

Depths of Gratitude and Being Thankful

by Roy Daniel

This sermon emphasizes the importance of true gratitude from a biblical perspective. It delves into the concept of being thankful not just for material blessings or compared to others, but as a response to the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ. The message challenges listeners to rekindle a heart of gratitude rooted in the cross and to remember the depth of God's grace in their lives.

Scripture: 2 Timothy 3:1, Luke 7:47, 1 Corinthians 11:25, Ecclesiastes 3:30, James 1:17

Topics: "True Gratitude", "The Gift of Salvation"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of true gratitude from a biblical perspective. It delves into the concept of being thankful not just for material blessings or compared to others, but as a response to the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ. The message challenges listeners to rekindle a heart of gratitude rooted in the cross and to remember the depth of God's grace in their lives.

Transcript

I'd like us to open up our Bibles to 2 Timothy 3 verse 1 and 2. 2 Timothy 3 verse 1 and 2. Another thing that's very interesting is I'm not going to preach a sermon I preached before you, don't worry about that, but there was a guy in South Africa, he died of cancer, his name was Bill Mamac. I don't know if you've ever heard of him, he was a godly, godly man. He woke up early in the morning to pray every morning for hours at about 3 o'clock and he was an amazingly humble man.

Started this little church many years back and he came to a meeting years back when my dad was preaching and my dad preached a sermon on calling and he got very cross because he felt God was leading him to full-time ministry. I don't know if you've ever felt that in your life. But what is very interesting is that after getting extremely angry that someone could preach a sermon like that, he was not going to come to the next message but then he thought to himself, well, Brother Keith has preached on calling, he's not going to preach on calling again so I might as well go to the second message because he's already preached on that topic.

So he came and he sat down and my dad said, and I know this guy very well, it really did happen, my dad said for some strange reason he felt to preach exactly the same sermon a second time. And so he stood up and preached to the same people exactly the same sermon from start to finish and there was about four people who got called to full-time service. Nobody responded in the first message and in the second message that man was called and he became one of the most wonderfully used preachers in a certain

part of South Africa.

And the stories were endless to prove that the God that we serve is real behind this word, even if I have a comb in my Bible. He uses weak vessels. So we've opened up our Bibles to 2 Timothy 3 verse 1 and we're going to look today at a little topic, a little Bible topic and we look in depth at it called gratitude and being thankful, something that many people even sitting in church do not understand, what it means from God's perspective to be thankful.

So with that, let's go over to prayer and then we'll read those verses. Dear Father, thank you so much from the bottom of my heart that we can be here together and we can read out of the word of God. Thank you for every single person sitting here and that you love every single one of them and that that love does not make them Christians in and of itself, but it's precious to know that someone cares who's great.

Thank you for every person sitting here who is born again and thank you that you want them to know you gave 66 books for us to know your will and who you are concerning every single part of our lives. I pray this in Jesus Christ's name, amen. Now we're going to read 2 Timothy 3 verse 1 and 2, talking about the end times, but the topic today is the depths of gratitude or being thankful.

When I talk about being thankful, if I was just off the hat, it would be quite fun, unless I was Amish, to go up to someone like Micah and give him a big smack in the face. I don't know if you've ever tried that. But when we talk about thankfulness, there's many people, when they talk about thankfulness, what they mean is they say thank you, but then with their life, they are not thankful, they're not showing gratitude.

If I was to go up to Micah and say thank you Micah for allowing me in your father's house, thank you for the food that you've given me, thank you for driving me out here, thank you for the fact that you're my friend, that I can email you at times with a prayer request once a year, and I do sometimes answer your emails. If I say thank you for all those things and I smack him in the face, with my words I'm showing gratitude, but with my life I'm not showing gratitude. There's many people, and that's not what we're talking about today when we talk about thankfulness.

We're talking about a life that shows gratitude, not just words that show gratitude, just off the bat. So let us read there in 2 Timothy 3 verse 1 and 2 concerning the end times. We talk a lot about the end times today.

We know that we are obviously living in the end times, but 2 Timothy 3 verse 1 and 2 says, this know also, that in the last days, perilous times, that's very dangerous times spiritually, not just around us that we can die and things like that, shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemous, disobedient to parents, and lastly, and then it says also, sorry, unthankful and unholy. The Bible says in the end times a long string of things, there's even more, that we will see around us more than ever before.

It's not that these things have never been before, but in the end times it will be everywhere in a very dangerous way that can affect you as Christians and unsaved people. And one of the things that will be in the end times as never before across the world is that people will be unthankful. They will not have gratitude for that which they should have gratitude for.

In Romans chapter 1, it talks of the progression of sin of a nation until God brings His judgment on that nation. And one of the things we read in verse 21 is because of that, when they knew not God, they glorified Him not as God being unthankful. Neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations

and their foolish heart, which was dark.

And we find in Luke chapter 17 that thankfulness, or thanking God, glorifies God. We'll get to that a little later. But yeah, they did not glorify God, neither were they thankful.

And when we look at this topic today, and I'd like to go a bit deeper, like I said, than just the average understanding of thankfulness and gratitude that most people have, but look at the Bible and what it says. If we had 1 to 6, 6 is the Antichrist, 666, and you had the lowest form of thankfulness up to the highest form of thankfulness outside of what God intends us to understand concerning thankfulness, then the lowest form of thankfulness out there across the whole world is the thankfulness that we find in Luke chapter 18 verse 11 where we read of a Pharisee and a publican, and we're not going to read the whole portion, but just verse 11, the Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, not with God, God I thank Thee that I am not as other men are. And then he listed them, extortionists, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

This is the lowest form of thankfulness that there can be out there when you are thankful in a proud way compared to other people's morality. Self-righteous thankfulness. Thank you God that I'm so special.

I can imagine Micah one day, if he doesn't lose all his hair, going to the mirror, looking at himself and saying, oh thank you that I'm not as other men are with my beautiful hair and my beautiful nose and my beautiful teeth. You can do this in so many different ways of morality, comparing yourself to others and saying, look, not just less fortunate people, but I am special because of who I am and being proud of it. This is the lowest form of thankfulness.

