

GRATITUDE

Why is thankfulness /
gratitude / gratefulness
so difficult?

Thankfulness is so difficult, because of our natural inclination towards a self-centric perspective of the world. So much so, that we often make assumptions about what we deserve, the way the world should be. If giving thanks were easy, we would find the internet comments filled with more praise, as opposed to complaints.

Thankfulness, gratitude, gratefulness, it often feels as if it is a mentality that runs counter to our naturalistic instinct. In fact, I'd suggest that it's a byproduct of sin — to be ungrateful. It places US, our needs, our desires at the centre of the universe — and find dissatisfaction in any other way.

2 SAMUEL 7

7 When King David was settled in his palace and the Lord had given him rest from all the surrounding enemies, the king summoned Nathan the prophet.

"Look," David said, "I am living in a beautiful cedar palace, but the Ark of God is out there in a tent!"

Nathan replied to the king, "Go ahead and do whatever you have in mind, for the Lord is with you."

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"Look," David said, "I am living in a beautiful cedar palace, but the Ark of God is out there in a tent!"

Nathan replied to the king, "Go ahead and do whatever you have in mind, for the Lord is with you."

“This is what the Lord has declared: Are you the one to build a house for me to live in? I have never lived in a house, from the day I brought the Israelites out of Egypt until this very day. I have always moved from one place to another with a tent and a Tabernacle as my dwelling. Yet no matter where I have gone with the Israelites, I have never once complained to Israel’s tribal leaders, the shepherds of my people Israel. I have never asked them, “Why haven’t you built me a beautiful cedar house?”

4 But that same night the Lord said to Nathan,

5 “Go and tell my servant David, ‘This is what the Lord has declared: Are you the one to build a house for me to live in? 6 I have never lived in a house, from the day I brought the Israelites out of Egypt until this very day. I have always moved from one place to another with a tent and a Tabernacle as my dwelling. 7 Yet no matter where I have gone with the Israelites, I have never once complained to Israel’s tribal leaders, the shepherds of my people Israel. I have never asked them, “Why haven’t you built me a beautiful cedar house?””

8 “Now go and say to my servant David, ‘This is what the Lord of Heaven’s Armies has declared: I took you from tending sheep in the pasture and selected you to be the leader of my people Israel. 9 I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have destroyed all your enemies before your eyes. Now I will make your name as famous as anyone who has ever lived on the earth! 10 And I will provide a homeland for my people Israel, planting them in a secure place where they will never be disturbed. Evil nations won’t oppress them as they’ve done in the past, 11 starting from the time I appointed judges to rule my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies.

“Furthermore, the Lord declares that he will make a house for you—a dynasty of kings! 12 For when you die and are buried with your ancestors, I will raise up one of your descendants, your own offspring, and I will make his kingdom strong. 13 He is the one who will build a house—a temple—for my name. And I will secure his royal throne forever. 14 I will be his father, and he will be my son. If he sins, I will correct and discipline him with the rod, like any father would do. 15 But my favor will not be taken from him as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from your sight. 16 Your house and your kingdom will continue before me for all time, and your throne will be secure forever.”

17 So Nathan went back to David and told him everything the Lord had said in this vision.

"Who am I, O Sovereign Lord, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far? And now, Sovereign Lord, in addition to everything else, you speak of giving your servant a lasting dynasty! Do you deal with everyone this way, O Sovereign Lord?"

18 Then King David went in and sat before the Lord and prayed,
"Who am I, O Sovereign Lord, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far? 19 And now, Sovereign Lord, in addition to everything else, you speak of giving your servant a lasting dynasty! Do you deal with everyone this way, O Sovereign Lord?
20 "What more can I say to you? You know what your servant is really like, Sovereign Lord. 21 Because of your promise and according to your will, you have done all these great things and have made them known to your servant.
22 "How great you are, O Sovereign Lord! There is no one like you. We have never even heard of another God like you! 23 What other nation on earth is like your people Israel? What other nation, O God, have you redeemed from slavery to be your own people? You made a great name for yourself when you redeemed your people from Egypt. You performed awesome miracles and drove out the nations and gods that stood in their way.[d] 24 You made Israel your very own people forever, and you, O Lord, became their God.
25 "And now, O Lord God, I am your servant; do as you have promised concerning me and my family. Confirm it as a promise that will last forever. 26 And may your name be honored forever so that everyone will say, 'The Lord of Heaven's Armies is God over Israel!' And may the house of your servant David continue before you forever.
27 "O Lord of Heaven's Armies, God of Israel, I have been bold enough to pray this prayer to you because you have revealed all this to your servant, saying, 'I will build a house for you—a dynasty of kings!' 28 For you are God, O Sovereign Lord. Your words are truth, and you have promised these good things to your servant. 29 And now, may it please you to bless the house of your servant, so that it may continue forever before you. For you have spoken, and when you grant a blessing to your servant, O Sovereign Lord, it is an eternal blessing!"

Thankfulness puts
God
in the centre

2. David does not take his position
for granted

3. David make sure God is always
on the throne

4. God is the one who gives, and
God is the one who can take away

2. Thankfulness moves us
from the middle

3. Thankfulness removes
our sense of entitlement

How do you respond when
God doesn't respond the
way you want him to?

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4. David doesn't pout, or whine, or
grumble — but thanks God.

5. How would you respond?
When God does not respond the way you
want him to, how do you react? When a
situation doesn't go the way you want,
how do you respond?

6. Would do you respond.

It's not a negotiation.

**David understands this, and in this
response, he never doubts that. His
response to God is first and foremost
— you're right. You are God. Who am i?**

**How do you deal with situations that go
against your desire.**

Thankfulness hears
God's truth
above our own

3. David's prayer of Gratitude to God shows his unselfish heart

5. His prayer focuses on God's promises. Even if he doesn't know what they will look like. There is an eternal understanding there for him.

6. All things are seen from God's eyes.

7. How quickly David's plans are replaced with God's eternal plans

David's response is to immediately respond with what God has promised and what God has said.

It focuses on God's truth, who he is, what his promises have been made, and responds to that.

Thankfulness is refocusing onto God's greater picture.

Thankfulness means I can focus on God's Kingdom, not my own.

Thankfulness gives
God the opportunity
to blow our minds.

David's desire was to thank God by building him a building. A home. but God, in response, says, you don't even know what a house is.

In other words, our picture of God's goodness is too small.

12. Have you wept
because of God's amazing grace?

13. Have you run out of
words because you were
overwhelmed

If we struggle with
thankfulness,
we are looking at a God
who is too small.

The heart of thankfulness
takes action.

The act of thankfulness
takes work.

The work of thankfulness
takes discipline.

The heart of thankfulness
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The act of thankfulness
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The work of thankfulness
takes discipline.

That's the thing with Kingdom Values, they
take focus, dedication, effort.

We have settled with a mindset that is
misguided. We need God's mindset to

"A thankful heart is one of the primary identifying characteristics of a believer. It stands in stark contrast to pride, selfishness, and worry.

And it helps fortify the believer's trust in the Lord and reliance of His provision, even in the toughest times. No matter how choppy the seas become, a believer's heart is buoyed by constant praise and gratefulness to the Lord."

--John MacArthur

"To be grateful is to recognize the Love of God in everything He has given us - and He has given us everything. Every breath we draw is a gift of His love, every moment of existence is a grace, for it brings with it immense graces from Him. Gratitude therefore takes nothing for granted, is never unresponsive, is constantly awakening to new wonder and to praise of the goodness of God. For the grateful person knows that God is good, not by hearsay but by experience. And that is what makes all the difference."

-Thomas Merton