

Gratitude in the Life of Paul

Introduction: The Need for Gratitude

- I. Gratitude Defined
 - A. A dictionary definition of ‘gratitude’ is simply, “Thankfulness; a state of being grateful.”
 - B. The Greek word *eucharisteo* is commonly translated as ‘thanks’ or ‘thankful’ and it means, “To be grateful; to feel thankful; to express gratitude.”
 - C. Though this term is simple to understand, it is not always easy to practice.
 - D. Gratitude requires discipline:
 - 1. Of the intellect – to comprehend one’s need
 - 2. Of the emotions – to maintain one’s perspective
 - 3. Of the will – to engage one’s desire
 - E. It is very easy to be ungrateful (cf. 1 Corinthians 10:6-14; Deuteronomy 1:27).
 - F. The life of Paul is an example of gratitude.

- II. Gratitude Desired
 - A. Jesus was a man of gratitude – some 10 times in the Gospel accounts it is stated that He gave thanks.
 - B. He commended the Samaritan leper who was healed and returned to give thanks (Luke 17:12-19).
 - C. He also asked, “Where are the nine?” demonstrating His desire for His followers to be men and women of gratitude.
 - D. Paul taught Christians to be grateful and to express their thanks to God.
 - 1. 1 Thessalonians 5:18
 - 2. Colossians 1:9-12; 2:7; 3:15-17; 4:2
 - 3. Ephesians 5:4, 20
 - 4. 1 Timothy 2:1-4
 - E. One who is not thankful displeases God (cf. Luke 6:35).
 - F. One who is ungrateful endangers his soul (Romans 1:21 [*pride*]; 2 Tim. 3:2 [*selfish*]).

- III. Gratitude Demanded
 - A. Paul was motivated to gratitude by the grace of God that resulted in the salvation of his soul (Acts 9:1-22).
 - B. Paul had been a persecutor of Jesus and His church.
 - C. The vision on the road to Damascus could have announced his condemnation and judgment.
 - D. Instead, the Lord offered him mercy and a second chance.
 - E. Paul responded with gratitude and a life-changing devotion (1 Cor. 15:9-10).
 - F. Gratitude is demanded of each Christian because God commands it.
 - G. Yet, gratitude is demanded of each Christian because God deserves it!
 - H. His grace has saved us from our sins!
 - I. Will we respond with gratitude?