

# Thanksgiving-Gratitude

AT Snacks- November 19, 2023

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The Johnsons have been getting the little cream nuggets off the top of what I teach on Sunday. We call it AT Snacks, and now you can get those by going to the Trinity Fellowship app, on the website as well, and also as printouts each week.

We have been talking about the awakening for almost four years, and now a lot of other people are talking about it. We didn't invent it. God invented that. What we're doing is learning how to cooperate and get in the flow of what God is doing.

Thanksgiving, thanks, thankfulness, being grateful and gratitude are all biblical words.

The first actual Thanksgiving took place in Plymouth, MA, a three day feast, where they invited the indigenous people who helped them to adapt to the new land and how to farm.

That first Thanksgiving was an event for this direct, specific purpose to give thanks and honor to God, thanking Him for their safe trip and arrival to the new land. They were grateful for the ability to freely worship and to propagate in spreading the good news of the Kingdom of God.

What they did 400 and some years ago was to set the tone and precedent for our nation to be grateful., We should stop every now and then and at least reflect on the fact and the blessing that we have in America, to be able to celebrate religious freedom, to be able to worship like we are led to worship.

But now, all of a sudden, there's a demonic agenda to vilify Christians, anybody who believes in Jesus. So when I'm talking about what needs to happen for the church to be the church, it's going to have to be people like you. We have to stand up.

I believe we're in the stages, early stages, of the greatest move of God that the planet will ever see. So it's a great time to be around, get involved in the church, find your place, roll your sleeves up and start finding your areas of gifting and anointing.

I'll say to those of you who are listening, you have gifts and there's really no excuse to not be moving in them. It's up to you to find out what they are and then to learn how to start operating in them. A lot of you are doing that already, so you're to be commended.

The most important thing that I'm doing in my life, at this very moment, in this part of my life, is listening.

Giving thanks and being thankful is one of the really, really important, integral parts of Scripture, and you see it early on in the Bible. Philippians 4:6 says, *"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God"*.

**Believing prayer** is asking and saying thank you to God for what you are praying for, before you see it.

**Please and thank you** are still magic words. I think spiritual stuff happens when you use those words. Please and thank you are words that open people's hearts, that sets people's minds and demeanor at ease. We need to tell that to people around here, who are doing the stuff.

Psalm 100:4 says, *“I will enter His gates with thanksgiving in my heart, I will enter His courts with praise”*. One of the things that we’re doing on Sunday is when we worship, we are giving thanks. That’s a thanksgiving offering.

When we come and worship with our whole heart, that’s payback to the Father for all that He’s done for us. So, that should help you in your attitude of Sunday mornings when we come to worship.

A lot of times when we come to worship, you have to push the distractions out of the way so your heart engages with the Father. That’s what it’s all about, because if there’s not an engagement on the part of your heart toward the Father during worship, it’s just a song service.

You enter into His presence through praise, so you experience His presence in the times of worship. And then, in prayer **and** in worship, and then praise starts to become a regular, consistent habit. That’s where I want to get to in being thankful and expressing gratitude.

Colossians 2: 6-7 says, *“As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him”*. Especially in this season, for the church, there’s no substitute to walking by faith. It’s going to take all the faith that you have. It’ll grow as you exercise it, but it’s going to take everything you have in this season.

James 1: 2 says, *“Count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work”*. We need to be geared to look and see what God is doing, right in the thing that’s testing you the most. If you look hard, you’ll be able to see God, and see what He is doing in your situation.

Look for God in your uncomfortable situation that you think is so bad for you, and allow the Father to complete the work that He’s doing, and more often than not, it’s a work of the heart. It’s something that God is changing and altering in you.

The Bible calls these times that we’re in *“perilous times”*. It’s critical that **you**, that the **church**, can be used for His purposes, to win the world.

Some people think and are hoping that Jesus will come and rescue us and rapture us out of all of the negative stuff that we are seeing. I’m not opposed to that, but I believe that the Church is supposed to be a glorious church before Jesus comes back.

