

# The Discipline of Gratitude

## Study Questions

[Romans 1:18-22](#)

As a culture, we have drastically undersold gratitude. It is not just important; gratitude is urgent. In Scripture, we find that a life connected to God is actually hallmarked by a life of gratitude. Giving thanks reveals the posture of our hearts, draws us closer to God, fights against temptation, and grows in us contentment and generosity. We don't have to live like people who are desperately scraping for the next thing. Instead, we know that God is good, kind, and has provided everything we will ever need.

## Application

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1. How have you viewed the discipline of gratitude throughout your life? Has being thankful been an integral part of your faith? How has the culture influenced you in your ability to give thanks regularly?
2. Entitlement strangles gratitude. How have you lived from a place of entitlement? In your own life, how has being entitled suppressed the amount of gratitude you produce?
3. Gratitude is the antidote to discontentment and the key to generosity. In what ways are you currently discontented? How could being thankful help you be content with where God has placed you for this season? In what ways can you be more generous because you are grateful?
4. Read Ephesians 5:3-4. When our hearts are fully satisfied in God, we are armed to fight the indulgence of sin. Have you ever thought about gratitude being a weapon to fight sin? How could gratitude enable you to resist temptation in your life? What are some practical ways the discipline of giving thanks could be a weapon in your battle against sin?
5. **CHALLENGE:** Chris tells us that a recent study about gratitude shows that it actually changes the molecular structure of our brains, and writing in a gratitude journal can decrease blood pressure, aches, and pains and lengthen and deepen sleep. Challenge: Read Romans 8 and write down every blessing that we have in Christ.

## Key Points

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- Gratitude is:
  - a discipline we live into, not an emotion we live out of;
  - the antidote to discontentment and the key to generosity;
  - a key weapon to fight temptation;
  - a result of being filled with the Spirit;
  - being thankful for both the gifts and the giver (for the benefits and the benefactor).
- If we constantly live out of what we feel like is lack, we will forever be discontented.
- God does not just provide for us through nature but reveals himself to us through nature.
- Gratitude is not a personality type or a luxury of faith; it is an integral component of faith.
- Chronic ingratitude is a symptom of spiritual poverty.
- Entitlement strangles gratitude.
- The hallmark of a life connected to God is one that is filled with gratitude.
- The person who lives in the reality that every good thing we have is from our Father is a person with a grateful and content heart, near to God.
- In Psalm 136:1-3, the Psalmist uses three names for God: (1) *Jehovah*, the self-existing one who needs nothing or no one else to exist. (2) *Elohim*, the one true God, standing while everything else will fade and fail. (3) *Adonai*, the governing being of the universe; he holds everything together.
- The best gift we can thank God for is that he gave us himself.

## Scripture References

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[Ephesians 5:3-4](#)

[Ephesians 5:18-20](#)

[Psalm 136](#)