



Thank you for downloading the  
**CQ Rewind - Summary Only Version!**

Each week, the **Summary Only** version provides you with approximately four pages of brief excerpts from the program, along with Scripture citations.

If you would like to receive the  
**CQ Rewind FULL EDITION** at no charge, simply sign up at  
[www.ChristianQuestions.com](http://www.ChristianQuestions.com).

The **FULL EDITION** of approximately 10-12 pages includes comprehensive excerpts from the program, fully quoted Scriptures, graphics, illustrations, and even extra study points that time prevented us from covering during the live program.

## Is Gratitude Your Attitude?

**Hebrews 13:15:** (NASB) *Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.*



Here is a question: what do the Fourth of July and Thanksgiving have in common? The most obvious answer is that these two celebrations are uniquely American in that their very founding were undeniably linked to the founding of the United States. The less obvious answer is that these two holidays were also founded in humble recognition of God Almighty. Just read the first and last parts of the *Declaration of Independence* and the first Declaration for Thanksgiving of the United States, and you will see that God was first and foremost. Here we are about 240 years later, and God is no longer first, and He certainly is no longer "for most." As we approach the Thanksgiving holiday, what can we do to relight our own fire of gratitude towards God and towards one another? Let us start by talking about it.

Profile of Gratitude: Daniel

Daniel was able to navigate that road with the compass of faith, the staff of courage and the sustenance of gratitude.

**The following event was upon the revealing of the king's dream and its meaning:**

**Daniel 2:19-23:** Daniel and his friends (Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego) prayed together over the problem of the king's request. Although the dream and its meaning were revealed only to Daniel, we see his great humility in saying *you have revealed to us* - he included his friends in the thank you, as they were all working together to praise and honor God.

Daniel was in a place where he could mentally and spiritually find gratitude because he was already attuned to God. But sometimes the path to gratitude is protracted. Early in King Nebuchadnezzar's life he appreciated God, specifically after the dream interpretation, but as time went on the king lost any godly perspective and became "god" in his own eyes. He had great wealth and success and was very prideful. Daniel warned him about this to no avail.

Rick tells the story about how he and Jonathan used to volunteer together at a Bible youth camp. One year there was a skit about Daniel (played by Rick) and Rick's normally dignified father, Richard, agreed to play the role of Nebuchadnezzar as a beast. He was dressed with lots of hair, dirt and long fingernails. He crawled around on all fours, eating grass. The kids at camp were astonished! Rick thinks back on that with gratitude. Because his dad had an opportunity to make an impression on those kids, he was willing to put himself in that position.

**God set Nebuchadnezzar low for seven years:** **Daniel 4:34, 36-37:** He was given back all he lost, so what would he do with it? *Praise and extol and honor the King of heaven.* We see a changed life.

**Gratitude Lesson:** *Whether we come from a place of sure and humble faith or pride and ego, gratitude can be equally powerful and transformative.*

Unfortunately, sometimes we miss opportunities to show gratitude.

PROFILE OF GRATITUDE: JONAH

Next is a person we would not normally view as one who was an example of gratitude, rather we often see him as an example of grudging obedience. *For more on the story of Jonah, please see our program from June 12, 2011, "So, What's the Story with Jonah?"*

At this point in the story, he is alive and conscious in the belly of the fish and had time to think.

**Here is the recorded prayer from the belly of the fish:** **Jonah 2:1-9:** *Thou heard my voice* - even though he was as far away as possible from God. *Yet you have brought up my life from corruption* - there was great faith and the beginning of gratitude. **Verse 7 - Gratitude Step 1 - Recognition** He recognized he did the wrong things in life. **Verse 8 - Gratitude Step 2: Contrition** He realized he was paying attention to his own thinking instead of the mercies of God. **Verse 9 - Gratitude Step 3: Submission** In other words, "I will do what You set me out to do."

These all equal an attitude of gratitude. His life was spared! (But then he went back to complaining again! He still had some work to do on his character.)



We have a tendency to make the Thanksgiving holiday about turkey and football games. Instead, let us make it about gratitude.

