's Day, the first day of the week, without prayer and singing praise to Him. I don't want to miss gathering around the Lord's table to _____ of the Lord's Supper, remembering the Lord's body and blood which were given for me.

The word "thankful" actually comes from the old English word "think-ful." Being thankful comes from being think-ful. When we realize how blessed we are, we should _____ to the love and goodness of God. How often people today want and want from God, but never _____ to give their praise, or their thanks, or their hearts to Him. Have you?

God's goodness _____ us to repent and obey the gospel. If I thank God for His grace, I'll gladly _____ and _____ Him. God's love leads us to _____ Him, to _____ of our sins, to _____ His name, and to be _____ into Christ. According to Romans 6:3-7, we die with Christ in baptism, we're buried with Him, and we're raised with Him to walk in newness of life in baptism. God wants you; He wants your heart, your life, and your soul. Won't you serve Him and follow Him always. Thankfulness begins when people _____ the Lord Jesus in their hearts every day and serve Him. We hope you'll not wait another day to put on your Lord in baptism.