

# Fearless Series - Gratitude

*It Really is a Wonderful Life*

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## Introduction

[45] You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. [46] You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. [47] Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little.” [48] Then Jesus said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.”

**Luke 7:44-48 NIV**

Gratitude for being forgiven made the woman want to love and give back. What does gratitude move you to do?

### **What is gratitude?**

Gratitude is a quality of being thankful or grateful regardless of the circumstance.

### **Do you have gratitude?**

*“At times, our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us.”*

**Albert Schweitzer**

- Who is someone you know that's grateful all the time?
- What would your life look like if you learned to be grateful?

**George Bailey - It's a Wonderful Life**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lxNXtjGY\\_Us](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lxNXtjGY_Us)

(watch from 3:40 - 8:28)

*“All you can take with you is that which you’ve given away.”*

In the movie, It's a Wonderful Life, George Bailey feels like he has nothing and nothing he has done in his life matters because he doesn't have financial success or prestige. By the end of the movie he realizes that his biggest successes are the lives he's impacted, and he is grateful for what is most important - the relationships around him.

**Your goal**

In what area of your life do you need God's help to be more grateful?

## Practice, Practice, Practice

[16] Rejoice always, [17] pray continually, [18] give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

**1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 NIV**

- **Practice "thank you"**
  - Practice makes perfect. The simple choice to just say thank you and think about how we are grateful for what we have can help us get through any circumstance.
- **Being grateful is a choice, not a feeling**
  - Regardless of the circumstance, we have a choice to be grateful or bitter and spiteful. Praying constantly can also help make that choice.
- **How often do you take the time to think about what you are grateful for?**
  - Do you base your gratitude on circumstance or are you grateful for what you have no matter what?

*Teacher's Note:*

- *Share about a time you chose to be grateful even when it was hard. How did that change your perspective? What did you need to do in order to make that choice?*

## Express Gratitude

As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance [13] and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!" [14] When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed. [15] One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. [16] He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan. [17] Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? [18] Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?" [19] Then he said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."

**Luke 17:12-19 NIV**

- **Express it**
  - Gratitude can be an overwhelming feeling, but be sure to express and let people know!

- **Take action**
  - He praised God because he was given a second chance. Many were given a second chance, yet only one took action.
- **What's a second chance you have gotten?**
  - What do you do with the second chance you get? Do you take it for granted or does it move you to go to God?

*Teacher's Note:*

- *What was a time you got a second chance from God? How did you respond to it?*

## Gratitude Motivates

You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

**2 Corinthians 9:11 NIV**

- **Gratitude is a response**
  - God has given us so much, and so the least we can do is give back. When we see how much God loves us and has given to us, it is motivating to want to give to others.
- **Pay it forward**
  - When we choose to give and love as a response to being grateful for what God has given us, it inspires and influences others to turn to God themselves. Our choice to be grateful and give doesn't just affect us, but the people around us too!
- **How will you respond to what God has given you?**
  - How can you choose to give and love today?

*Teacher's Note:*

- *Share about a time you gave as a result of what God gave you. Who in your life was influenced because of it? How did people see God from it?*

## Decision

*"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them."*

**JFK**

- **Talk it through:** How do you need God to help you be grateful no matter what?

- **Take action:** What are you going to change with God to become grateful?
  - *Teacher's Note: Walk through step by step what it would take to change. The leader should think through some of this ahead of time. Be as detailed as possible.*
    - *What steps will this decision involve?*
    - *When will you do them?*
    - *Possible pitfalls?*
    - *Who will you ask to help hold you accountable?*

## Next steps

*This section is meant to be done together over the next 1-2 weeks. Set up times to do some of these together or to do them separately and then talk about what you learned.*

- **Read together:** Genesis 37-47 - Joseph was grateful for the life God gave him even when it was hard - after reading, talk to a friend about what you learned
- **Watch together:** *It's a Wonderful Life, Family Man, Blind Side and Freedom Writers* - watch with a friend or two and talk about what you learned
- **Do together:** Write something you are grateful for in a journal everyday for a month and share with a friend what you learned.

## Further study

- The Book of Daniel
- Psalm 23
- James 1
- Philippians 4
- Acts 9 - *Saul's conversion*