**Gratitude Lesson:** We can be filled with gratitude even if we have missed opportunities, for our personal lack does not diminish the power of the gifts we have been given.

In the Old Testament:

**Thanksgiving:** Strong's #8426 *hdwt towdah*; properly, an extension of the hand, i.e. (by implication) avowal, or (usually) adoration; specifically, a choir of worshippers, confession, (sacrifice of) praise, thanks (-giving, offering).

The following texts show the actions that true gratitude towards God provokes in our lives: Psalms 26:1-7

Psalms 50:14: (KJV) *Offer unto God **thanksgiving** <8426>; and pay thy vows unto the most High.*

Say the words and do the action.

Psalms 28:6-7: This reminds us of the song that says, "We all need somebody to lean on..." By leaning on God, we are given promises to lift us and carry us through our daily experiences. Our deepest gratitude will always go towards those whom we trust the most. If we do *not* show gratitude, what does that say about our trust?

Without showing intentional gratitude, trust can begin to feel like an entitlement. Rarely would you feel grateful for something you feel entitled to. We could look at God's care for us and think, well, if I am a follower, He is *supposed* to take care of me. If we look at God's contribution to our lives and are in awe and feel deep, humble, gracious thankfulness for His overrulings, we will be deeply appreciative without having a sense of entitlement. Gratitude is an intentional, clear action.

Profile of Gratitude: Apostle Paul

Philippians 1:3: (NASB) *I thank my God in all my remembrance of you.* Paul found gratitude in thinking about his brethren. He saw them as having great value.

2 Corinthians 11:27-29: Paul joined his brethren in their pain, suffering, trials and mistakes. He had a connection with them.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10: Paul found gratitude in his weakness and his lack, because he knew that Christ could sustain him. He was content in the knowledge that through his weakness the power of Christ is more obvious and effective. His weakness (likely poor eyesight) taught the Apostle Paul to not depend on himself so much.

Giving our difficult experiences to the Lord helps to remove the effect of the pain, leaving us with peace.

The pursuit of gratitude and compassion will make you happier than the pursuit of happiness. Gratitude and compassion are major tools to create brain happiness and therefore life happiness. Gratitude is rooted in contentment and the ability to be thankful for "what is," even if it is not what you prefer.

**Paul taught us about gratitude:** Romans 8:35, 37-39: Paul found gratitude in his conviction that we are led and protected through all trial and suffering, no matter how it happens in our lives. Gratitude is not just a feeling. It is an attitude and a decision about how we are going to live our lives, helping us walk a more fulfilled path.

**Gratitude Lesson:** We are surrounded with reasons for gratitude; we fellowship, we bear each other's burdens, we suffer for Christ and see his deliverance - all can EQUALLY bring gratitude!

Gratitude and praise drove this faithful servant of God. The entire podcast could be about him, but we will focus on his gratitude in one of his most difficult times.

**This shows us how David grew back toward God and gratitude:** Psalms 32:1-7,11: *My vitality was drained away* - David's sin had left him broken.

*Selah* - meaning, "pause and consider." Absorb the depth of despair he was feeling.



David is telling us to pray to the Lord like he did and be completely vulnerable. Turn your sin over to Him.

*Be glad in the Lord and rejoice...shout for joy* - His pathway back to God was humbling, painful and long, but once he could again see the light of God's love his gratitude overflowed! Gratitude brought him back to God.

**Gratitude Lesson:** Our greatest need for gratitude is when we have made destructive choices. As soon as we can realize, repent and reframe our issues we will position ourselves to receive the healing balm of gratitude that gushes forth from God's love and forgiveness.

Psalms 106:1: (NASB) *Praise the LORD! Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; for His lovingkindness is everlasting.*

Profile of Gratitude: Jesus

**Jesus giving thanks for the seemingly small provisions from God:** Matthew 15:32-36: Jesus was about to perform a major miracle, but the execution of that miracle came through his gratitude to God first. He was going to feed thousands of people with almost nothing. What is small and insufficient in the eyes of men can - by the grace and power of God through Jesus - be made to satisfy the multitudes.

