

Gratitude Matters

Scripture used: [Luke 17:15-18 \(NLT\)](#) and [1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 \(NLT\)](#)

OVERVIEW

Pastor Hurmon reminded us that gratitude is a game-changer for our lives, and for the people who surround us. To illustrate everyday gratitude, Pastor Hurmon told a story of him intentionally thanking a fast-food service worker while on a drive on the Eastern Seaboard. Gratitude defuses frustration and changes the environment, allowing God's Presence to show up. It's key to acknowledge what's going well in our lives, and to celebrate those who contribute to our lives, in all circumstances.

KEY POINTS

1. Disease and death are democratic. In our Scripture, the disease is leprosy, and it crosses ethnic groups and classes. Those affected wear an "unclean" tag, and others keep their distance from them. The priests have the authority to certify who is clean. But the grace of God does not discriminate. God wants something improbable, something unlikely to happen in our lives. God moves supernaturally in the lives of those who dare. The grace of God is for all. When the protagonist was healed, he was so grateful, he was shouting the grace of God. He went from what would have been considered an "outsider", or "inferior" faith as a Samaritan to being honored by Jesus because of his total game-changing gratitude.
2. Gratitude is important to God, not because God needs gratitude, but because embedded in gratitude is the power to unleash enormous positive changes in our lives. The definition of being grateful starts with being thankful for small miracles. This can be fleeting, as it is tagged to a particular event. At a basic level: how often do we say thank you for the small everyday blessings? Grace is the favor that we don't earn; it is a huge gift. We must take the time to acknowledge what makes a difference, what adds value, and joy, and blessing, in our lives.
3. A deeper level is when gratitude becomes part of our character. It endures as a permanent posture and disposition in all circumstances. It transcends specific events. We recognize and appreciate the value of what we have, and the contributions of others to our well-being & wholeness no matter what difficult circumstances we may be going through.
4. Gratitude is also recognizing God's unlikely provisions in tough times. We must maintain a gratitude flow. Mercy begins anew each morning. It's a great idea to keep a gratitude journal, to write down our emotions. To see the things that we have not noticed before. We must step forward, and practice being a blessing to others. A posture of gratitude pushes away adversity and pain; it helps us find joy; and to remain faithful. Out of our gratitude, we are invited to respond to God and to serve God; gratitude is the best and truest foundation for serving others.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - What specific things in your life are you grateful for right now? What tends to make it hard for you to be grateful or feel grateful?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Read [Luke 17:15-18 \(NLT\)](#). Why do you think Jesus highlighted the gratitude of the Samaritan in just this way in the passage? Because of his gratitude, what experience did the Samaritan receive that the others did not? [1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 \(NLT\)](#) teaches us to be thankful in all circumstances - do you think that is possible? Have you encountered a situation where it was impossible to be grateful? If we look to create a space for gratitude in every circumstance, what difference would that make? How can we go about creating space for gratitude in every circumstance?
- 3) **DO** - Pastor Hurmon encouraged us to consider acting on our gratitude with a "Thank you, plus!" That is, not leaving our gratitude as words, but also look for concrete actions to express our gratitude. Is there an active step of gratitude that God is putting on your heart? If you have been blessed by the ministry of New Beginnings, is there a way you might serve and engage with the vision of NBCC that reflects your gratitude? If so, reach out to a staff person or visit the serve page on our website! Join us next Sunday as we continue the series, Character Matters!