

My Gratitude Jar – Part 2

A time to reflect on part 1

Remember the gratitude jar on my coffee table? Fred and I deposit thank you notes to the Lord for anything He does for us during and throughout the year. So on the 1st of the year, my husband and I did sit by a nice fire, a hot chocolate and after having taken communion together, we read out loud all those praise reports and thank you notes. It was fun!

There is no doubt it stirred us up and made us even more thankful. As a funny anecdote, my husband said "wow, you have so many more notes than me, I am going to have to get busy this year!"

In part 1 of this message, I had talked about the dangers of a lack of gratitude. Not being thankful is like shooting yourself in the foot. Many people are wondering why things are not working for them. Well, could it be the reason. You alone can answer this question. you know deep down, where you stand. Now on the positive side of things, I now want to share all the benefits of having a heart that always wants to say thank you, to others, but more importantly to God.

Gratitude Brings Freedom

Do you remember the story of Jonah and the whale? While in the belly of the fish, he chose to worship and thank God with no guarantee of his deliverance. I am sure it was neither easy nor comfortable, yet he chose to focus on God's goodness and faithfulness.

"But I will sacrifice to you with thanksgiving...for Salvation is of the Lord.

This is powerful, He thanked God before seeing any breakthrough and God spoke to the fish & it vomited Jonah onto dry land." Jonah 2:9-10

Gratitude Keeps Your Eyes on Heaven' Supply

We can choose to be dominated by our natural surroundings or by the perspective we gain from Heaven. Being thankful helps us remember that all our resources and everything we will ever need are found in the heavenly realm—in the spirit.

Ephesians 1:3 (Amplified Version) states: "May blessing (praise, laudation, and eulogy) be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah), Who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing given by the Holy Spirit in the heavenly realm!"

This is why Jesus always kept His focus on Heaven. He was never limited by what He could see or encounter in the natural world.

John 3:13 tells us that "Jesus was on earth but lived in Heaven." In times of need, crisis, or seemingly impossible situations, He always LOOKED UP!

Psalms 121:1-2 declares, "I will lift up my eyes to the hills—From whence comes my help? My help comes from the LORD, Who made heaven and earth."

When Jesus fed the 5,000 in Mark 6:41, healed the deaf and mute in Mark 7:34, or raised Lazarus from the dead in John 11:41, He looked up to Heaven.

Gratitude Brings Miracles & Wholeness

In Luke 17:11-17, we read about ten lepers who approached Jesus seeking healing. As they obeyed His command to go and show themselves to the priests, they noticed they had been healed. Having lived in India, I often encountered lepers and witnessed their suffering firsthand. A leper endures skin ulcers, nerve damage, and muscle weakness, which can lead to severe disfigurement and significant disability. As the ten lepers traveled along the road, they must have felt a change in their nerves and muscles. Perhaps they began to regain sensations and feelings—what an exciting realization it must have been for them to understand that the leprosy had ceased! Although all ten were healed, only one returned to thank Jesus for this incredible gift. His simple gesture transformed his life, as Jesus said, "Your faith has made you whole!" This meant that any missing fingers or toes—and possibly even his nose—were restored. All his ulcers and open wounds were healed. While the other nine received healing, this grateful man experienced a miracle.

Gratitude Keeps You Filled and Sensitive to the Spirit

"And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" Eph. 5:18-20

Gratitude Keeps You in the Peace of God

When we choose to be thankful, it keeps our focus on God who is a Spirit, and it will produce life and peace. "For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. " Romans 8:6

Gratitude Keeps You in the Love of God

Being thankful helps you focus on God so that when you face attacks, persecution, or even betrayal, you can love and forgive as Jesus did. In John 13:3-5, we read, "Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper, laid aside His garments, took a towel, and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet." Even knowing that Judas would betray Him and hand Him over to His persecutors, Jesus washed Judas's feet. He demonstrated love and service to Judas until the very end. This passage shows us that Jesus has revealed the way to true life and complete freedom. Living and loving in this manner is the best path we can take!