

# Gratitude

Gratitude transforms me regardless of my circumstances.

Intro: Gratitude for Thanksgiving dinner. Grateful for our church doing life together.

God's Word to the Apostle Paul concerning Gratitude: (I'm being transformed)

**Phil 4:4-7** **4** Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!\* **5** Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. **6** Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. **7** And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. NIV

- \*chairó (khah'-ee-ro) praise to God

**\*\*Giving thanks to God fills you with peace.**

- Science agrees! Science recognizes the impact of faith and gratitude.
  - UC Berkeley published research on the Science of Gratitude.
  - Metric for measuring Gratitude involved:
    - 1) Living with in Sense of Abundance, not Sense of lack or being deprived
    - 2) Appreciation for Simple blessings, example: taking kids to the park, enjoying a cup of hot tea, Me: walking at the park, I slow down, stop to really what's in front of me: see glint of the sun intricate spider webs on the grass, deep hue of green, bugs dancing in the air
    - 3) Social Appreciation: you appreciate people for their influence in your life.
  - A few conclusions from this study on the Science of Gratitude:
  - "A grateful disposition is associated with better health. Better sleep less fatigue (28).
  - People with heart conditions had less inflammation and had more strength stronger strength when practicing gratitude.
  - Those recording 5 blessings per day for 10 weeks had fewer physical complaints than those who journaled 5 daily events.
  - Those having an active faith, going to church, increased gratitude.
  - Married couples praying for one another increased levels of gratitude.
  - Increased Gratitude leads to increases happiness and can protect us against burnout(31)
- The problem is sometimes we do not feel grateful. We feel more anxiety and stress than gratitude. All kinds of things make us feel stress: know you'll be late, Thanksgiving dinner preparations, being a parent of a teen -- miss curfew

- **Monday story:** Cell phone had not charged. Several chargers and none of them worked. Automatically think: new cell phone, no time. Meanwhile another dilemma: the sanitation truck is coming, alerted that something was thrown out away by accident.  
I was not grateful. Anxiety and stress are the opposite of gratitude.
- I let my circumstances dictate my emotions. People texting me, I would be ignoring them because my phone didn't work.
- God was waiting for me to choose to be grateful.
- He sent me friends to create gratitude (colleagues).

### \*\*Gratitude is the antidote for stress.

- **When you fixate on what steals** your joy, your broken relationship, a difficult relationship, the temptation is to become stuck in that emotion of sadness, and frustration.
- I'm not saying that Gratitude negates the challenge you face, yes you need to process your feelings.
- **Emotion of despair, anger can become a gauge for your reality.** You let emotion dictate your reality. Led by emotions. You can't see past the current obstacle. And so this is where you live.
- Jesus wants us to fix our gaze on Him.

### \*\*The challenging process you're in, is temporary.

- The difficulty we're experiencing is temporary. My transformation doesn't occur from having everything go my way – change would never happen.
- Jesus transforms us in the trials.
- Question: Will I praise him during the trial?

#### Go back to Scripture Phil 4:4-7

In his letter to the Philippian church the word "JOY" is found 16 times.

Paul writes this letter to the Philippian Church while he is in prison.

- No Starbucks, no pizza delivery, few visitors. It's cold and damp.
- He's publicly beaten. Open wounds on his hands and feet anchored to the floor in prison stocks.
- His concern: for the church in Phillippi. In his pain his thoughts are for others, brothers and sisters in Christ.
- When I'm in pain, and disappointed in my circumstances – I am not thinking of others. This is how much work God has to do in me! I'm being transformed.

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! **5** Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. **6** Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. **7** And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. NIV

Paul's Instruction in this passage of Scripture:

- Rejoice -- praise God (calming, reframe what I'm carrying)
  - Be gentle (praise changes my attitude, kindness grows replace negative emotions)
  - Do not be anxious
  - Pray
  - Be thankful -- experience gratefulness, what I is enough
- 
- The Outcome: Jesus guards your heart and mind. Guard is a military term, to garrison: to guard like a Navy Seal. Sometimes our heart and mind need rescued.

**\*\*The difficulty is temporary. God's promise is permanent.**

- This Scripture is not a method, strategy, or formula; it is A PROMISE. God's promise to you!
- In a few moments you will have a chance to give a brief account of gratitude for God's goodness in your life.
- First, Video from MediaTeam to reflect on the past year: river baptisms, child dedications, Life Groups have served in the community, Youth Group events, Kid's Ministry Events
- So many God stories have occurred past 6 months. New people joined our church, prayers have been answered for jobs, for healing, people have received God's direction.
- In this room we have stories that need to be told – God stories, give God Glory for His faithfulness. Let's watch.

**(Brent and Rachel open mic  
Rock Won't Move, Graves To Gardens)  
Message 2**

(Ricardo playing)

**\*\*Gratitude transforms me regardless of my circumstances.**

- In sadness, illness, or loneliness, gratitude may seem counterintuitive. Be kind to yourself, start small, start praising God for the good things He has put in your life.
- **Promise is ours – unsurpassing peace.**

- **Praise, pray, and give thanks we experience his promise of unsurpassing peace.**

•

**\*Gratitude is a decision.**

- The more you give thanks to God in prayer, and tell your story of how God is working in our life – you experience God’s unsurpassing peace.
- In the presence of God’s Peace gratitude overflows.
- **In gratitude we become more like Christ.** Imitators of Christ.
- **Always Praise God, pray continually and give thanks – this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus. I Thes 5:16**

(Ricardo begins playing guitar)

- In the song Gratitude, “Hallelujah” is repeated.
- Hallelujah OT version of “Rejoice”
- “Hallel” means joyous praise in song; “jah” is a shortened form of Yahweh – the Hebrew name for God.
- Maybe your in a place with God you don’t know what to say . . . feel like you have nothing to say . . . your words will fall short . . . you’ve got nothing new . . . you can raise up your hands and say “Hallelujah.”

Gratitude is a decision that brings peace.

God’s transcending, unsurpassing peace.

In His peace your mind and heart are protected.

- What’s going on in your life that you can give God praise for? Each of you have a gratitude card. As the music plays, Write down what you are thankful for
- And experience his unsurpassing peace.

**2 minutes to fill out card**

**Pray: WT comes to stage**

Invite to Connect after the service: dessert

**Benediction: Rejoice and again I say rejoice! Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Phil 4:4, 6, 7**