But going from this lowest form of thankfulness which we find in the Bible up to the highest form of thankfulness that you can have outside of Christianity. And the reason I say that is because this type of thankfulness that I'm going to tell you now, which all of you know about, you don't have to be a Christian to be thankful in this way. It's not a wrong type of thankfulness, it's a good type of thankfulness, but you do not have to be a Christian to have this type of thankfulness.

The highest form of thankfulness that we have outside of Christianity, in Christianity too, but you don't have to be a Christian to have it, and there is a growing, far deeper understanding of thankfulness in the Bible, we'll get to soon, is that of which we are thankful compared to those that are less fortunate. Not just thankful because I'm not morally as bad as that guy in my own eyes. But I'm thankful, you all know the saying, I was, I didn't like the fact that I didn't have shoes on until I saw someone with, no, feet.

And this is the thankfulness your year many preachers preach about. They'll stand up and they'll say we should be very thankful because there's a guy in India and he's dying and you're not dying and he doesn't have food and you have food and so on. And it is the thankfulness your year of the most.

But the world preaches this thankfulness too. We should be thankful compared to those that are less fortunate than us. It's not something you need the bible to have.

It's not something you need to be a Christian to practice in truth. And I'd just like to look at this for a while before we dig a little deeper. And I'd just like to look at a few examples where you could say in Christianity we should be thankful compared to other people.

For instance, for having a Christian family. I don't know how many of you realize what a privilege it is just to have a father and mother. They might get irritated at times but they even try, or even friends, even if you

don't have a father and mother that are saved, that you have a church family that try to reach out to you in any sort of love.

I don't know, I've been, some of you might have been to India. I remember going to India and going up in the mountains there and even in England sometimes in about 20 times that I went there. You meet people in the street and the only thing they know about Jesus Christ is that he's a swear word.

Up in the mountains in some places in India you'll find people who have never heard the name of Jesus Christ as you will in South America and some other places. And then you realize, I grew up, I went to a church. I went to Christian camps.

I had people that at times I could go out with and witness with them and you realize what a precious, wonderful thing it was that your parents gave you those bankings from a Christian perspective, in love. It was so wonderful to have a Christian family. In South Africa about 30 years back there was a 38 year old woman and this 38 year old woman was, her husband left her, she turned to heroin and drugs and a social worker came and I don't like social workers but in this case a social worker took away her 9 year old child.

And this 9 year old child, though taken away from her, was allowed to see her. She could come in and see the child and they left her alone with this child for a little while and she brought in a syringe and this syringe had in it ant poison and heroin and she put it under the cushion of this 9 year old child and said to that child who was broken hearted to lose its mother, I'm going to go home and I'm going to take a syringe and I'm going to stab myself and I'm going to die and I'm going to go to heaven. And if you want to be with mommy in heaven then take that syringe and after I'm gone stab yourself and you will be with mommy in heaven.

And that little 9 year old child believed its mother, so long to be with its mother, that after its mother left it took that syringe, stabbed itself with that syringe and it died a horrible death. Mother in hospital survived so we know the story. I didn't have a mother like that.

I had a mother who was my tooth mouse. I had a mother that read me the bible. How precious compared to those less fortunate that we have anything with a church or family that is like that.

In South Africa I sometimes go to preach or minister at special homes and the one place I went to a lot apart from the other places, the one place I really focus on in Utrecht South Africa was a place where they had the worst children's child criminals of the whole of South Africa. And these little kids in this school were terrifying. But some of these children who were the worst child criminals in South Africa from the age of 2 months old were sold as prostitutes and that's how they landed up in the school.

From 2 months old they would be paid, money would be paid for adult women to french kiss them at 2 months old before they got older and did worse stuff. Compared to people like that we say thank you God for a Christian family or anything like it or anything better than that. There are multiple places in South Africa, not just one where I've gone to orphanages and I find a little child and the child's body is rubber.

Literally you can at 5 years old hold that child's hands up here, feet up here and it will hang like this. It has no almost muscles to move or strengthen itself, be able to stand up upright. It can say only about 5 words.

And I've asked the people of that place what is wrong with this child? Does it have a genetic disorder or is there some disease that did this? And they will tell me that there is nothing wrong with this child. The only thing that is wrong with this child was nothing genetic, no disease that hit it, but that the parents were so

emotionally abusive that it's body started to eat itself. And compared to people like this I say a little less fortunate than us, thank you God for a Christian family.

One thing we can be thankful for is just to be alive. And again we can compare ourselves to other people less fortunate. Some people think well if there's a purpose in life for you to be alive, then you'll be alive.

In South Africa there was a preacher, his name was Benny. He was in our mission. And Benny was an amazing preacher.

He was married to a young woman and they called him an Israelite in whom is no guile. He would go out and preach and God would use him mightily unto the salvation of souls. And he was going around preaching and God was using him as a young man with a lovely wife.

And someone was let out of jail. And when this person was let out of jail, after about 20 years in jail, the people who let him out of jail said to him, we hope never to see you again. And he said well you won't see me alive.

And what that person decided at that moment is I'm going to drive and I'm going to find someone to kill. And I'm going to drive at high speed and kill that person that I find. And he drove literally about 240 miles away from that prison in a country of over 60 million people nowadays.

And out of the 45 million people back in those days or whatever it was, he found Benny. And at high speed he smashed into him and killed him. He had a wonderful ministry.

Souls were getting saved. He had a family. And the question is, if we come to the point where we think well I have the right to live because I have a family, because I have children, because I have a ministry, because God can use me, then why was he not alive? And therefore we can say compared to him, compared to him that is less fortunate than us, we should be grateful that we are alive.

I knew a person, a friend of mine, many of my friends die. In fact when I was preaching at a young people's camp, a young person came up to me and said, I don't want to be your friend. I said, why? He said, because all your friends are dead.

I just happen to have a lot that I can preach about that died. My one friend there, I remember he was an amazing man, but he couldn't have children. And eventually after many years of praying for God to give him a child, he got a little child.

And he was amazed that God, you know, the wife's stomach would get big and he was amazed he was going to have a little child for the first time ever. And the child was born and it had Down syndrome. And when this child was born, I remember him coming up to me and he was crying, he was weeping.

And he said, I prayed and waited so long for God to give me a baby and then he gave me this. He was angry at this little child. But then something wonderful happened.

