



Life Principles Notes™

A Thankful Heart

Summary:

The Bible has a great deal to say about the heart. The organ is not only crucial to our physical well-being, but it also represents the seat of our emotions, passions, moral choices, attitudes, and thoughts. In fact, the heart is central to every aspect of life. So we certainly want it to be healthy—we need to keep our hearts pure, loving, unselfish, and kind. One way the Bible encourages us to do so is through praise and thankfulness.

Psalm 100:4–5 tells us, “Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise, give

thanks to Him, bless His name. For the LORD is good; His lovingkindness is everlasting and His faithfulness to all generations.” Do you have a thankful heart? Are you a person who appreciates all that the Lord has done for you? Find out how your heart can overflow with gratefulness.

Key Passage: Psalm 100

Supporting Scripture: *Psalm 33:1; 1 Corinthians 15:55–57; 2 Corinthians 9:12; Ephesians 5:20; Philippians 1:1–4; 4:6; Colossians 2:6–7; 1 Thessalonians 5:18*

Scriptural Principles:

1 What motivates us to be grateful?

Although having a loving family, excellent health, and a good job may initially come to mind, there is something much more important that we must appreciate: *We serve the one true God.* You and I can be thankful that:

- a) *The Lord is sovereign.* Our heavenly Father is above all things, knows about every one of our circumstances, and is always able to help us no matter the situation.
- b) *God loves us unconditionally.* His affection for us never changes, and we cannot do anything to lose it. God’s merciful love is consistent and everlasting because that is His character.
- c) *The Father restores our relationship to Him through the death and resurrection of His Son.* Jesus paid our sin-debt in full so we would not have to pay the eternal penalty for our wrongdoing and so we could have an intimate relationship with the Father.
- d) *God forgives us.* He pardons us when we confess our sins and turn back to Him in repentance.
- e) *The Lord abides with us.* His wonderful presence, strength, wisdom, goodness, mercy, and love are with you and me no matter where we go or what we face.
- f) *The Father has sealed us with the Holy Spirit.* We have a guarantee of the redemption He has promised us. God has adopted us into His family and is preparing an eternal home for us in heaven. Absolutely nothing can take that away.
- g) *God always hears our prayers.* We have the privilege of talking to Him about the things that burden us, and Jesus is our advocate in all of our concerns.
- h) *The Father has given us a Helper.* God has empowered, enabled, and gifted us to serve Him through the Holy Spirit.
- i) *God has a purpose for our lives.* The Lord’s will for us is the best plan possible—one He will accomplish if we’ll obey Him. Only God can give our lives eternal significance and meaning.

2 In what areas of our lives should we have a thankful heart?

- a) *Worship*: Praise and gratitude should permeate every area of our life, and our songs are a good place to start. Psalm 100:2 tells us, “Come before Him with joyful singing.”
- b) *Prayer*: Philippians 4:6 instructs, “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.” When our intercession is filled with gratefulness, we will be less focused on our own problems and more on the wonderful sufficiency of the Lord.
- c) *Giving*: We must find opportunities to express our gratitude to God. One excellent way is to show His love to others. Second Corinthians 9:12 explains, “The ministry of this service is not only fully supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing through many thanksgivings to God.”
- d) *Friendships*: Are you always finding fault in your relationships, or are you grateful for the amazing people the Father has put in your life? In Philippians 1:3–4, Paul wrote, “I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always offering prayer with joy . . . for you all.” We should be thankful for our friends—for what they teach us about Christ and how He uses us in their lives for His glory.
- e) *Spiritual battles*: How can we give thanks in the midst of adversity? By remembering that God has a purpose for everything we experience. He will ultimately lead us to triumph if we obey Him. As 1 Corinthians 15:57 says, “Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” The Father uses our most trying circumstances to show us His power, increase our faith, and transform us into the image of His Son.
- f) *Daily lives*: Colossians 2:6–7 teaches, “As you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude.” Believers who remember that Christ is leading them and working in their lives will be less tempted to complain. When we finally understand the remarkable privilege of having an intimate relationship with Jesus, our hearts will be like an overflowing spring of gratitude.

3 How does thankfulness change your life?

The Father asks you to cultivate this attitude for your benefit. When thankfulness flows from you, it will impact your life in a positive way. What is the impact of a heart of gratitude?

- a) Godliness, because we are aware of His presence
- b) Motivation to look for His purpose in our circumstances
- c) Submission to the Lord’s will, even when we don’t understand
- d) A reminder of our dependence on God
- e) A stronger witness
- f) Attractiveness to others
- g) Joy and contentment instead of fear and anxiety
- h) Focus on the Lord in the midst of difficulty
- i) Transformation of our environment
- j) Supernatural energy to serve God

Conclusion:

A thankful heart begins with understanding what it cost the Jesus Christ to forgive your sins and have a relationship with you. When you accept His death on the cross as payment for your transgressions and receive Him as your personal Savior, you surrender your life to the Lord. The Holy Spirit then comes to seal you as a child of God—to enable you to become everything He created you to be. He fills the emptiness that nothing else in this world can.

Isn’t He worthy of your praise? Doesn’t your heart erupt with thanksgiving when you discover all that He can be and do in your life? It should. That is why 1 Thessalonians 5:18 says, “In everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” You have so much to be grateful for! So worship the Lord and give Him thanks in every circumstance. You are a child of God and “praise is becoming to the upright” (Psalm 33:1). 🙌

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