



"Find Your Purpose and Reach Your Destiny"

6265 University Avenue, San Diego, CA 92115

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Website: www.cityoffaithfwc.org

August 9, 2017

Managing Threatening Emotions

Gods' Expectations for My Life

LESSON FOUR

GRATTITUDE: Possessing a Grateful Heart

FOCUS: *Learn how to be thankful at any place and at any time of your life.*

FOCUS STATEMENT: Our lives will overflow with gratitude when we become convinced of God's unconditional love. We can be reminded of His love through creation, our relationship with Him, and His provisions for our lives.

INTRODUCTION: The Discipline of Gratitude means we are practicing and producing an attitude of Gratitude, and of being thankful, even when we cannot see what we must be thankful for. This is an aspect of our worship of Christ; expressing to Him our appreciation and reverence for how He has profited our lives. We must be grateful because His blood has redeemed us. Because we have been redeemed, we should apply this gratitude toward others; showing our support, appreciation, and kindness for how they have benefited our lives. As a discipline, this means we are to realize our indebtedness to God and "practice" our faith in Christian living because of what He has done for us.

APOLOGETICS

WHAT GRATTITUDE IS NOT: Gratitude is not mindless joy, or a good attitude without a reason behind it, as this disposition cannot last. Good attitudes are important and essential, but we have to have a basis for them to keep them, to hone them, and further develop them.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE DO NOT PRACTICE THIS DISCIPLINE? We will be fueled and filled with ingratitude, refusing to

acknowledge and respond to what Christ has done for us. This will produce an unhealthy attitude and a life that is not Spirit-led. We will not realize what we have, or could have, but rather focus on an "entitlement" mentality that says we deserve this or that, and humbleness and servitude will be absent. Ingratitude produces a life of dissatisfaction and dysfunction. This can happen to a Christian who does little to nothing with his or her faith and remains in the way of the world, or someone who refuses to grow and respond to God.

***Psalms 136:1-26**

Read Psalm 136:1-3 Gratitude that is centered around God's _____, _____ and _____ is always effective and accepted by Him.

The psalmist's gratitude is followed by three specific reasons and realities concerning God:

- vs. 1 Oh, give thanks unto the Lord for He is good; and His mercy endureth forever
- vs. 2 Oh, give thanks to the God of gods for His mercy endureth forever
- vs. 3 Oh, Give thanks to the Lord of lords for His mercy endureth forever

Gratitude is _____ and it must come from a place of _____. Additionally, one cannot be grateful without _____ on God and His attributes.

Psalm 136 provides a thorough written guide of how gratefulness is to be rendered unto God. It gives us three _____ to implement when we focus on gratitude to God:

1. The charge - *Oh give thanks...*
2. The why - *For He is good and His mercy endureth forever*
3. The who - *The LORD* (The word "LORD," refers to God's Supremacy over all)

Notice the difference of sequence of reference in verses 1-3.

- vs. 1- The charge; (#1) and the why, (#2)
- vs. 2 -The charge, (#1) the who, (#3); and the why (#2). *Here, the sequence is switched.*
- vs. 3- The sequence is the same as in verse 2 and the continuity remains throughout this entire Psalm.



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RECAP - Psalm 136:4-26 reveal the 3rd and 2nd order... (the **who**; and they **why**)

vs. 4, **WHO** is He? He's the one that performs *great wonders*. **WHY?**
Because his mercy endures forever.

NOTE: the "WHO," mentioned in this Psalm has multiple descriptions, but the WHY at the end of every verse remains the same.... *Because His mercy endureth forever.*

DEFINITION: Great Wonders (from vs. 4) The heavens, the heavenlies, the universe, the galaxies and uncharted, undiscovered planets in the universe; the splendor of their existence and divine providence of their creativity.

COMMENTARY:

The verb "**Wonder**" occurs only a few times in the Old Testament; "wonder" as a noun is much more frequent, and is chiefly the translation of the word *mopheth*, a splendid or conspicuous work, a "miracle" (Exodus 4:21; 11:9, etc.), often conjoined with *'othoth*, "signs" (Exodus 7:3; Deuteronomy 6:22; 13:1,2; 34:11; Nehemiah 9:10, etc.).