He prayed. And when he prayed and sought God, God gave him love for that little child. And I remember seeing him at Christian camps and so on.

And that little child was his pride and joy in the year after that. He literally loved that little baby. And his wife got pregnant again with a normal child.

And before that baby was born, he was in an accident and he went into a coma and he died 9th of April, 2060, two years back. I just asked myself the question, why would God give him a child after all those years? He has hatred for the child. God gives him love.

And after God giving him love for that little child that is his pride and joy, God kills him. And I have a little thought in my heart. Just because I've got a family and I've got children, does that mean I automatically have a right to live? Compared to him, I should be grateful that I'm alive compared to those who are less fortunate than me.

But remember I said there's the lowest form of thankfulness in the Bible and there's the highest form of thankfulness that man can attain. But you don't have to be a Christian to have this form of thankfulness. Many people talk of thankfulness like this and they've never been saved.

And so I'd like to bring, the first type of thankfulness is sinful. The second type of thankfulness is just the highest form of man's thankfulness outside of God. And so I'd like to bring three weaknesses, three weaknesses in the highest form of man's thankfulness.

Number one, if we are only supposed to be thankful compared to those less fortunate than ourselves, then somewhere out there in the world, I don't know where it is, is the person who is least fortunate. Maybe he's in Cardboard City in India where they grow up and literally are born in the mud. I don't know where he is, but there's somebody out there in the world, it has to be, that is the least fortunate person on earth.

And there's nobody less than him that is less fortunate that he can compare himself to and so he doesn't have to be thankful. Number two, if we are only to be thankful compared to those that are less fortunate than ourselves, this type of thankfulness is by degrees. So if I am more fortunate compared to someone less fortunate and someone is a little less fortunate than me, then I should be more grateful than the person who is a little less fortunate compared to those less fortunate than him.

So you'll have different people who should be less and more thankful in life. And number three, if we have this type of thankfulness, the more we achieve in a certain instance or occurrence or part of life, and the less obvious it is that God intervened, the less thankful we will be in that particular area of life. And this I see Christians everywhere, in conservative churches, liberal churches, you name it, they have this thing.

And I'd like to give you an example. If a little child, your little child that you love, got a disease and started to die, and the doctors give it absolutely no hope of living, and you go down on your knees and you cry, and maybe it dies, maybe it doesn't, but at that moment, as you're crying out to God, God intervenes and that little child is healed, and as obvious it was God, then the inclination will be for a little bit of thankfulness to be there towards God, because it was obvious God did something for you from the outside. But when it's less likely that you'll be thankful, and God explains this in scripture, we'll come to this very soon, I'm not just taking my time of my own thoughts, it's in the Bible, I will show you right through scripture, is when for instance, you don't have a baby that's dying and you call out to God and a miracle happens, but you put some effort into it.

For instance, you buy a field, and after buying this field in Africa or India or some other place, you find that there's lots of stones in the ground, and so you want to plant some crops, and oh dear, what do you have to do? You have to take out the stones, and so you take your pick and your spades and whatever else you have, your wheelbarrows, and you come there and you start to get the stones out of the ground, and it takes days and days, perhaps months and months, and eventually you've got all those stones out of the

ground as best you could so that you can plant nice crops. And after all that work, and seeds in the ground, and water, and fertilizer, and whatever you have in the ground, you see this crop growing up. And the inclination is there to think, well, I did most of the work, so it's not like a little baby dying, and now I know that God intervened.

I am a little less obviously thankful to God for what I did myself. And we find this in the Bible. We find this right through the Bible, but I'd like to start with Deuteronomy 8, verse 12 to 14, 17.

Yeah, we find that Moses, God knew that when the Israelites came into Canaan and they started actually putting their own effort into building houses, taking over houses that were given to them, yes, but plowing fields, and farming, and doing things like that, that they would become proud. Deuteronomy 8, verse 12 says, Lest when thou hast eaten a nut full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein, and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied, then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, and from the house of bondage. And then verse 17, And thou sayest in my heart, My power and the might of my hand hath given me, gotten me this wealth.

This attitude I was telling you about is right through Scripture. People were so thankful to God when miracles happened, but in everyday life when they put effort in, they took the glory to themselves. That's what the Bible warns against, that's what the Bible says.

And so you find in Psalm 69, verse 30, that there is a verse there, and it says, I will praise the name of God with a song, and then it says, And I will magnify him with thanksgiving. How do you make God, you know magnifying God, how do you make God bigger by thanking him? It's when you make yourself smaller in what you take credit for. God, I might have taken these stones off the ground, I might have done all the work to make this field right, I might have built that house with the sweat of my hands, but I'm not going to make myself big so I don't thank you, I'm going to make myself small, and I'm going to magnify God by thanking him even for that house that he gave me, even though I had to put an effort in.

We magnify God with thanksgiving. David understood this. In 1 Samuel 30, verse 23, we find there he had come back to Ziklag, and he found that his wife and the 600 or more men that were with him, their wives and stuff was taken away, and so he followed them, and 200 people stood, were too tired to go with, and so they stayed at the brook of Bezor.

And the 400 that went on, they came there, and I'd like you to note something, they took their own swords and their shields, and they did work. When you fight it actually takes effort, you have to use your arms and your legs and stuff. And they were fighting, and God gave them a wonderful victory, but they fought.

And some of them, they were called children of Belial, said we deserve all the credit, we should get all the gold and all the wonderful stuff that came with this. And the 200 people who were too tired to go with, they get nothing. But David said, not so.

And he said these words in 1 Samuel 30, verse 23, you shall not do so my brethren, listen to these words, with that which the Lord has given unto us. In spite of the fact that they took their swords, their shields, and fought with people, it was still God that gave them the victory, not them themselves. And David said we're going to give to those 200 people who were too tired to come with, because God gave it to us, and we're going to give it to every single place that we ever had a house to stay in basically, and to the leaders of Judah, and we're going to send stuff to them all.

So in light of this, in light of the fact that there are weaknesses in the highest form of man's thankfulness, and the fact that we ought to be thankful in spite of our own effort, I'd like to dig a little deeper. This is not the depths of thankfulness yet, this is just a little deeper. And I'd like to bring up what some preachers do, which is the fact that every single one of us deserve hell, compared to a holy God without Jesus Christ.

