

Message: The Power of Thanksgiving November 23, 2014

Q: Why giving thanks is important. A: My heart

1 Thessalonians 5:18; Ephesians 5:17-20; Philippians 4:4-7; Psalm 92; Psalm 100:4; Psalm 103, Romans 1:21; Deuteronomy 8:11-17; 1 Corinthians 10:1-11

Learn to recognize the good things God is doing.

Deuteronomy 8:2-20; Joshua 4:4-7; Matthew 6:25-26

10,000 Reasons Project

Be the one who gives thanks.

Luke 17:11-19; Isaiah 55:8,9; Proverbs 3:5-6

Why is it so hard to maintain thankfulness?

The Great Enemies of thankfulness

- Comparison Matthew 20:1-15
- Entitlement Luke 11:7-10
- Pride Deuteronomy 8:11-17
- Bitterness Ephesians 4:31-32; Hebrews 12:15; Matthew 6:14; Matthew 18:22-35
- Spiritual Shortsightedness Psalm 73; 1 Peter 4:12-19; Hebrews 12:7-8

Four significant aspects of thankfulness.

Four elements of true thanksgiving are found in Psalm 92

- (1) Remembering what God has done.
- (2) Telling others about it.
- (3) Showing God's glory to others.
- (4) Offering gifts of self, time, and resources.

Food for Thought

For the week of November 23, 2014
(Questions and scriptures for further personal study)

Asaph in Psalm 73 as an example of a person who suffered from shortsightedness. Take a minute to go back and read all of Psalm 73 and then answer the following questions.

Where do you see these other two "Enemies of thankfulness" – comparison and bitterness – show up in this psalm?

What is it that ultimately helped Asaph overcome the trap of shortsightedness and comparison?

How does Asaph's attitude change once his perspective changes?

What are things in your life that can help you gain perspective when you're struggling with any of the "Enemies of thankfulness"?

One reason we can struggle with thankfulness is because God isn't working the way we want or expect Him to. Often, God's will unfolds very differently than we expect so we miss what He's doing in our lives. One example of this is found in 2 Kings 5:1-15. After reading the story, answer the questions below.

How do Naaman's expectations of how God would heal him compare to how it actually happened?

Why do you think he was so angry at how God chose to heal him?

What is the impact of his response to his healing on his thankfulness?"

What can we learn about how we and others respond to God's will from this story?

The theme of the song "10,000 Reasons" is to recognize and praise God for who He is and what He does. Take some time to do just that. Write down what you are thankful for. Share it on Thursday during Thanksgiving with family and friends. Share it with Real Life on the blog (<http://seekreallife.wordpress.com/>), Facebook ([Facebook.com/seekreallife](https://www.facebook.com/seekreallife)) or e-mail it to office@seekreallife.com. Let's celebrate together all the Good God is doing.

Giving thanks note ideas:

Sometimes it can be hard to put into words why we are thankful for someone in our life. Here are a few thought prompts as you write your thank you notes.

- Thank the person for the relationship: friend, brother, sister, parent.
- Thank them for an action they have done: helped, given, supported, served.
- Thank the person for an example they have shown
- Thank the person for the influence they have had.
- Thank the person for the encouragement given.
- Thank the person for the joy they bring.

Our thank you card to all of you:

Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God. Whenever I pray, I make my requests for all of you with joy, for you have been my partners in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it until now. And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns. So it is right that I should feel as I do about all of you, for you have a special place in my heart. Phil 1:3 –7

We love you Church!

Blessings.

Jeff & Shelley