

Slide #1
Habit of Gratitude
Scripture: Psalm 105: 1 - 5



Slide #2 ...

Slide #3



"I'm trying to develop an 'attitude of gratitude' but the best I can muster is a 'sentiment of resentment'."

There was a medical study of chronic complainers done a few years ago. They are never "alright" or "blessed" as Earl Eamer would always say when asked "how are you" he would simply say "blessed" When you go with complainers to a restaurant, the waiters either don't come by often enough, or else they won't leave you alone long enough to eat your food, too much to choose from, not enough to choose from. This type of person could come into a lot of money, and then complain about the taxes that they would have to pay. The chronic complainer can find fault with anything.

"A customer in a cafeteria complained that everything there was terrible, including the self service"

"The poor complain about the money that can't get, and the rich complain about the money they can't keep"

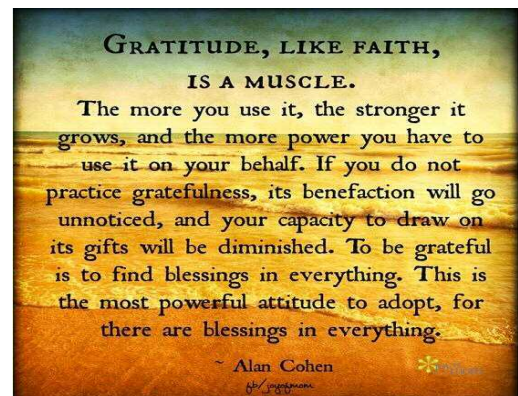
Anyway, the study was done to compare how constant complaining affects a person's health. According to the researchers, chronic complainers live longer than those with sweet, agreeable dispositions. The study claims that their cantankerous spirit gives them a purpose for living (can you believe it?) They begin each day with a challenge to see how many things they can find to grumble about. They derive pleasure from making others miserable (or at least it seems like that's what they're doing). And apparently, they live longer. **Personally, I suspect that they don't actually live longer...it just seems that way to everyone who has to put up with them!!**

Whether you realize it or not, both gratitude and grumbling are learned or developed habits. You simply develop a habit of focussing in on the good things around you or the things you don't like, the things that can make you happy, or the things that add hardship to our life.

It becomes a habit to be grateful, or to grumble.

Slide #4 READ SLIDE...gratitude is like a muscle...

Unfortunately, it seems to me that it is a lot easier to fall into the habit of complaining. That is why we need the special encouragement God gives us in His Word to be grateful.



Slide #5 praising God

Every now and then,
we need someone to stand up and say with the Psalmist,



“O give thanks to the LORD!”

We need to be reminded that God is good. We need to be prodded to remember how He has blessed us.

There are three simple truths that I want us to learn from this psalm about being grateful.

I. Gratitude Must Be Directed - “Unto the Lord”

A. Gratitude must be expressed TO someone.

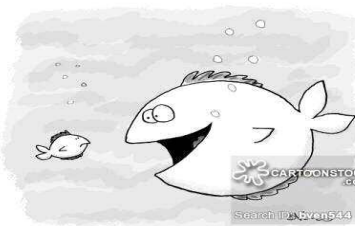
It’s not enough to just feel thankful. We must express our thanks to someone, being grateful for what they have done....

Slide # 6 ...



“A token of my appreciation for all the late hours you’ve been putting in. It’s a nightlight.”

SLIDE #7...and be sincere



“And now, as a token of my appreciation for the vital role your species plays in the food chain, I’m going to eat you!”

Express your thanks. We don’t just feel thankful.

We have to tell someone what he or she has done that has benefited and blessed us.

*A man gave a woman his seat on the bus;
she fainted. When she was revived, she
thanked him...then he fainted.*

There is a sense in which no gift is ours till we have thanked the giver.

B. There are many who deserve our thanks.

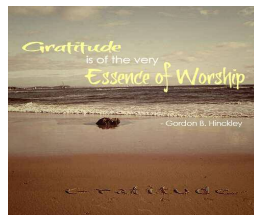
1. Only God deserves our thanks for many things with which we are blessed.

Slide #8 READ SLIDE

Gratitude is an offering precious in the sight of God, and it is one that the poorest of us can make and be not poorer but richer for having made it. A.W. Tozer
www.cherylcope.com

- a. . You can thank God for the air you breathe, the rain that waters the soil, and the abundant variety of foods that grace our table.
- b. You have God to thank for a healthy body, a sound mind, eyes that see, and ears that hear.
- c. You can thank Almighty God for an inspired, preserved Word of Truth upon which we can build our lives.

SLIDE #9
**“Gratitude...
the very essence of worship**



- d. And you have no one to thank but God for the precious gift of salvation. **This is the reason we have Communion...to be reminded to be thankful for the sacrifice Jesus gave for you and me.**

“For God so loved the world (You and Me), that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him will not perish but have eternal life” -John 3:16

Slide #10
Him!