And thus we should be thinking as people who are born sinners, going our own way, doing our own thing, born with a heart that does not love God, does not know God, lives outside of His life and outside of His authority. But we have done sin by breaking God's law, and compared to other people we might look good, but compared to God, we deserve hell for every moment of eternity. And therefore the fact that we are sitting in chairs right now, and the fact that we are breathing, every breath is a gift of God.

We should right now, outside of Jesus Christ, be in hell right now for eternity. Therefore everything we have in life is a gift, and we should be thankful for it. Whether we can eat and not be burning in hell, be thankful for that.

Whether we are drinking a drop of water and we're not in hell longing for a drop of water, we should be thankful for that, because that is what we deserve outside of Jesus Christ. Nothing in us can change the fact that we deserve hell for eternity. Therefore we should be thankful because everything is a gift.

But I would like to take this a little deeper. In fact I'd like to take it very deep right now, because I'd like to ask a question. Satan and Adam, before the fall of man, and before the fall of Satan, they were both ungrateful.

Why did they have to be grateful? Well, number one, the reason I ask that is, there was not anybody extremely less fortunate than them. There might have been people who were less glorious than the angel that Satan was. There might have been animals that didn't look as amazing as Adam and Eve looked.

But there was nobody with no shoes, no feet, to say, well, I've got no shoes but that person has got no feet. There was no sin, there was no disease, there was no suffering. So Adam could not look around him and say, well, compared to that person who's filled with sores all over their body and hasn't eaten for 50 days, I must be grateful.

Adam at the same time was not deserving of hell, so he could not say, well, outside of Jesus Christ I deserve hell, therefore everything in life is a gift because I should be burning in hell right now. Why did Adam have to be thankful? Why did Satan have to be thankful before sin, disease, suffering, or even people deserved hell? And this is where we get a little deeper than man's concept of thankfulness. In Ezekiel 28 verse 13 and so on we read, number one, that thou hast been in Eden, number two, every precious stone was thy covering, talking of Satan, tablets in thy pipe was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created, thou art the anointed sheriff that covers.

Satan was beautiful. But in spite of this we read in Isaiah 14 verse 14, I shall ascend above the hearts of the clouds, I will be like the Most High. Instead of being grateful for what God gave him, he was ungrateful for what he did not have.

The same thing we find in Adam. Instead of being grateful for this beautiful garden with all these amazing fruits that he could have and the amazing paradise he was in, he was ungrateful for the one thing that God didn't give him, either the one tree or the knowledge of good and evil. But why were they supposed to be grateful? Well before sin, before suffering, before there were people that were usually less fortunate than

others, there's one concept that reaches out throughout eternity and that we need to understand and that many of the prophets in the Bible understood and that the New Testament was understood by Paul and others.

And that is because God is creator, because he spoke and trees were created and fish were created and men were created and everything on earth was created. Everything in life and in the universe is God's property. And because it's God's property, he made it, he created it, he can do with it as he wishes.

He can send it to a lake of fire tomorrow and he would be righteous to do so because he owns it. And this God who owns everything, and because he owns everything, it is a gift and we should be grateful even before we have someone less fortunate than us to make us thankful for our fortitude and before we deserved hell. The fact that God owns us makes everything a gift and therefore we are to be grateful.

And we'll find this in Scripture. I will show you the Bible preaches this clearly. God actually owns us twice.

How many of you have heard of the Whippoorwill song? Well, it's a sweet little song and one of the verses goes, I don't know if I'm pronouncing Whippoorwill wrong, but perhaps Americans say it differently. I could demand your love, I own you twice, but only winning love is worth the price. Beautiful little song.

God owns us twice. That we read through the Bible. He owns us by right of creator.

As creator of the universe, you don't have to be slave for him to own you. He can send you to hell and judge you. He has that right as creator.

He owns you and owns every blade of grass on the ground, every tree on the mountain, every river that flows, and every bird in the sky. He owns every star in the heavens. He owns the moon.

He owns everything. And therefore, he owns us the first time, but the second time he owns us, we find this in the Old Testament, he owns us by right of redemption. Because the Passover did not mean that you are now free from Egypt to be your own master.

No, the firstborn are mine. And in the New Testament, in 2 Corinthians, we read, you are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and your spirit, which are God's. God owns it because you're bought with a price.

And that is the beauty of redemption. One of the things that happened to Abraham in the Bible, in Genesis chapter 14, is for the first time, I might be wrong, but it seems like the first time after Genesis 12 and 13, we had four different altars, twice at Bethel, one at Hebron. Then this guy called Malchizedek comes and he blesses Abraham and he uses a term that we've never heard of before.

Remember God was revealing himself, first as the Almighty One, then as Jehovah later to Moses. But this time with Abraham, he reveals himself through the words that are said by Malchizedek when he says that God is the possessor of heaven and earth. He owns everything.

And Abraham seems so shocked. For the first time we hear Abraham in his own prayer saying to the king of Sodom, and no, I'm not going to take any of your gold and your silver. In the previous verse he says, because I serve the God who is possessor of heaven and earth.

He copies Malchizedek. He realizes this great concept, therefore I can't take your gold because you're going to say, I made Abraham rich and I'm actually serving the God who owns everything. Every last little

blade of grass he owns and that's the one I serve.

The beautiful thing is he can do with his creation as he wishes. Jeremiah 18 verse 6, talking of Israel, he said, am I not the potter and basically you're the clay, you're in my hand. But I've got some questions now for normal people.

Now this would not be me because I'm not normal. But in some churches you have people who have nice voices. I'm not saying you don't have a nice voice.

I'm sure there are some very beautiful voices here. But if you do and you're born with that and you spend a lot of effort to get that voice nice after you're born with a nice voice. And because of that effort, you know one of the biggest problems with thankfulness is just we compare ourselves not only to people less fortunate, we compare ourselves to lazy people.

And the more effort we put in the less thankful we are because we say well this is the American conservative way, hard work equals you deserve your pay, which is fine. And lazy people should not get paid, which is fine. But the problem is the lazy person doesn't deserve it and you also don't deserve it, it's a gift of God.

