

Gratitude in the Life of Paul

Gratitude for Brethren: Part 1

- I. Gratitude for Brethren Who Accept the Truth (1 Thessalonians 2:13)
 - A. As a preacher of the Gospel, Paul was joyful when any soul obeyed and became a Christian.
 - B. Furthermore, he expressed his gratitude to God for those who accepted the Truth of the Gospel.
 - C. The Thessalonians were a great example of this.
 - 1. They were able to discern the distinctiveness of Paul's message.
 - 2. They were able to discern the truth of Paul's message.
 - 3. They were able to discern the power of Paul's message.
 - D. The Gospel is powerful; and Paul was thankful when others allowed it to change their lives (2 Thessalonians 2:13-14).
 - E. Likewise, we should be thankful and express gratitude for our brethren who accept and obey the Gospel of Christ.

- II. Gratitude for Brethren Who Are Faithful in Service (1 Thessalonians 1:2-4)
 - A. Paul was thankful for brethren who remained faithful, no matter the challenge.
 - B. The Thessalonians demonstrated faithfulness in their continual service.
 - 1. Work of faith – *toil motivated by one's trust in God*
 - 2. Labor of love – *work to the point of pain motivated by love of God*
 - 3. Patience of hope – *cheerful endurance motivated by hope of salvation*
 - C. Each of these was seen in the actions of these brethren (1 Thes. 1:8-10).
 - D. Furthermore, they continued to grow in their service (2 Thes. 1:3).
 - E. We must express gratitude for brethren who serve faithfully in the kingdom of Christ.
 - F. Paul even did this for brethren he did not know personally (Colossians 1:3-5; 2:5).
 - 1. We should be glad to know of our brethren in other places.
 - 2. We should support those who go and preach!
 - G. Yet, he was also thankful for the faithful service of Christians who were his friends (Phm. 1:4-6, 21).
 - 1. Philemon was a loyal, dedicated servant of Christ.
 - 2. Paul was confident that he would do right, even in a difficult situation.
 - 3. We should be grateful for our friends who are Christians – and encourage them.
 - H. Finally, Paul was grateful for congregations that remained faithful even after he departed from them (Ephesians 1:15-16).
 - I. We should express gratitude for the local congregation where we worship and serve.

- III. Gratitude for Brethren Who Are Faithful in Influence (Romans 1:8)
 - A. Paul was thankful for the church at Rome because their reputation for faithfulness had become known throughout the world (cf. Matthew 5:16).
 - B. Paul was thankful for Timothy and his influence his own life (2 Tim. 1:2-5).