

GRATITUDE

Faith Practices, Luke 17:11-19; Colossians 3:15-17

October 9, 2022

"Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?"

Luke 6:5

Gratitude in poetry, epistle, law, and narrative (see *Faith Practices*)

- ¹ Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name;
make known among the nations what he has done.
- ² Sing to him, sing praise to him;
tell of all his wonderful acts.
- ³ Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice.
- ⁴ Look to the LORD and his strength;
seek his face always.

Psalm 105

¹⁵ Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Colossians 3:15-17

²⁹ "When you sacrifice a thank offering to the LORD, sacrifice it in such a way that it will be accepted on your behalf. ³⁰ It must be eaten that same day; leave none of it till morning. I am the LORD.

³¹ "Keep my commands and follow them. I am the LORD. ³² Do not profane my holy name. I must be acknowledged as holy by the Israelites. I am the LORD, who makes you holy ³³ and who brought you out of Egypt to be your God. I am the LORD."

Leviticus 22

¹¹ Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. 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.

Luke 17

1. The language and genre of the Bible connect gratitude with praise, blessing and grace
2. Gratitude is always a response – sometimes from surprising places!

Gratitude and Faith

Jesus said to his disciples: “Things that cause people to sin are bound to come, but woe to that person through whom they come.”² It would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied around his neck than for him to cause one of these little ones to sin.³ So watch yourselves.

“If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him.”⁴ If he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times comes back to you and says, ‘I repent,’ forgive him.”

⁵ The apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith!”

⁶ He replied, “If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it will obey you.

⁷ “Suppose one of you had a servant plowing or looking after the sheep. Would he say to the servant when he comes in from the field, ‘Come along now and sit down to eat’? ⁸ Would he not rather say, ‘Prepare my supper, get yourself ready and wait on me while I eat and drink; after that you may eat and drink’? ⁹ Would he thank the servant because he did what he was told to do? ¹⁰ So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.’ ”

¹¹ Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him

¹⁷ Jesus asked, “Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? ¹⁸ Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?” ¹⁹ Then he said to him, “Rise and go; your faith has made you well.”

Luke 17:17-19

⁶ So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, ⁷ rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

Colossians 2 (see Ephesians 5:15-20; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-17)

¹⁵ For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, ¹⁶ I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. ¹⁷ I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. ¹⁸ I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, ²⁰ which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, ²¹ far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.

Ephesians 2:15-16

1. Luke’s central story about thankfulness happens under the shadow of the cross (like the other “good Samaritan” story in Luke 15)
2. The answer to the “increase our faith” request is a meeting with a thankful Samaritan
3. Thankfulness is one of the most important (THE most important??) sign of strengthened faith

The benefits of gratitude

1. Gratitude is the first step in addressing the tension in Scripture between faith and works

Heidelberg Catechism, Section III: Gratitude, Lord's Day 32

Q 86. Since we have been delivered from our misery

by grace through Christ

without any merit of our own,

why then should we do good works?

A. Because Christ, having redeemed us by his blood,

is also restoring us by his Spirit into his image,

so that with our whole lives we may show that we are thankful to God for his benefits,¹

so that he may be praised through us,²

so that we may be assured of our faith by its fruits,³

and so that by our godly living our neighbors may be won over to Christ.⁴

¹ Rom. 6:13; 12:1-2; 1 Pet. 2:5-10 ² Matt. 5:16; 1 Cor. 6:19-20

³ Matt. 7:17-18; Gal. 5:22-24; 2 Pet. 1:10-11 ⁴ Matt. 5:14-16; Rom. 14:17-19; 1 Pet. 2:12; 3:1-2

2. Thankfulness opens our eyes to God's work

²¹ *For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.*

Romans 1 (See Romans 5:1-8; Doug also likes Piper on this passage at <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/proud-people-dont-say-thanks>)

3. Gratitude is the spiritual antidote against pride

¹⁰ *When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the LORD your God for the good land he has given you.* ¹¹ *Be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day.* ¹² *Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down,* ¹³ *and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied,* ¹⁴ *then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery* ¹⁷ *You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me."* ¹⁸ *But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today.*

¹⁹ *If you ever forget the LORD your God and follow other gods and worship and bow down to them, I testify against you today that you will surely be destroyed.*

Deuteronomy 8

Resources for further studies in faith practices

The “Faith Practices” booklet is available at church and from Faith Alive Resources:

<https://www.faithaliveresources.org/Products/810786/faith-practices.aspx>

Spurgeon has a “How To Read the Bible” sermon at <http://www.bible-researcher.com/spurgeon2.html>

Ryle has commentary on the Luke 6 text at <https://www.gracegems.org/Ryle/106.htm>

Tom Schwanda has a helpful definition of Reformed disciplines at

http://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/ref-rev/10-1/10-1_schwanda.pdf

Eugene Peterson’s “Eat This Book” seminar is the best description of *lectio divina* that I have heard.

Available From Regent at https://www.regentaudio.com/products/eat-this-book-the-holy-community-at-table-with-holy-scripture?_pos=1&_sid=88952cbbf&_ss=r

Two classics on spiritual disciplines: Richard Foster’s *Celebration of Discipline* (Harper and Row, 1978, with a new 40th anniversary edition out) and Dalla Willard’s *The Spirit of the Disciplines* (HarperOne, 1990).

Michael Horton has a good reminder of the limits of spiritual disciplines at <https://www.monergism.com/following-jesus-what%E2%80%99s-wrong-and-right-about-imitation-christ>

Kevin DeYoung has a wonderful blog on thanksgiving and the glory of God at

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevin-deyoung/glory-of-god-gratitude-to-gods-glory/>

getpocket.com has some secular articles on the very real physical benefits of gratitude at

https://getpocket.com/collections/how-to-be-grateful?utm_source=pocket-newtab

John Piper on Romans 1-2 at <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/proud-people-dont-say-thanks>

Two sermons I found helpful were Deffinbaugh at <https://bible.org/seriespage/putting-faith-perspective-luke-175-19> and Spurgeon at <https://www.spurgeon.org/resource-library/sermons/the-necessity-of-increased-faith/> and on the “other nine” at

<https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjKqNraj9L6AhWnMDQIHfFjCKMQFnoECCkQAO&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.spurgeongems.org%2Fsermon%2Fchs1935.pdf&usg=AOvVaw25iHOeJsvdLUnkQaY0w-z0>