He just deserves, he less deserves it less. If you want to use very weird terminology. But do you have a nice voice? Well Psalm 12 verse 4 says these words, We have said with our tongue will we prevail, not talking about singing, but still the concept is there, our lips are our own.

Who is Lord of us? I own my lips. That's what some people say. And God says no, I own your lips.

Do you have a business? Well in Habakkuk 1 verse 16 we read of people who were thankful for what? They were thankful for their business, not to God. Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous. In other words, what God is saying here is there's people who instead of looking to God who gave the fish in the sea that went into the nets, they literally worship their nets and are thankful to their nets.

Like many people worship their business as if that thing is something they did and they can be worshipped as a God later. The work of their own hands. You might have built the Suez Canal.

What's the canal between America and South America? Panama. Panama, you guys are brilliant, you have brains. Sometimes you use them.

But someone might have spent many years building the Suez Canal, the Panama Canal that many people died, thousands of engineers I think died down there, or at least over a thousand I think died people building that from America. They weren't used to the diseases. And you might after all that work that you put in think that well it wasn't a miracle that it happened, it was work that went into this.

And therefore I deserve some of the credit and there's less credit to God Almighty. But in Ezekiel 29 verse 3 we read of a king, a pharaoh, sorry, king of Egypt. And Pharaoh king of Egypt said something very interesting that God condemned.

He talked to the river Nile and he said these words, my river is mine own. I own this river. God said no, no, no, no.

I own this river. You can't take credit for owning this river. I own it.

I own your lips. I own your business. I own your rivers.

If you get promoted at work, Psalm 75 verse 6 and 7 we know these words for promotion neither comes from the east nor from the west nor from the south. But God is the judge. He put it down one and set it up another.

No matter how much work and effort you put in while the other guy was lazy you studied and eventually you came to the point after a few years that they promote you and you get a little more pay and there's a little bit of you know I did it therefore I don't have to be extremely thankful to God because he didn't do a miracle. I did a lot of the effort. God said no, no, no.

I promoted you. Hezekiah, when they presented gifts to Hezekiah in 2 Chronicles 32 he was magnified in the sight of all the nations and his heart was lifted up. Basically Hezekiah became a little bit proud of what he had done and forgot that God was the giver of everything that he had in life.

We know in Daniel 4 verse 30 that Nebuchadnezzar then he took credit for the kingdoms that he had. He said is not this great Babylon that I have built by the might of my power. I love Cyrus.

I have no idea where Cyrus stood with God but I do know that he said some good stuff. One thing I love about him in contrast to Nebuchadnezzar was the words he used in 2 Chronicles 36 verse 23 because he said that the God of heaven gave me all these kingdoms. That every single one of the kingdoms that I have is because God gave it.

It doesn't matter if I send out armies to win other nations. It doesn't matter if I put effort and money and resources and people and hours into running this whole kingdom. It's God that gave it.

He understood this basic concept. I would like us to open up the Bible to 1 Chronicles 29 verse 11 and 14. Sorry.

1 Chronicles 29. By the way that is in the Old Testament. I say that because D.L. Moody the first time he went to try and join a church he was looking for revelation in Genesis.

God still used him later. 1 Chronicles 29 verse 11. David and the people had brought together gold and precious things and material to build the temple.

Obviously how did they get these things? They had to fight for it in some cases. They had to work for it for years to earn these things. But there's a wonderful thing we see in the heart of David.

He understood what I'm talking about to a great degree because we read here in verse 11 and 14. Thine O Lord is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty. For all that is in the heaven and that is in the earth is thine.

God owns everything. Thine is the kingdom O Lord and thou art exalted head above all. But then we read in verse 14.

But who am I and what is my people that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of thee. And listen to these words. If you forget everything else from the sermon remember this.

Of thine own have we given thee. Of thine own have we given thee. He didn't say look of mine own that I worked for I gave you.

It's your own that I'm giving you. No credit to me. And he said the same basically in verse 16 of the same chapter.

Job understood this in Job 1 verse 21. He was the richest man, the greatest man in the east with all his riches. And when God took it away he said the Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away.

Blessed be the name of the Lord. He understood if you take the first part of that verse before you take the hardships of Job. That God, in spite of the effort he put into his businesses and the people he sent out to run certain things.

There was a lot of effort he had to put into all those different sheep and cattle and whatever. No matter how much effort he put into his businesses he realized God gave it. It's a gift of God and he has the right to take it away.

Job said in Job 31 verse 27 a very interesting thing. He said these words. And my heart, if my heart has been secretly enticed basically, or my mouth hath kissed my hand.

How many of you kiss your hand? French people do that to other people. Do you know what Job was saying here? He was basically saying this. If I look at my hand and say you're wonderful.

You're the one who built up that business. You're wonderful. You're the one who gave so much to both of you.

You're wonderful. You're the one who did all the different things that he accomplished in life. That's when you kiss your hand.

That's an expression among the Jewish people. To kiss your hand. So many people before they thank God they're kissing their hand.

Look what I've done. And go to church. You kiss your hand.

1 Corinthians 4 verse 7. This is right through the Bible. We read concerning spiritual gifts and abilities these words. What hast thou that thou didst not receive? Why are you proud? And why are you causing divisions? And I'm a better Christian than you because of these gifts that I have.

What do you have that you have not received? Now probably the most important chapter in the whole Bible on this topic you'll find is a psalm. Psalm 104. You can turn your Bibles to it.

It brings us out probably clearer than any other portion of scripture in a wonderful beautiful way that we perfectly understand what God is saying. In Psalm 104 we read of a God who not only created everything but he sustains everything. We read in Psalm 104 verse 10 that he sendeth the springs into the valley.

That he gives drink to every beast of the field. Verse 11. That he causeth the grass to grow.

In other words when there's a river flowing down a hill it's not just because rain randomly came there. God is sending that water down there. When there's grass growing opposite yes it's nice to know that we watered it but it's God that's making it grow.

That's what my Bible says. Psalm 104 verse 21. This becomes very interesting.

The young lions roar after their prey and seek their meat from God. Yes. It talks of lions that are looking for prey.