I’m seeing it take shape with people. I’m seeing some of you who are going through extremely hard times, make or break situations, who are coming through the fog, who are starting to be victorious, getting strong and seasoned spiritually, so you can be where you need to be.

So there’s a key to everything that we do in life, through thanksgiving. There’s science behind exercising gratitude.

When something continues to come up in your mind, in your psyche (it doesn’t have to be anything spiritual), again and again, that’s God trying to get your attention about something.

**NOTE:** Meditation can get a bad rap, because of Eastern meditation, spirit guides and all that demonic kind of stuff. It’s just like the enemy to take something like that and pervert it, so Christian people, not knowing any better, won’t do it.

It's good for you to meditate on the Word. Philippians 4:8 says, *"Whatever things are lovely, whatever things are pure, whatever things are holy, whatever things are wholesome, meditate on these things"*. I started a practice of meditation, and for about the last six months, I've only missed about four or five days. Most of them are about 8 to 10 minutes long.

When you talk about meditation...I've told maybe a dozen people. I'm not trying to push it on anybody else. I just know it works for me, but about half the people that I mentioned that to just blow it off. Some people will, some people won't, but those of you who put your hand to the plow, you'll get the benefits from it.

There's a human condition called **negativity bias**. *"The negativity bias, also known as the negativity effect, is a cognitive bias that even when of equal intensity, things of a more negative nature have a greater effect on one's psychological state and processes than neutral or positive things"*. If you are thinking about all the stuff that could go wrong, you ought to at least try to give just a little bit of time, and think about and ponder, maybe even meditate about what might go right in your situation.

They say we have 60,000 thoughts a day and 85% of those thoughts are negative. In any situation, our mind automatically goes to all the things that could go wrong. That's why we need to work at offsetting the negative with positive thoughts.

Here are some benefits of practicing gratitude:

- Better mental health: the practice of gratitude has been linked to increased happiness and overall satisfaction with life
- Better physical health: people might experience fewer aches and pains, improved immune system function, and better sleep, which can increase energy levels
- Better relationships: people who are grateful and practice gratitude tend to be more empathetic, more kind, and more compassionate, which leads to stronger social connections, interaction and better relationships with others
- Greater resilience: the ability to get back up after you have been knocked down
- Boosts self esteem: you begin to see yourself like God sees you
- People who practice gratitude tend to focus on possibilities and opportunities, which contributes to a positive mindset, less focus on material possessions and more emphasis on experiences and meaningful relationships

How you start a practice of gratitude is just to start somewhere along the way. Maybe all along the day, wherever you're at, **whatever your doing, just start to thank the Lord for something**. *"Thank you Lord that my car will start"*. I mean, you start there. Seriously. *"Thank you that I have a roof over my head. Thank you, Father"*.

There's lots to be thankful for. Thank you, Father for Jesus, for rescuing me, for putting me on solid ground and for putting me in this house.

Thank you for my spouse, my children, for my health and the promise that you would never leave me or forsake me. Thank you Lord that You've given us all things that pertain to life and godliness, for everything that we need and for reaching into the darkness and pulling us out of darkness. Thanks for the call on my life.

So Father, I give you permission to do all You need to do in my heart and in my life.

I'm grateful Father, for your long suffering, for the good things that have happened to me, for the challenging things that we go through and endure in our lives, for the deep, deep work in us and that You love us with a perfect love.

Thank you Lord, that you've given us victory over every single sin, that you have already declared us to be free, that when we just turn our lives over to You, that you lead us in the paths of righteousness. Thank you Father that you are always there, for the little reminders, for wisdom as we walk this thing out.

Thank you Father, that we have the mind of Christ, that we can think like You think and that we might have life and have it more abundantly.

Lord, we give you praise! **THANK YOU FOR BEING SUCH AN AWESOME LORD!**