

# THANKSGIVING: OUR SUPERPOWER

Personal thanksgiving *in* all things and *for* all things is a powerful weapon against our enemy.

## KEY POINTS

- ❖ William Law (17th/18th century English cleric), once asked, “Would you know who is the greatest saint in the world?” In answer to his own question, he said: It is not he who prays most or fasts most; it is not he who gives most alms or is most eminent for temperance, chastity, or justice; but it is he who is always thankful to God, who wills everything that God wills, who receives everything as an instance of God’s goodness and has a heart always ready to praise God for it.
- ❖ Seeing the hand of God in our lives and responding to His will with thankfulness instead of resistance is an invaluable key to our spiritual growth and development.
- ❖ “Every good and perfect gift comes from God” (James 1:17). When we begin to recognize and embrace this truth, it helps facilitate a greater relationship with Him.
- ❖ As is the case with most virtues, we do not magically become thankful. There are disciplines and habits we need to cultivate, or develop, that will produce a harvest of gratefulness in our lives.:
  - **Giving thanks requires practice.** We need to regularly give thanks for the good things in our lives. We need thankfulness (not criticism) to be our default position. When you see something good in your life, point it out. Thank God for it. We all complain occasionally, but practice responding to your own complaining by finding things to be thankful for. This helps to rewire your brain to be as proficient at recognizing the good in your life as you are at identifying the bad.
  - **Give thanks in all circumstances.** Paul tells the Thessalonians to give thanks in all circumstances because it’s God’s will (1 Thessalonians 5:18). Why? We lack perspective about our lives. We don’t have the clarity to look at any situation and say with any certainty why it’s happening. What we do know is that God is in the middle of it, and He is working to bring good out of it. No matter what we are going through, we can give thanks that God is there. He is redeeming the situation and sustaining us through it. Left to our own devices, we focus on what’s going on around us. But when we’re able to lift our eyes and see God’s handiwork in the middle of it all, we rise above our experience. As A.W. Tozer says, “Perhaps it takes a purer faith to praise God for unrealized blessings than for those we once enjoyed or those we enjoy now.”

## KEY SCRIPTURES:

1 Chronicles 16:34; 1 Thessalonians 5:18; Ephesians 5:20

- **Give thanks when things are going well.** This advice may seem silly, but it’s important. Our default position is to expect that things will and should go well for us. When life is running smoothly, it’s easy for us to forget that it is a gift from God. We don’t notice how He protects and guides us along the way to green pastures and still waters.
- **Recognize the good that has come from bad experiences.** It’s good to spend some time reflecting on the difficulties you’ve already walked through. With enough distance, you can begin to recognize the good that came out of those experiences. Maybe it gave birth to a new blessing or it built your stamina and endurance. Either way, learning to see past trials through eternity’s perspective enables us to be more thankful during times of struggle.
- **Understand the power of giving thanks.** Many people walk through all sorts of horrendous experiences. It always seems to be the case that those who are the most thankful and have learned to recognize God’s hand have the most fortitude and grit.
- ❖ Thanksgiving is a superpower! It enables us to see past our experiences and embrace the way that God is moving. Not only are thankful people able to draw strength from gratitude, but they’re also able to empower others with their perspective as well.

## DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. Share some undesirable experiences that are common to us as human beings and also share situations some have faced that are beyond the ordinary.
2. What is your default response when less-than-fortunate circumstances occur in your life? Are you thankful at the outset or does it take some time to reach that mindset? Or do you even reach it at all?
3. Discuss things we can do to achieve a level thankfulness when facing negative life situations.
4. Whether you’re on mountain heights or in valley lows, take some time to give God the glory.

## Prayer Time




“Lord I thank You, thank You, thank You  
Thank You, thank You, thank You  
Thank You all the days of my life.”

# WEEK OF SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2019

## NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week’s message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

✓ (Reminds me/Confirms)  (New idea)  (Think about)

 (Do this)  (Speaks to my heart)  (Must share)

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Start-up: What are the top three things you are thankful for?

## PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS

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*Go deeper with your Life Group family.*  
 CONNECT-REFLECT-DISSECT THE WORD  
 Your Life Group ~ Your Lifeline