And then it says in verse 23 very important words. Man goeth forth unto his work. How many of you wake up in the morning and go work somewhere? Sometimes it's a lot of effort.

You could get food stamps. Be like all those socialists. And those Africans.

I'm talking about people like me. I'm from Africa. That are lazy.

But then we read in verse 27. These all wait upon thee. But then these amazing words in verse 28 which explains everything.

It says that thou givest them they gather. That thou givest them they gather. In other words that lion.

I don't know if you've ever studied a lion. I've seen a documentary on a lion. A lion sometimes has to spend days working, toiling, creeping up on animals that get away.

And eventually after days of work it will get one prey that it can eat for many days. A man going to work has to wake up in the morning, pack his hands, take his legs, go to work. Maybe at a computer you're ticking.

Maybe you've got a spade. Maybe you're building up houses. And all these things you are doing.

And God says these words. It's part of all the effort that you put in. That lion put in.

That you put in. It's still me that gave it. And this is a concept that so many Christians don't understand.

And it's the reason why they are only thankful when their baby is dying and they call out to God. And the baby gets healed. But they're not thankful for the little things.

Because they think that they did it. There's a little bit of a glory in my work and my effort. And God says no, no, no.

You've got to work and you work very hard. It's still me that gave it. Psalm 104.

Very clearly said. This year we've got to get a spousal permit again. I can't take my wife back to South Africa unless I have a visa.

So if I don't get the visa in Chicago now with all the paperwork that I have to do. I have to get doctors, clearances, TB tests. I've got to go to notaries to say that I still love my wife.

I've got to get FBI clearances. I've got to get South African police clearances. I've got to get a whole lot of stuff.

And I have to give that in. And after all that effort, I have to drive up 10 hours to Chicago. Not a lot of posts in.

I have to go see the people. I have to hand it off and I have to smile. Now that might sound like a lot of effort.

I've done that quite a few times in my life. They have rejected me before and thrown me out of the country. They have said to my wife, you are a criminal in front of my face.

They have said to me with a baby in my hands, this baby was not born. I'm like, are you certain? And they sent me off after seven hours in a long hot queue line and I had to go to lawyers and many people to get the baby born again after three weeks later. And eventually, you've got all these things happening.

My wife on their computers was not in the country when the baby was born. But there is the piece of paper to prove it was born without the wife in the country. I don't know how they work in South Africa sometimes.

But one thing I know, though I could say, well, I am part of the reason why I sometimes get this visa to go back to South Africa and bring my wife with me. Because of all the effort I put in. I know it's a gift of God.

Whenever it ever happens that I can even have my wife. There's times in my life where I have failed emotionally. I remember things happened and things happened and for months things were happening and people came against us and things were going wrong.

And I came to my wife and I wasn't crossing my wife but I said to my wife, I am so down, so irritated, so frustrated and I just have to be like a Catholic for once and confess it to somebody and I'm going to tell you. And I go before God and say, God, I'm failing in my heart. I'm sorry.

By the way, preachers aren't supposed to fail. But you know what always amazes me? It's often after I've failed emotionally in my heart, soon after that God saves a drunken. Or somebody that people have been praying for for 5, 6, 7, 8 years.

Many people praying for and I am this big failure and I come before this person and I say some words and GADDOOF! And I know it's a gift of God. And I wonder sometimes if God has to do that to you just to bring you to the point where you realize everything is a gift. Because when you're all victorious, you know there's a little bit about me.

Maybe it was because I'm such a wonderful Christian that God used me like that. I find the same sometimes when I feel such a failure in my heart and there's financial needs at home and I pray to God and I feel, why would God hear my prayers? And I just come to God for who He is anyway. His mercy, His love, His goodness.

And somehow the phone rings. And I say to my wife and I cry and I say, why would God be so kind to me? Because it's a gift and it always was a gift. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 10 verse 31, do all to the glory of God.

I used to struggle with this as a young Christian. I don't know if you did. It says here, whether therefore you eat or drink or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Okay, now the reason I struggled with this was I was wondering, how do I obey this? I love God, I want to obey verses in the Bible. How do you do all to the glory of God? Well, when you're eating, you have to sing hymns with a full mouth. I don't know exactly what this means.

That's what I was thinking. Do I have to sing hymns? Hallelujah! I don't know what I have to do with this verse. And what I didn't understand, and this is something we find in Luke chapter 17, when you have the 10 lepers, one of them a Samaritan at least, were told to go to the temple, to the priest, shall we say, to tell

them they were healed, and one of them came back and he knelt down and he thanked Jesus.

What did Jesus say two verses later? Only one has come back to glorify me. What does thankfulness do? It glorifies God. You see, when you start to realize that even the glass of water on the table is a gift of God, and I sometimes forget to pray occasionally, I'm not saying I'm perfect, but the point of the matter is, God is worthy of thankfulness for the little things in life, because everything in life we don't deserve.

Because we deserve hell, number one, but number two, our son of Jesus Christ, because it's a gift. Because he earned everything. He could have chosen not to give that to us.

We've got to work and we think we deserve it because of our work. Do all to the glory of God. And of course the Bible says this in Ecclesiastes 3 verse 30, and also that every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of his labor.

Why? Because it is the gift of God. Our food, God says in the Old Testament, is a gift from God. James 1 verse 17, talking of spiritual things mostly, and everything in life, every good gift and every perfect gift is from above.

The problem though with us as Christians, and many other people, is we often can forget what God has done for us. When times are bad and the baby is dying, and God miraculously does something, for the next few days we're very grateful to God. But when things go well, and it's our work that brings the paycheck at the end of the month, whatever happens, or there's no miracles going on, we forget very easily.

And we find this in the Bible. Genesis 40 verse 13 and 14, and I'll quickly go through a few of these. We have a man in prison called Joseph, and the butler is told the interpretation of his dream, and basically he's going to live.

And Joseph asks a simple question. He says, but think on me when it shall be well with thee. Just remember me basically.

And we read the next verse, but the butler did not remember Joseph, in spite of the goodness that was done unto him. The children of Israel, Judges 8 verse 34, Israel remembered not the Lord who had delivered them out of the hands of their enemies. Psalm 78 verse 42, also Israel, they remembered not his hand nor the day when he delivered them from the enemy.

