



GRATITUDE

The Art & Science of Gratitude

Giving Thanks: Body, Soul, & Spirit

- Scriptural Support – Including a surprise (for me, at least)
- Scientific Support
- Practical Exercises
- A Brief Epilogue

Giving Thanks: Scriptural Review

Giving Thanks in the Gospels

- Matthew & Mark
 - ◆ Feeding the 5000 +women & children
 - Matt 14:19; Mark 6:41
 - ◆ Feeding the 4000 +women & children
 - Matt 15:36; Mark 8:6
 - ◆ Offering the Bread & Cup
 - Matt 26:26-27; Mark 14:22-23

Giving Thanks: Scriptural Review

Giving Thanks in the Gospels (cont'd)

- Luke
 - Anna gives thanks for baby Jesus
 - Luke 2:38
 - Feeding the 5000 + women & children
 - Luke 9:16
 - 1 of 10 lepers give thanks
 - Luke 17:16
 - Offering the Bread & Cup
 - Luke 22:17, 19
 - The Walk to Emmaus
 - Luke 24:30 - Gave thanks, broke bread, eyes opened, Jesus disappeared, hearts burning

Giving Thanks: Scriptural Review

Giving Thanks in the Gospels (cont'd)

- John
 - Feeding the 5000 +women & children...
 - John 6:11
 - ...and the Day after
 - John 6:23
 - Then some boats from Tiberias landed near the place where the people had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks.
- Lazarus
 - John 11:41
 - 41 So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. 42 I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.”

Giving Thanks: Scriptural Review

Giving Thanks in Paul's Letters

- Ephesians 5:4
 - ♦ Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving.
- Philippians 4:6
 - ♦ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Giving Thanks: Scriptural Review

Giving Thanks in Paul's Letters (cont'd)

- Colossians 3:17
 - ♦ And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18
 - ♦ 16 Rejoice always, 17 pray continually, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Giving Thanks: Scriptural Review

Giving Thanks in Revelation

- Revelation 4:9
Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever,
- Revelation 7:11
11 All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying:
“Amen! Praise and glory
and wisdom and thanks and honor
and power and strength
be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!”
- Revelation 11:17
16 And the twenty-four elders, who were seated on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, 17 saying:
“We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was,
because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign.

The Science of Gratitude & Thanks

Recent Research on Gratitude/Thankfulness

- Consistent practice of gratitude made people (vs. control group):
 - ♦ More happy, energetic, and hopeful
 - ♦ More helpful, spiritual, religious, forgiving
 - ♦ Less materialistic
 - ♦ Less likely to be depressed, anxious, lonely, envious, or neurotic
 - ♦ Reduced physical symptoms (headaches, nausea, even acne!)

The Science of Gratitude & Thanks

How Gratitude Causes These Changes

- More likely to savor life experiences
 - ♦ A grateful meal vs. nit-picked one...
- Bolsters self-worth & self esteem
 - ♦ Replace “woe is me” what is good/can I learn
- Helps us cope with stress & trauma
 - ♦ Gratitude can help replace negative emotions
- Promotes moral behavior (kindness)
 - ♦ Grateful people are more likely to help others

The Science of Gratitude & Thanks

How Gratitude Causes These Changes(2)

- Helps build social bonds
 - ♦ When you value someone – leads to upward spiral
- Subdues comparisons to others
 - ♦ Being thankful for your gifts – not desiring another's
- Diminishes and displaces negative emotions
 - ♦ Anger, greed, jealousy, etc. are deterred
- Thwarts hedonic adaptation
 - ♦ In English – helps us stay happier longer

Exercise #1

Express Gratitude Directly to Another

- Who has the Holy Spirit put immediately on your heart or in your mind?
- Contact them directly
 - ♦ Phone, email, hand-written letter, face-to-face
 - ♦ Be as detailed as possible
 - ♦ Do it today. And you can re-write or upgrade it.
 - ♦ Deliver randomly or on birthday, etc.

Exercise #2

Today & on Sunday for 6 Weeks:

“There are many things in our lives, both large and small, that we might be grateful about.” Think back over the events of the past week and write down on the lines below up to 5 things that happened for which you are grateful or thankful:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Epilogue

An Exercise for Divisive Times