



**MESSAGE: (30) 25 NOVEMBER 2018 – 09:30**  
**PASTOR MICHAEL KEEVE – SUNDAY MORNING**  
**THE FAMILY OF LOVE & FAITH**

**(A) TITLE: “REAL GRATITUDE!”**

**(B) SUMMARY:**

Our theme for November is ‘We give thanks’. We are looking at gratitude. The title of last week’s message was: **“GRATITUDE – HOW TO BE THANKFUL IN TOUGH TIMES!”**

I shared five keys with you out of our scripture reading on overcoming worry, anxiety and stress in the touch times that we are living in.

**1. CHOOSE NOT TO WORRY**

92% of our worries are about things that either won’t happen, or that are insignificant or petty. Worry is one of the biggest wastes of time and energy and does not change anything. As a matter of fact it makes things worse!

**2. LIVE ONE DAY AT A TIME**

Today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday! Live today to the full!

**3. PRAY**

Whenever God gives you a ‘don’t’, He will also give you a ‘do’. God said: “Don’t worry!” So instead of worry, pray! Pray about everything! Some people may say: “Pastor, but I don’t have the time to pray about everything!” Well, we are serving a practical God: Remember, according to statistics, 92% of our worries are a waste of time and energy! So use that 92% of the time and energy to pray instead of worry! Every time that you start to worry, stop and make a decision: “This next 15 minutes that I take to worry, I will not worry but pray instead!” If you do this, your life is going to turn around and you will have a change in attitude!

**4. THANK GOD**

Thank God in all things! Give thanks in all circumstances, not for all circumstances! There is always something to be thankful for. The Bible tells us to ‘give thanks’. It is something that we must do. It is a verb. ‘Thanks’ and ‘giving’ goes together. It is an expression of gratitude.

**5. THINK ABOUT THE RIGHT THINGS**

If you want to change your life, change what you think and what you meditate about. The root cause of worry, stress and anxiety is the way I choose to think.

We saw last week that an antidote to our worries is prayer and thanksgiving. Counting our blessings. Appreciating how God has provided for us and blessed us in so many ways.

Today I want to build on the foundation laid last week. I want to go further and deeper and I want to help you to develop real gratitude that will change your life! The title of our message today: **“REAL GRATITUDE IS AN ATTITUDE!”**

**(C) SCRIPTURE READING:**

**Luke 17:12-19 NIV**

(12) 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.”

**(D) TEXT VERSE:**

**Luke 17:19 MSG**

Then he said to him, "Get up. On your way. Your faith has **healed** and **saved** you."

**Luke 17:19 AOV**

En Hy sê vir hom: Staan op en gaan; jou geloof het jou **gered**.

**(E) INTRODUCTION:**

One sign that Jesus Christ is living in your heart is gratitude. God lives in a humble and grateful heart. As believers we should appreciate all the blessings God has given to us each and every day. Our lives should be filled daily with an attitude of gratitude.

A woman with the name of **Francie Swartz** in her book **Chicken Soup for the Soul** tells about a guy named **Jerry** who was always in a good mood and always had something positive to say. And when asked how he was doing he would always say, "If I was any better I'd be twins."

**Jerry** was a restaurant manager who everybody loved to work for because he was so positive. And **Francie** said, "I don't get it **Jerry**, you can't possibly be upbeat all the time how do you do it?" And **Jerry** replied, "Each morning I wake up and say to myself **Jerry** you have two choices today: you can either choose to be in a bad mood or choose to be in a good one. And I choose to be in good mood." "Oh it's not that easy," I protested, **Swartz** writes. "Yes it is," **Jerry** responded, "life is all about choices." Well several years ago, **Jerry's** restaurant was robbed. The thieves panicked and shot him and he was rushed to the emergency room. He spent 18 hours on the operating table and several weeks in intensive care but he survived.