2. Yet, others deserve our thanks for the many good things they contribute to our lives.

Slide # 11
Praise Him!!!



- a. When was the last time you thanked a friend for their friendship?
- b. How long has it been since you thanked your mate for their commitment to your marriage?
- c. How about thanking that person who has stuck with you no matter what, like a sister, cousin, aunt, grandparent?
- d. Have you ever thanked your employer for giving you a job that puts food on your table, or helps pay some of the bills, and a roof over your head?

Quote:

“Be thankful if your job is a little harder than you like. A razor can’t be sharpened on a piece of velvet”

SLIDE #12

**PUT SOME GRATITUDE
IN YOUR GRATITUDE**



- e. How about thanking your parents for all the sacrifices they have made to help make you successful, or the times they spent late in the night calming your fears, soothing your fevered forehead, praying for you?
- f. What about thanking Him for your church, the pastor, Sunday School teachers, the youth leader, childcare providers, the “pastor’s wife” (smile)

II. Gratitude...
Must Be Declared.

SLIDE # 13



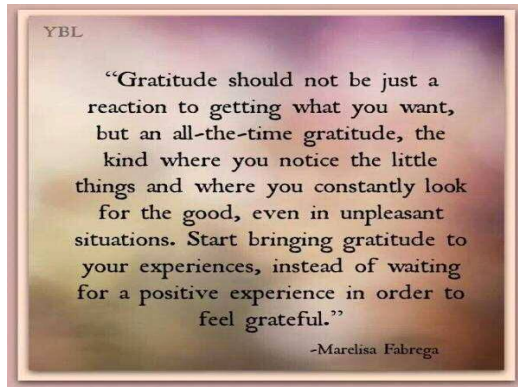
A. Gratitude must be expressed.

The Psalmist tells us to “give” thanks, to “make known” what God has done. We are to “talk” of all His wondrous works. If you are grateful, tell it, sing it, shout it, but don’t bottle it up inside of you. Don’t take it for granted that people will know you are grateful, or what you are thankful for.

B. Both gratitude and ingratitude are contagious.

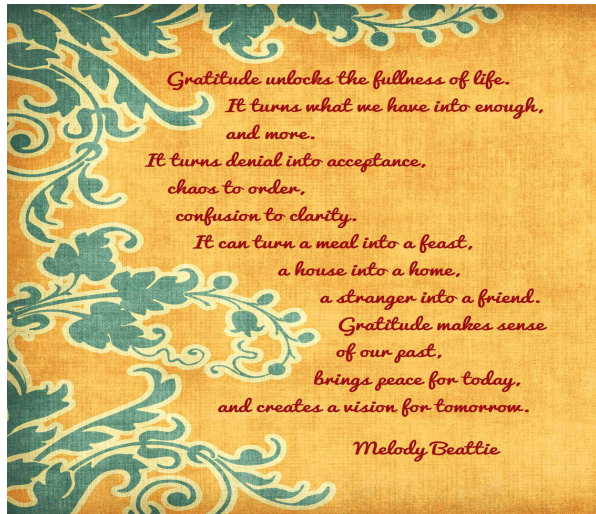
Don’t you find it somewhat depressing that people almost always know of our complaints, but seldom know how we have been blessed? We are so quick to share our latest trials, no matter how trivial, but it seems it takes a “big blessing” before we think to share something good.

**SLIDE # 14
READ SLIDE**



Can you imagine how different life would be if we spend as much as time in sharing our blessings as we do in airing our complaints?

**SLIDE # 15
READ SLIDE**



When our children were really young, our family had the potential to be revolutionary

**SLIDE # 16
child praying**



Melissa at a young age wanted to participate when we prayed before our meals... we let her. I can tell you it was a humbling, yet refreshing experience to hear her. **She thanked God for EVERYTHING!...**for the spoon, fork ,plate, chair, her socks, her bed, and so on and so on.

Miriam would be thankful for letting her go walking to the mall with me, for allowing her to visit her friends, for being able to get dirty in the sandbox or whatever seemed special to her that day.

Matthew would thank God for the worms he could pick to go fishing, and thank God that the worms couldn't feel any pain. (Share worm crying drawing story)

Nothing big or exciting, just a lot of little things that most of as adults could take would take for granted. If only we could see through the eyes of a child.

SLIDE # 17
CHILD & FLOWER



***“The way to develop the best that is in a person.
is by appreciation and encouragement “
- Charles Schwab***

I think we could all learn from our children. I hope that these lessons are not soon forgotten. **God tells us to be like little children, not childish, but have their hearts...simple faith/gratitude**

III. Gratitude Must Be Deliberate

A. It is not enough to be grateful TO SOMEONE, but we must be grateful FOR SOMETHING.

The psalmist mentions God's "deeds", "His "Wondrous works", and His "marvellous works." Beginning in verse 6, he begins to list specific things God has done in the life of the nation. He thanked God for His covenant, His servants, His salvation, and His sustenance.