Other frequent words are *pala'*, *pele'*, a "marvel," "miracle" (Exodus 3:20; 15:11; Joshua 3:5; Isaiah 9:6 "wonderful counselor," etc.). In the N.T. the ordinary verb is *thaumazo*, and the most frequent noun is *teras*, a "marvel," "portent (sign)," answering in its meaning to Hebrew *pala'*. As in the Old Testament the "wonder" is chiefly a miraculous work, so in the Gospels the feeling of wonder is chiefly drawn out by the marvelous displays of Christ's power and wisdom (Matthew 15:31; Mark 6:51; Luke 4:22, etc.

MERCY: Unmerited favor. A concept integral to an understanding of God's dealings with humankind. In the English translations of the Bible, this is expressed in phrases such as "to be merciful," "to have mercy on," or "to show mercy toward." The corresponding term, "merciful," describes a quality of God and one that God requires of His people. The noun denotes compassion and love, not just feelings, or emotions as expressed in tangible ways.

OBSERVATION: Gratefulness must prompt us to see _____ in every aspect of life and creation.

Gratefulness must be centered around the personhood of God, or His divine attributes and Power.

Since we have established the "why," which remains consistent at the end of each verse, we will now delve into the variety of the "who," from verses 5-26

Vs. 5 **WHO** – *He's the one by whom His wisdom made the heavens* (Genesis 1:1; vs. 14-20; 2:1-2)

vs. 6-26 in order by which they are written in Scripture, the "**who**," is described in the following manner:

- ✓ 6. He's the one who laid the foundations of the earth (Gen. 1:1-2:1)
- ✓ 7-9 He's the Creator of great lights/ the sun, moon, and stars (See Gen. 1:14-18)
- ✓ 10 -16 He is Israel's deliverer:
 - a) vs. 10 - He struck Egypt in the first born (the last plague on Egypt)
 - b) vs. 11-12 He brought Israel out from among the Egyptians (the exodus from Egypt)
 - c) vs. 13-14 He parted the Red Sea and gave Israel passage through it
 - d) 15-16 He is the one who overthrew Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea and led Israel through the wilderness
- ✓ 18-20 He's the God who slew famous kings for His people
- ✓ vs. 21-22 He's the God of promise to His people, because he led them into the land of Canaan
- ✓ vs. 22, He's a heritage to His chosen people
- ✓ vs. 23 – He remembers us when we are lonely and feel abandoned
- ✓ vs. 24 -He's the God who rescues His people from their enemies
- ✓ vs. 25 – He's our Jehovah Jireh-, He provides for His people
- ✓ vs. 26 -He's the God of the heavens

The scriptures of this Psalm give various descriptions to who our God is and why we should be grateful to Him for who He is, for what He's done, what He's doing, and what He's going to do for us!

SUMMARY: Be aware of the infectious diseases of ingratitude, ungratefulness, and thanklessness. They will lead to apathy, envy, anger, lust, misplaced ambition, greed, aloofness, and bitterness. They will block the growth of our relationship with Christ and cut us off from the character and reflection of Christ to the world. It has been said we cannot control our circumstances, but we can control our attitudes.

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We must practice the discipline of gratitude in order to appreciate God as we should.

The reason the Discipline of Gratitude is called a *discipline* is because it comes easy theoretically and actually; all we have to do is recognize Christ and His work in our lives. But, the "practice" seems to come hard; we have to work at it. ALL THE TIME!

REFLECTION: Read these scripture Disciplines on Gratitude. 1 Sam. 12:24; Matt. 5:17-20; Luke 17:11-19; Romans 12:10; 1 Corinthians 4:7; Col. 3:17; 1 Thess. 5: 12-18; 1 Tim. 5:17; 6:1; 1 Pet. 2:17; Heb. 12:28-29.

1. How do I currently exhibit a life of Gratitude?

2. How can I develop the discipline of acknowledgement and gratitude for Christ's work in me?

3. What blocks Gratitude from working and being exhibited in me?

4. How can I initiate an attitude of Gratitude, and discipline myself to carry it out?

5. What can cause Gratitude to function better, stronger, and faster in me, even in times of uncertainty and stress?

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Answers:

- Read Psalm 136:1-3 Gratitude that is centered around God's goodness, greatness, and supremacy is always effective and accepted by Him.
- Gratitude is **Intentional** and it must come from a place of unselfishness. Additionally, one cannot be grateful without reflecting on God and His attributes
- Psalm 136 provides a thorough written guide of how gratefulness is to be rendered unto God. It gives us three powerful practices to implement when we focus on gratitude to God:
- **OBSERVATION:** Gratefulness must prompt us to see God's Mercy in every aspect of life and creation. Gratefulness must be centered around the personhood of God, or His divine attributes and Power.