Then we have the Israelites of the Red Sea, Psalm 106 verse 7, they remembered not the multitudes of his mercies, but they basically provoked him at the sea, even the Red Sea. Often through the Old Testament and the Bible, you read that people forgot what God had done unto them. And they weren't thankful anymore, but they became rebellious.

But then we even find people, like with Joseph, who were forgotten. Where 2 Chronicles 24 verse 22, when the king remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done unto him, the king basically killed the son of the priest that had been so good to him. He forgot the goodness of his man.

And I don't know if you know in life, but it's so easy to forget, and not so gratitude, just to people out there. We have in the Bible, in Mark chapter 7 and other portions of Scripture, where Jesus rebuked people for not supporting their old parents in their old age. They were forgetting the good that their parents did unto them, in many cases.

But I know a man in South Africa, he's almost dead now, his name is Peter Schultz. He's one of the reasons I'm in the ministry. You know, when you name drop, just remember one thing.

We should not follow a man as God, but we can lift up people only in the sense of what we lift up what Christ has done to them, and who Christ is to them. And there are many people like Hebrews chapter 11, great revivalists of old, that are humble, that don't take the glory, but we can say, thank you God for giving us that preacher who has meant so much in so many people's lives, because of what Christ has done through his humble heart towards other people. And one such man was Peter Schultz in South Africa.

He was born again in revival in the 1930s or so. His brother came with a gun, literally, to tell him to have a family altar, and he was a drunk himself. And God swept through that town, saved them.

He became a preacher across South Africa, and God swept through different communities, and people were saved in their hundreds across our country. In his old age, I remember him preaching to teenagers where they were all weeping, all seeking God, though they were used to entertainment and a television at school, as he preached simple messages from the Word of God. He was a powerful, anointed preacher who loved God, and loved God's Word.

And I remember sitting under him and just being amazed. But this man, who so many people were saved under his ministry, in his old age, late 80s at that stage, another friend of mine came up to him, had not seen him for 20 years, got saved under his ministry, got blessed under his ministry 20 years back, saw him and thought, but that's that old preacher. He walked up to him and he said, are you Peter Schultz? And he said, yes.

He said, I want to tell you something. 20 years back, I got saved under your ministry. You know what happened to that old man who had been so used to God? He started to weep.

He wept and he wept. And he said, you know, it's so precious that anybody bothered to come to me and say thank you. That anybody remembered, enough not to just go on with their life, to come back and say thank you.

I know a man who brought my great-granny to the Lord, with a squeaky voice. He started 13 churches at the same time. He had a revival at the Durban Central Prison in the 1970s or so, that the prisoners were weeping, and their thousands were weeping down the corridors, and for two weeks they were bringing each other to the Lord.

God swept through there in revival. More people were radically saved through him than any other person in that massive prison's history, as he was the chaplain at that place. And yet I found him in his old age and I went to him.

I heard tapes of him. I picked up the phone and I phoned him and I said, can I visit you? And I went there and I stayed at his place and he burnt eggs. He couldn't see much, and he then afterwards decided to teach me how to cook eggs.

We prayed together and we sang hymns together. And I didn't know something. I was an ignorant little kid, but I was just thankful that he brought my great-granny to the Lord, who I never met.

But he phoned my dad and he was weeping. And after the revival and the thousands of souls who were saved under this man, a true time, old time revivalist, he said to my dad, Keith, I'd lost something in my

fire, but just that someone cared to say thank you, I sought God to get it back. Joseph wasn't the only person who asked us to remember.

Jesus asked us to remember. 1 Corinthians 11 verse 25, Matthew 26 verse 27 talks of the Lord's table that we do at church. And it says, this cup is the new testament of my blood.

This do you as oft as you drink it in remembrance of me. And he took up the cup and gave thanks and gave it to them saying, drink ye all. But there's a lot, it's something that many people don't understand.

This is not a ritual. This is a remembrance. It's not just an ordinance, it's a remembrance.

It's remembering what God has done for us and a deep thankfulness for that which he has done. I'd like to ask you a question. Why do you do projects for the Lord? Some of you might have tried to do something for God after you got saved.

Why do you stand for truth? Why do you witness? Why did you do that at some stage in your life or stop? Why did you stop doing it as you used to do? In some cases, well there's practical reasons, but we wouldn't be preaching at 5 o'clock in the morning like John Wesley did because there's no one to preach to, only cars. But in most cases it's because life has become too busy. True born again Christians, life has become too busy.

Projects have failed. You started off, oh we're going to win 10,000 souls through this project for God and then you don't have 10,000 souls and it's not as exciting as it used to be, so we give up. People don't support it.

At the beginning others were excited and it's always exciting to do something if you get attention because, oh isn't it wonderful your little project that you're doing for God. You're writing a tract. You're doing a website.

You're making videos. You're witnessing on the street. You've got this thing that you're building.

Well great and everybody's excited. Well that's wonderful. Everybody's excited.

Motivation! And then they start getting less excited because they don't see the world rising up in one moment and then you get less excited because they're less excited. Great men that made you excited about their projects tells you, oh there were people across America who were leaders and they had projects for God and they were doing things for God and now they're caught with a woman. So why should I be excited about stuff like that? And I meet this across America as you would too.

Young people will say, I'm not excited. You remind me of that guy who was a leader of millions. And I'd just like to ask a little question of every single person who once had a fire.

Why were you on fire in the first place? Well if you're truly born again, I'll tell you why. It was not because you had the primaries. It was not because there were people that failed you and did not fail you.

You were truly born again. It was because of a little hill where you came as a sinner deserving, because of who you was and what you've done compared to God, deserving hell for eternity. You came to that little hill where there was a cross and you met with God through Jesus Christ and your sins were forgiven.

And because of meeting God through Jesus Christ at that little hill, you were thankful! And because you were thankful there was nothing you would not do for him. And then people lose it because other things become the reason that we serve God. And those other things can fail us, but God never fails us.

The despised little hill in history is the reason we're grateful. There was a man in our mission, or actually in our Bible college years back. He was drunk a lot of the time, sleeping around a lot of the time.