He didn't say, as we are prone to do,

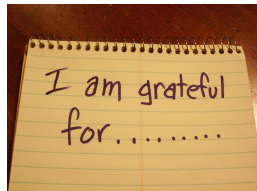
“God I thank you for all your many gifts. Amen”

He knew what God had done, and he rehearsed them in this psalm of thanksgiving. I am concerned/afraid that too often we don't spend enough time reflecting upon the specific ways in which God has blessed us. But to be truly thankful, we must be ...

“grateful FOR SOMETHING to SOMEONE!”

B. we must be careful to not forget OUR BLESSINGS from God

The psalmist calls his people to “remember” the works of God (verse 5) He knew how prone we are to forget. He knew how easy it is for us to focus on our trials, to be weighed down with care, to overlook the many simple daily blessings we enjoy in life.



SLIDE #18

I would like to encourage you to perform a simple exercise. Some time soon (today would be best). Get a piece of paper and divide into three columns

Give each of the columns one of the following headings: God, People, Things. Take time to “remember”. When your list is completed, take it before God in prayer and deliberately, “one by one” thank Him for the things on your list. Then, you might want to thank the people on that list for how they have been a blessing. Write them a note, call them on the phone, or give them a “hug” the next time you see them.

Slide #19



CONCLUSION:

The park bench was deserted as I sat down to read
Beneath the long, straggly branches of an old willow tree.
Disillusioned by life with good reason to frown,
For the world was intent on dragging me down.
And if that weren't enough to ruin my day,
A young boy out of breath approached me, all tired from play.
He stood right before me with his head tilted down
And said with great excitement, "Look what I found!"

Slide #20 dying rose



In his hand was a flower, and what a pitiful sight,
With its petals all worn---not enough rain, or too little light.
Wanting him to take his dead flower and go off to play,
I faked a small smile and then shifted away.

But instead of retreating he sat next to my side
And placed the flower to his nose and declared with overacted surprise,
*"It sure smells pretty and it's beautiful, too.
That's why I picked it; here, it's for you."*

The weed before me was dying or dead.
Not vibrant of colours, orange, yellow or red.
But I knew I must take it, or he might never leave.
So I reached for the flower, and replied, *"Just what I need."*

But instead of him placing the flower in my hand,
He held it mid-air without reason or plan.
It was then that I noticed for the very first time
That weed-toting boy could not see: he was blind.

I heard my voice quiver, tears shone like the sun
As I thanked him for picking the very best one.
"You're welcome," he smiled, and then ran off to play,
Unaware of the impact he'd had on my day.

**Slide #21
folded hands**



I sat there and wondered how he managed to see
A self-pitying man beneath an old willow tree.
How did he know of my self-indulged plight?
Perhaps from his heart, he'd been blessed with true sight.

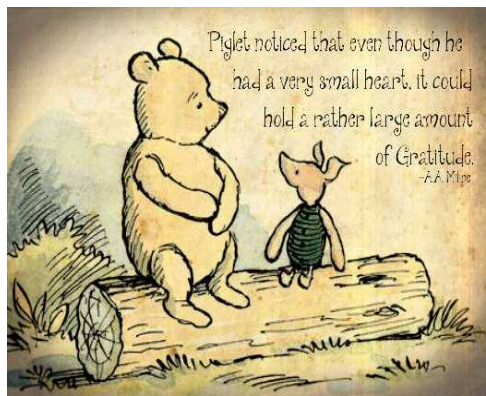
Slide #22
dandelion bouquet



Through the eyes of a blind child, at last I could see
The problem was not with the world; the problem was me.
And for all of those times I myself had been blind,
I vowed to see the beauty in life, and appreciate every second that's mine.

And then I held that wilted flower up to my nose
And breathed in the fragrance of a beautiful rose
And smiled as I watched that young boy,
another weed in his hand . . .
About to change the life of an unsuspecting old man.

SLIDE #23 (Piglet)
How big is your gratitude
in your little heart?



SLIDE #24
GRATEFUL DECLARATION...
READ TOGETHER.

(Back of bulletin)

After Service Song :
"Blessed Be Your Name"

I DECLARE I am grateful for who God is in my life and for what He's done. I will not take for granted the people, the opportunities, and the favor He has blessed me with. I will look at what is right and not what is wrong. I will thank Him for what I have and not complain about what I don't have. I will see each day as a gift from God. My heart will overflow with praise and gratitude for all of His goodness. This is my declaration.