

# Learning to Trust God in Every Circumstance

August 26, 2018

Sermon title: How to Give Thanks in All Circumstances

Introduction: The Ostlunds and perhaps the movie Beautifully Broken

Theme verse for today: 1 Thessalonians 5:18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (ESV)

Main point: Thanking God for every gift and situation is our way of appreciating God's generosity and fatherly care.

Learning how to give thanks is simply a matter of knowing there is an extremely positive outcome of any severe trial we are facing.

1. It matters to God that we express our appreciation for every blessing and for every unknown outcome of every trial.
  - We can ask ourselves, "Why does God care if he doesn't get our thanks?"
  - Answer:
    - It doesn't make God feel any better about Himself if we do or don't express our gratitude. He is all sufficient. In other words he is not lacking in self-esteem in any way. Psalm 50:9-12. Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you; your burnt offerings are continually before me. I will not accept a bull from your house or goats from your folds. For every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the hills, and all that moves in the field is mine. "If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world and its fullness are mine. Do I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats? Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and perform your vows to the Most High, and call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me." (ESV) or 1 John 4:8 Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. (ESV)
    - So, it's not for God's benefit, but for ours and it pleases God to see Himself in His people when they are grateful for all his blessings.
    - Just as a parent encourages thankfulness in a child since it will develop their character and mold their personality so does God demand that we be thankful creatures. Think about this in your own life . . . A thankful person is a happy person and is a delight to be around. Another reflection of God. A thankful family is a happy family and a delight to be around (so important to pray at every meal and bedtime). A thankful church is a happy church and a delight to associate with and be a part of.

Another reflection of God's personality of joy and happiness. Listen to David: Psalm 92:1–4 It is good to give thanks to the LORD, to sing praises to your name, O Most High; to declare your steadfast love in the morning, and your faithfulness by night, to the music of the lute and the harp, to the melody of the lyre. For you, O LORD, have made me glad by your work; at the works of your hands I sing for joy. (ESV)

2. Learning how to give thanks is 1) a matter of knowing there is an extremely positive outcome of any severe trial we are facing. And 2) the knowledge that our public gratitude will make God look bigger in the eyes of non-believers.
  1. Knowing the outcome. Try to imagine what God is doing with you through the trial. Is he humbling you? Great lesson. Is he increasing your faith? Even better. Is he making you wiser, more patient, kinder, more compassionate, more understanding? All great lessons. James 1:2–4 Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. (ESV)
  2. Making God look bigger. Psalm 69:30–33 I will praise the name of God with a song; I will magnify him with thanksgiving. This will please the LORD more than an ox or a bull with horns and hoofs. When the humble see it they will be glad; you who seek God, let your hearts revive. For the LORD hears the needy and does not despise his own people who are prisoners. (ESV)

#### Application

Want to be a happy person? Be grateful and thankful. Gratitude is feeling it thankfulness is expressing it.

Want a happy family? Teach your children to be grateful and thankful.

Want a happy church full of life and fun? Encourage one another not to complain but to be grateful and thankful.