And later she asked him how he did it. He said, "When I was lying on the floor I remembered I had two choices, I could choose to live or I could choose to die. I chose to

live. The paramedics were encouraging, but when they wheeled me into the emergency room and I saw the looks on the faces of the doctors and nurses I got really scared. Because in their eyes I read: ‘he’s a dead man’ and I knew I needed to take action.” And there was a big burly nurse shouting questions at me and she asked, ‘Are you allergic to anything?’ ‘Yes,’ I replied. And the doctors and nurses stopped working as they waited for my reply. ‘BULLETS,’ I answered. And over their laughter I yelled: ‘I’m choosing to live, operate on me as I am alive not dead.’ And **Jerry** lived thanks to the skill of the doctors, to his attitude, and to the grace of God. And **Francie Swartz** says, “I saw **Jerry** six months after the accident and asked him how he was doing and he replied, ‘If I was any better, I’d be twins.”

The highest level of life we can live is a lifestyle of thanksgiving out of a grateful heart! This is exactly what we see with the one leper who returned to Jesus to say thank you!

## **(F) ARE YOU REALLY THANKFUL:**

We’re often like the 9 lepers in **Luke 17**. There were ten lepers who stood at a distance and cried out to Jesus as He was passing by. The lepers cried out, “Jesus, Master have pity on us.” They begged at a distance for anything and everything they needed. It may have been just a long distance prayer, but that cry was heard. The response from Jesus was just a command. But it was a response. Jesus heard the lepers and said to them promptly, “Go show yourselves to the priest.” Jesus responded to their cry!

**Jesus gave them an assignment** He tells them: “Go and show yourselves to the priests!” I can imagine that these men were probably confused; they knew they were leprous. They might have examined their hands, noticing that the flesh was still decayed. They saw no change. They had felt nothing. They couldn’t go see the priest like that! Yet they could not be re-admitted to society until they did! They might have thought, “Well, we don’t seem to be healed, but we will do what He said.” So they started walking toward the city to present themselves to the priests.

**God often chooses to answer our prayers as a result of our own obedience.** And so we read, “As they went, they were made clean.” They looked at their hands, and the skin was restored. They stroked their faces, and the sores had been healed. They peeked under the bandages, and the signs of decay had disappeared! Their fingertips and ears were back. They were healed. Ten people that day received the benefits of God’s grace! Ten people were reached by the love of God, and made legally and ceremonially clean. But nine of them kept on going without a backward glance. They received their blessing and they were gone!

Jesus’ emotional response to the ignorance of the nine lepers gives us a glimpse into the heart of God. Jesus was disappointed that **only one person** cared enough to express his gratitude. The lepers came to Jesus with desperate longing. Jesus healed them and nine never came back to give thanks.

So many times when a man has got what he wants, he never comes back to say ‘**thank you!**’ Is that not what we sometimes do? We take God’s goodness for granted. We receive great blessings yet often we don’t give God our gratitude.

## **(G) REAL GRATITUDE:**

### **Luke 17:15-16 AB**

(15) Then one of them, upon seeing that he was cured, turned back, recognizing and thanking and praising God with a loud voice;  
(16) And he fell prostrate at Jesus' feet, thanking Him [over and over].  
And he was a Samaritan.

Real gratitude is an attitude of the heart.

“Gratitude,” as defined by J. B. Massieu, “is the memory of the heart.”  
So what must we as believers do to have real gratitude?

### **1. TURN BACK TO GOD**

**Luke 17:15:** ‘Then one of them, upon seeing that he was cured, **turned back...**’

The first step in being really grateful is to turn back to God.

It means to take your focus of the blessing or the circumstance and to turn back and to focus on Jesus, the source of your blessing!

### **Hebrews 12:2 AB**

**Looking away [from all that will distract] to Jesus**, Who is the Leader and the Source of our faith [giving the first incentive for our belief] and is also its Finisher [bringing it to maturity and perfection]. He, for the joy [of obtaining the prize] that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising and ignoring the shame, and is now seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Seek the giver not the gifts. It is all about a living relationship with Jesus Christ!

### **2. RECOGNIZE GOD**

**Luke 17:15:** ‘Then one of them, upon seeing that he was cured, turned back, recognizing and thanking and praising God’

Recognize God as your God, the one who is good and who blessed you.

In order to recognize God, you must connect with Him, having a lifeline with Him!

### **James 4:8 NKJV**

**Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.**

Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

Draw near to God, recognize Him.

### 3. THANK AND PRAISE GOD

#### **Luke 17:15 AB**

Then one of them, upon seeing that he was cured, turned back, recognizing and **thanking and praising God** with a loud voice;

You can only thank and praise God for what He has done for you after you turned to Him and connected to Him! Let your thanks and praise flow out of this gratitude, this thankfulness and gratefulness that you experience in your heart!