**Jesus gave thanks for God's compassionate and listening ear:** John 11:39-41: Lazarus had already begun to decompose - there was no question he was dead. Martha is practical with her admonition to him not to remove the stone. The people around him had to be concerned over what was happening. Jesus then does something he did not have to do. He raised his eyes and thanked God for hearing him. He makes a public proclamation of gratitude to God. He did not have to say that aloud, but he did it so they would understand his gratitude to the Father for the great power about to be expressed and exposed to everyone watching. Jesus was a template for us in our daily lives - we should always be open to be thankful to God.

**Jesus also shows gratitude that he could clearly represent the Father to all who witnessed this event:** John 11:42-44: *Unbind him and let him go* - take the wrappings of death and sin off him. This was a picture of the great resurrection of all mankind coming in the future.

This greatest of all his miracles was born out of the deep connection between Jesus and the Father, a relationship of mutual love, purpose and gratitude. God Himself showed gratitude for Jesus: *This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.*

**Jesus giving thanks for the sacrifice he was about to offer:** Luke 22:14-20: Jesus gave an example to remember him in the bread and cup. He gave thanks for the opportunity to be and do God's will in the redemption of the entire race of mankind.

Ultimate gratitude is when we can be truly thankful for the harsh and painful experiences before us.

**Gratitude Lesson:** Gratitude can and should permeate every part of our lives. It should echo through the little and the big providences, the privilege of and answers to prayer, the opportunities to represent the Gospel with our lives and the hard and costly sacrifices that are required of us.

We have an opportunity for gratitude to not only be present in our lives but to have it permeate our lives. We want to have gratitude when offering prayers, when God answers our prayers - even when the answer is "no." Gratitude changes the way we look at our experiences.

Profile of Gratitude: You and Me

First, a three-step recipe for creating "Personal Gratitude Momentum:"

**1. Be aware of your surroundings - choose the environment in which you want your mind to flourish:** Psalms 1:1-3: Blessed is the man who takes his every day and makes a choice. Will we get drawn into the pitfalls or rise up to the opportunities? Know what you really want and you will know what to **choose**.

**2. Make a conscious effort to focus on those things that naturally deliver gratitude:** Philippians 4:4,7-8: These things mentioned - *true, honorable, right, pure, lovely, of good*



*repute* -naturally deliver gratitude. If we are going to wallow in self-pity, we will end up grumbling in misery. Make a conscious effort to focus on things that naturally bring us gratitude. Distractions abound while goodness and righteousness seem to hide. Observe and **choose** carefully.

**3. Live firmly in the present, not with one foot in the past or the future:** Exodus 16:1-3: How small did they think God was? Did they think He would miraculously deliver them only to starve them later? Israel chose to look backward selectively. Where do YOU **choose** to look and live? Gratitude is a choice!

Jonathan has a client who is always down on herself. At last year's CQ program on Thanksgiving, he gave her a challenge: Every month when they get together, he wanted to hear she wrote a letter to someone to thank them for being special, or caring. Each month she told Jonathan who she contacted and what a blessing this was to her. It really helps those who are depressed and down.

**We promote gratitude in others when we **choose** to live our own gratitude:**  
Hebrews 13:15-16

**Live your gratitude out loud! Sometimes the most impactful gratitude (which usually happens in a time of private pain) finds its way to the ears and hearts of others to spur them on as well: Psalms 100:1-5**

**Gratitude Lesson: Gratitude if chosen will lift your heart and mind so that you can better contribute to others and they in turn can experience gratitude that will lift their hearts and minds.**

The choice of gratitude is yours. It is with you every day in every experience. Choose to try it on and see how it fits. Choose to look into Scripture instead of the nasty news of the day and see if you can find the gratitude necessary to lift you to a different place. Then choose to pass it on to others. Have a wonderful Thanksgiving! Make gratitude your attitude.

*So, is gratitude your attitude?  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!*