
Words of Truth

Be Grateful

By: Brian A. Yeager

We are currently in the last days (Acts 2:16-21, Hebrews 1:1-2, and I John 2:18). The Lord tells us that during these last days, there are types of people we have to withdraw ourselves from. Notice: *"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, **unthankful**, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away"* (II Timothy 3:1-5).

Carnally minded people are not thankful for things. We have all seen it. I have seen supposed Christians who do not have a mindset of thankfulness. You can do something (great or small) for that type of person and they are not grateful. These people are not thankful to God either. They cannot seem to realize what the Creator has done for mankind (Genesis 1:27, Psalms 68:19, Acts 14:17, Acts 28:14-15, I John 4:9-10, etc.). When someone does not have a thankful disposition, that person is not obeying God.

God Expects His People To Be A Thankful People

Under the Old Law, God demanded thankfulness from His people. Notice: *"O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever. And say ye, Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, and glory in thy praise... Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness... Rejoice in the LORD, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness... Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name... O give thanks unto the LORD; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people... Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever... O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever... Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name: the upright shall dwell in thy presence... Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime"* (I Chronicles 16:34-35, Psalms 30:4, Psalms 97:12, Psalms 100:4, Psalms 105:1, Psalms 106:1, Psalms 118:29, Psalms 140:13, and Daniel 6:10).

We are not under the Old Law today (Romans 7:1-6, Ephesians 2:11-17, Colossians 2:14, and Hebrews 9:15-17). Therefore, we need to take notice that God expects us to be thankful today as part of His will in the New Testament. Notice: *"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ... Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our*

Lord Jesus Christ... Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son... And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful... And what soever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him... In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you... I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men... By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name” (I Corinthians 15:57, Ephesians 5:20, Colossians 1:12-13, Colossians 3:15, Colossians 3:17, I Thessalonians 5:18, I Timothy 2:1, Hebrews 13:15).

The commands, from both the Old and New Laws, are abundantly clear. We should be thankful for everything, as the commands state. Whether it is the food we are eating (Matthew 15:36, Acts 27:35, and I Timothy 4:1-5), the day we are enjoying (Romans 14:6), or the relationships we have with our brethren (Romans 16:1-4, Ephesians 1:16, and Philippians 1:3); we need to be thankful. We shouldn't just be thankful though because we are commanded to. We should really have the mindset of being thankful. That means we are going to have to realize what the things we are thankful for do for us. Additionally, we should realize that a mindset of thankfulness helps us accomplish other things we are commanded to do.

Thankfulness Helps In Other Ways Too

The fact that God tells us to be thankful is reason enough to be thankful (Luke 11:28, John 8:31, John 14:15, and Revelation 22:14). However, there are many ways in which being a thankful people can help us in other areas of obedience. For example, God commands us to be content (I Timothy 6:6-10 and Hebrews 13:5-6). When you are truly thankful for what you have, you'll find that contentment comes easier. This is true because when you think about how thankful you are for what you do have, you'll find a mindset of joy in what you have. Most unthankful people want more because they are not happy with what they already have. Thankfulness will help you learn to be content in whatever state you find yourself (Philippians 4:11-16).

God demands humility out of us (James 4:6-10 and I Peter 5:6). When we are thankful to God for everything it helps us in being humble (Psalms 69:30-32). Additionally, be thankful for the help we receive from others in achieving what we do in life. That helps in keeping us humble. Consider, where would the “successful businessman” be without his customers? For us as Christians, how could we ever get to Heaven without the help we receive from one another (I Corinthians 12:14-27)? These are just a few, of many, areas that we can be stronger through being thankful.

Conclusion

We should be thankful for all that God has done and has provided us with (cf. Psalms 136:1-26). Be grateful for good people and the good things they do (II Corinthians 8:16). If you are alive and you have the opportunity of eternal life in front of you, there are many things to be thankful for. How can you not be grateful for what you have now and can have in the life to come? Those who are unthankful are those whom shall find the wrath of God upon them in the Judgment (Romans 1:18-21).