#### **2 Chronicles 5:13-14 NIV**

(13) The trumpeters and musicians joined in unison to **give praise and thanks to the Lord**. Accompanied by trumpets, cymbals and other instruments, the singers **raised their voices in praise** to the Lord and sang: “He is good; his love endures forever.”

Then the temple of the Lord was filled with the cloud,

(14) and the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for **the glory of the Lord** filled the temple of God.

God’s presence came to the temple in response to the **thanksgiving**.

God loved to hear the praise from the temple and so He drew near.

Thanksgiving and praise is the key to manifesting the presence of God. It pleases him.

### 4. HUMBLE YOURSELF BEFORE GOD

#### **Luke 17:16 AB**

And **he fell prostrate at Jesus’ feet**, thanking Him [over and over]...

Humble yourself at God’s feet.

When we focus on God and recognise Him, it humbles us.

Thanks giving make us humble!

There cannot be a hardened heart and a thankful heart in the same person!

#### **1 Peter 5:6 NKJV**

Therefore **humble yourselves** under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,

### 5. THANKS GIVING IS A LIFESTYLE

#### **Luke 17:16 AB**

And he fell prostrate at Jesus’ feet, **thanking Him [over and over]**...

We must thank over and over every day in everything!

Thanksgiving must be a lifestyle. An attitude of gratitude!

**1 Thessalonians 5:18 NKJV**

**in everything give thanks;** for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

**(H) CONCLUSION:**

Psychologists today tell us that sincere gratitude and thanksgiving, is the healthiest of all human emotions. Hans Selye, who is considered the father of stress studies, has said that gratitude produces more positive emotional energy than any other attitude in life.

Thanksgiving is more than just expressing our appreciation to God for what He has given us. It is a statement of faith that says, "No matter how bad this situation might be, I know that God is going to bring me through it."

Jesus said to this thankful man who was healed from leprosy in:

**Luke 17:19 MSG:** "...Your faith has **healed** and **saved** you."

Have you ever wondered why Jesus said this? This man was already healed of his leprosy, like the 9 others, from the time they went to show themselves to the priest. When Jesus said to this one man, "Your faith has made you well," He wasn't just talking about a physical healing; He was talking about healing spirit, soul and body! This man had been made whole! Real thanksgiving and an attitude of gratitude where you connect with God, makes you whole, spirit, soul and body!

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**NOTES:**

Gratitude has been shown in studies to:

- Help you make friends. A study found that thanking a new acquaintance makes them more likely to seek a more lasting relationship with you.
- Improve your physical health. People who show gratitude report fewer aches and pains, a general feeling of health, more regular exercise, and more frequent check-ups with their doctor than those who don't.
- Improve your psychological health. Grateful people enjoy higher well-being and happiness and suffer from reduced symptoms of depression.
- Enhance empathy and reduces aggress. Those who show their gratitude are less likely to seek revenge against others and more likely to behave in a prosocial manner, with sensitivity and empathy.
- Improve your sleep. Practicing gratitude regularly can help you sleep longer and better.
- Enhance your self-esteem. People who are grateful have increased self-esteem, in part due to their ability to appreciate other peoples' accomplishments.
- Increase in mental strength. Grateful people have an advantage in overcoming trauma and enhanced resilience, helping them to bounce back from highly stressful situations.

**Practical things to do:**

Before going to bed:

1. Think about the things that you are thankful for
2. Feel and experience the gratitude inside you.
3. Write it down
4. Express your gratitude. Thank God in prayer and express your gratitude towards Him. I doing so, experience His love and grace!
5. Then and only then can you go to bed with a real attitude of gratitude!

When you wake up in the morning:

1. Connect with God
2. Thank God with a real attitude of gratitude.
3. Start your day the right way.

During the day:

1. Think connect with God and say: ‘Thank you!’
2. Make it a way of living, a lifestyle.
3. You default spiritual and emotional domain will become one of appreciation and gratitude that you can enjoy in the presence of the Lord!
4. You will not put in any effort to be happy. Happiness will be part of your life!
5. Happiness and joy will flow from you like the fragrance from a flower!