

Blog



Gratitude

Are you grateful?

According to Doris Day, "Gratitude is riches. Complaint is poverty." Human nature has an instinctive leaning towards negativity. As we enter our seventh week of lockdown here in the UK, it is natural to feel frustrated with our current lot. However there is a powerful key which can unlock the door to a different view of life. Gratitude.

An old song from a bygone era taught us to, "Count your many blessings, name them one by one." Gratitude. The intentional practice of recalling and voicing all the many positives in life. The song goes on to say, "And it will surprise you what the Lord has done." Start naming all the things we are grateful for and let's see where it takes us.

The Old Testament Psalmist wrote the following words for his generation to sing:

"Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever." (Psalm 136:1)

The people who sang this were being reminded that whatever a day may bring, there are always plenty of things to be grateful for. Gratitude is the path to a healthier mind and a better life. Here are a few thoughts from this Psalm which may help us.

Gratitude is an attitude - Give *thanks* to the LORD.

Gratitude is an attitude. It begins in the mind. If gratitude doesn't fill our thinking it won't impact our lives. Remarkable blessings go unnoticed by a person fixated on their problems. I don't think I have ever felt grateful for the breath in my lungs until spending the past few months with Covid-19 patients. "When I started counting my blessings, my whole life turned around." (Willie Nelson) When we start being grateful, everything changes. Think grateful. Be grateful. Gratitude is an attitude.

Gratitude is an action - *Give* thanks to the LORD.

Gratitude is an action. It is not good enough to be grateful. Gratitude must be expressed. Through words and actions, gratitude has to be given. "Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it." (William Arthur Ward) When Jesus healed ten lepers, only one returned to express his gratitude. "Were not ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" (Luke 17:17-18) "Silent gratitude isn't very much use to anyone." (Gertrude Stein) I am truly grateful for my wife. But if I never said so or showed so it would be a miserable existence for us both. Gratitude needs to be given. Gratitude ought to be expressed. Gratitude is an action.

Gratitude is attributed - Give thanks *to the LORD*.

Gratitude is attributed. The Israelites were not just taught to give thanks. They were to give thanks to the LORD. To feel and express gratitude for something while ignoring the source of the blessing is an insult to that person. “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights.” (James 1:17) All true gratitude is Godward. We are not just grateful. We are grateful to God. “Every blessing you pour out I’ll turn back to praise.” (Matt Redman) Gratitude is given to God. Gratitude is attributed.

“Thank you,” is the best prayer that anyone could say.” (Alice Walker) In the face of life’s challenges, gratitude is the key to a brighter day. Gratitude is an attitude. Gratitude is an action. Gratitude is attributed. Be grateful. Give thanks to the LORD.