God saved him. And I remember him weeping, literally tears falling down his face, dripping on the ground as he told us that he would always be more thankful than us that came from more conservative houses. Because he quoted from the Bible, and then Luke 7 verse 47, Her sins which are many are forgiven, for she loved much, but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

You know I disagreed with him that day. I'll tell you why I disagreed with him. Because when I came to be saved, I had as much sin in my heart as he had in the outside.

And when God saved me, he forgave much. I'd looked on women like he slept with women. And according to God, that's evil.

And I was grateful. I remember quite a few times that I prayed to be saved, and I was basically wanting a ticket to heaven. You know, this is a little problem I have.

I go from church to church to church to church, and I see Christians that come to church on Sunday, they come to church on Wednesday, they're at the prayer meeting, you name it, but there's no intense, it doesn't have to be emotional, but gratitude to a God who saved them in a little hill called Calvary. And some of them say they never had that. And many of them, they only have a ticket to heaven.

Jesus is a ticket to heaven. I don't want to go to hell, so I'm going to go to heaven. There's no understanding of the fact that we are sinners.

Compared to God and his law, we deserve hell for eternity. And therefore, at this moment, the fact that I'm alive is a gift from God. And the greatest gift that God gave his own son to die on a cross, I could never deserve that.

But that's my only hope. And I come to that, and he actually gave me righteousness in Jesus. And because of that, I'm grateful.

There's just, I don't want to go to hell, so Jesus, please come into my life. Oh, now I'm a Christian. What do I do? I go to church.

But you're not saved. If there's no gratitude, you can't be saved. And then they add to this false foundation of liberalism or conservatism or experientialism or emotions that there's no fruit according to the Bible.

What God says must be in your life if you're a Christian. Not to be perfect. I was not perfect when I got saved.

I went and had some legalism afterwards. I can tell you lots of stuff, but I'll tell you one thing. He changed my life, and I was grateful.

I'd like to end off with just two little concepts and a little song. Very importantly, you're not saved by thanking God. There are movements out there, and I don't want to run video right now, but there's books

out there that are sold in their millions where you have God moments by thanking God for a tree and thanking God for your clock and thanking God for everything in life, and basically through that you meet God through the things you thank God for.

That's called panentheism, meeting God through things. You're not saved by God. You don't experience God through thankfulness.

You experience God through Jesus Christ and Him in the world and learning, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh to the Father but by me. If you are unsaved and you need to get saved, you need to go to that little cross, to Jesus, and get saved.

If you don't have that old fire that you used to have, and because of many of the reasons that I've mentioned or others, then you don't need to start just saying, thank you God for the tree, thank you God for the plants, thank you God for my bed, thank you God for my mommy. That's good stuff, but that's not going to change your heart. You've got to go back to that little cross and meet with God and be restored like Psalm 23 says, and then because He saved you, because He restored you, you're thankful.

You are thankful and you will be thankful and you choose to be thankful. He has a little song I wrote. I'm not going to sing it, else you're going to be very unthankful for the message.

But I'm just going to read the first verse. My grandfather's name was Jack Daniel, and he was a drunkard, but he wasn't the Jack Daniel. He was my grandfather.

And he got wonderfully saved, smashed every bottle. His wife that was divorcing him, my grandmother, stopped the divorce case when she saw the new person through Jesus Christ that was in front of her. And I wrote this little song in memory of him.

I once was a drunkard who thought he was good. I sent my family through hell on earth. My pride kept me back from the foot of the cross.

But Jesus was seeking his sheep that was lost. How could a king die for a slave? How can creation deserve what he paid? All of grace, salvation so free, but offered with pierced hands. It was not cheap, though it's free.

I'm not going to ask you guys to come and pray or anything like that. I'd just like to ask something very simple. The main issue before we get to anything else is just that many people have a very man-centered understanding of gratitude.

It comes down to either being thankful compared to other people's morality, or it comes down to you only being thankful compared to those less fortunate to yourself. And therefore you will find in your life, and some of you might have been sitting here, and you realize that when you do a lot of effort and things, you're less thankful towards God for those things, like Psalm 104 and many other verses preaches against. And if that is the case, then you have to come before God and you have to talk to him and say, God, I want to be thankful for everything because everything is a gift, and realize that I need to magnify God by making myself less, and your work more, and therefore I should be thankful for everything.

But secondly, it's possible that you've lost your fire as a Christian, and the things that excite you don't excite you anymore in any way, because instead of being motivated by gratitude for what Christ has done in your life, you're motivated by things that can fail you. People, time that isn't there anymore, so many

different things. And in that case, you also need to come and pray to Jesus Christ, and he's willing to restore you.

My grandfather died of cancer two years back. He always used to say one little thing. He said, listen, if you need a heart operation, I'll tell you someone who's an expert who's done it many times.

My Jesus. And the same thing he would say, let's pray. And then I give it over to Brother.

Dear Father, thank you so much that we can, you said that we're supposed to thank God for food. It's so beautiful to be sanctified by the word of God in prayer. And I just want to, I want to thank you for the word of God that is so deep, that is so beautiful.

That the greatest human mind that could bring up the most amazing concepts of what is morality, and how we're supposed to be thankful, and how we're supposed to be chaste, and how we're supposed to be hardworking, how we're supposed to be everything. We can look at the highest morals of any nation without God and without the Bible, and it falls far flat from your desires for us as Christians to understand the depths of any concept in Scripture. And so it is with thankfulness.

Help us to understand it so much deeper than just being thankful compared to someone less fortunate than ourselves. But that everything in life, because you are creator and everything is owned by you, everything is a gift, and therefore we cannot take credit for anything, no matter how much effort we put in. But for every little thing in life, even the food on the table, we give glory to God by being thankful.

And help us, dear Father, to have a life where we don't just thank God and are deeply thankful when the baby gets saved that was dying that we called out to God, but we're thankful for every little thing in life because it was a gift from God Almighty. And I pray this in Jesus' name. Let it not just be that we say it with our lips to you and then we smack you with our lives, but let it be that we are thankful with our lips and hearts and we live it out every moment showing gratitude to the God who died in that little tree so that we might live.

In Jesus Christ's name.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/RPz2z9tZW20.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/roy-daniel/depths-of-gratitude-and-being-thankful/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net