

How Can We Be Thankful When Life is So Hard?

Philippians 4:6: (NASB) Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.



When we think of the most basic manners we teach our kids, we generally start by instructing them how to appropriately make a request for something and how to graciously receive it. "How do you ask?" "Please!" "What do you say?" "Thank you!" These two simple communication tools (which incidentally seem to have been misplaced in our social media world) are not merely expressions of good manners, they are declarations of good character. As we approach the American holiday of Thanksgiving, we want to focus on being thankful in a way

that goes beyond typical platitudes. How can we be truly and deeply thankful even when our life experiences are difficult and harsh? How can we make true thankfulness a way of life and not just words of praise?

This week is the Thanksgiving holiday in the United States. Unfortunately, this holiday is overshadowed by Halloween and the glitz and glimmer of Christmas. Thanksgiving is the holiday that can get lost.

Let's gain a biblical perspective on the idea of Thanksgiving. What we will find is thanksgiving is multifaceted and can be expressed for many reasons. We will introduce several potential reasons for thanksgiving throughout the podcast.

Thanksgiving can be expressed out of lifelong loyalty.

Thanksgiving: Strongs #8426 *towdah*; an extension of the hand, i.e. (by implication) avowal, or (usually) adoration; specifically, a choir of worshippers

The following texts show true loyalty towards God provoking thanksgiving in our lives. The test:

<u>Psalms 26:1-7</u>: (NASB) ¹Vindicate me, O LORD, for I have walked in my integrity, and I have trusted in the LORD without wavering. ²Examine me, O LORD, and try me; test my mind and my heart. ³For Your lovingkindness is before my eyes, and I have walked in Your truth. ⁴I do not sit with deceitful men, nor will I go with pretenders. ⁵I hate the assembly of evildoers, and I will not sit with the wicked.

The Psalmist presents himself for judgment, examination and intellectual heart testing.

The results:

⁶I shall wash my hands in innocence, and I will go about Your altar, O LORD, ⁷that I may proclaim with the voice of **thanksgiving <8426>** and declare all Your wonders.

He is expressing a high level of adoration.

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



This is "living" thanksgiving. It is not just saying words.

We will also be expressing ways thanksgiving can be part of our lives by discussing the mechanics of thankfulness. With these mechanics, there is a question at the end of each one to help us examine how we are doing.



Is my own thankfulness &towards God built on a basis of

INTEGRITY

or is it expressed on a basis of

EMOTION?



Our goal should be to have both integrity and emotion in our thankfulness. We will look at this more closely as we continue.

2. Thanksgiving can be a result of deep trust proven to be well-placed:

Thanks: Strongs #3034 *yadah*; literally, to use (i.e. hold out) the hand; physically, to throw (a stone, an arrow) at or away; especially to revere or worship

When we revere something, we look at it with great solemnity, reverence, honor and respect.

<u>Psalms 28:6-7</u>: (NASB) ⁶Blessed be the LORD, because He has heard the voice of my supplication. ⁷The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in Him, and I am helped; therefore my heart exults, and with my song I shall <u>thank <3034></u> Him.



This Scripture made me question, "How much do I trust God? How many times throughout my day do I thank God?" Someone suggested to me this week that we should memorize hymns. One of my new goals is to memorize a new hymn every week and while I am working, I can sing to God to show my thankfulness to my Heavenly Father.



Our deepest gratitude will always go towards those whom we

trust the most.

If you do not show gratitude, then what does that say about your trust?





Please and *thank you* really are a basis for gratitude - they display humility and an ability to be truly receptive.

It is one thing to be thankful when things work out. How can we be just as thankful when they don't?

Gratitude in the face of hardship is an area where thankfulness does not naturally occur. It is easy to be thankful when we are given an outward blessing, for the blessing itself lifts our emotions. When we are suffering, our emotions are low and that usually keeps gratitude off of our agenda.

Should our gratitude be emotionally driven? No, it needs to be a choice backed by the role of emotion.

Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. — Melody Beattie

The act of gratitude can change our life.

We will be listening to a story by a Christian woman named Laurie who lives with constant pain.

)) The Pain, Laurie F.

I've suffered from arthritis and nerve damage in my back for several years. I also have Restless Leg Syndrome, and one can trigger the other, causing not only pain but, well, let me put it this way: I now know what the expression, "driven to distraction" means. For several years, before I found the right medication, every night I would be in agonizing pain for about four to six hours until I would finally fall asleep. There was no position I could get into that would bring any relief. I couldn't sit, stand, lie down, or walk for very long, so the hours were spent just moving around. This still happens once in a while.

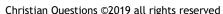


It is hard to imagine having this battle every night for four to six hours. This is a life-changing experience. Stay with us to see what Laurie discovered.

Please search our archives for Episode 924: How Do You Stand When Life Gets Too Heavy?

3. Thanksgiving can be a result of comprehending the necessity for hardship and pain.

<u>1 Peter 4:12-16</u>: (NASB) ¹²Beloved, <u>do not be surprised</u> at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; ¹³but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, <u>keep on rejoicing</u>, so that also at the revelation of his glory you may rejoice with exultation. ¹⁴If you are reviled for the name of



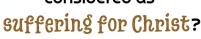


Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. ¹⁵Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; ¹⁶but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name.

If we are suffering publicly as a Christian (being biblically humiliated), we are not to be ashamed. Peter tells us to rise above it. Jesus is our pattern to follow. The Scribes and Pharisees tried to make him look bad and he rose above it.



Where are my head and my heart? Can my suffering be considered as





Does suffering for Christ have to be a result of persecution? What about illness, accidents and experiences that do not seem related?

Our friend Laurie has this private pain. Is that suffering for Christ?

Hebrews 12:7-11: (NASB) ⁷It is for discipline <3809> that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? ⁸But if you are without discipline <3809>, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

Discipline: Strongs #3809 *paideia*; tutorage, i.e. education or training; by implication, disciplinary correction

The Lexicon develops this further:

Discipline: Online Bible Greek Lexicon: 1) the whole training and education of children...
2) whatever in adults also cultivates the soul, esp. by correcting mistakes and curbing passions; 2a) instruction which aims at increasing virtue

Discipline is a life lesson to grow into a mature adult in Christ. The apostle is saying, if we are not being disciplined by God, we are not His child. The example of personal pain is a discipline and we must learn how to grow through the experience. Christ learned things through which he suffered, and we must too.

⁹Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? ¹⁰For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness. ¹¹All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

All discipline (life development) for the moment seems not to be joyful. Discipline does not necessarily mean we have done something wrong. When an athlete is going through the discipline of training they need to keep doing more and push harder to get stronger and faster. The discipline spoken of in Hebrews 12 is life development. Even when life is hard, we do have cause for gratitude.



Fatherly discipline includes all life teachings put in place for the purpose of rounding out the character of the child, so they become a responsible adult. Even better with our Heavenly Father who loves us so much. Bearing our burdens helps us have strength to later help others. Our discipline can also be for the purpose of training us for an even more difficult experience in the future. Some of our hardest experiences can become some of our best growth experiences.



Romans 8:28: (NASB) And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

We had a wonderful Thanksgiving program at our Bible study on Sunday. There were several keys for living a life of gratitude. One of the suggestions was to "be in the moment" so we can see the gratefulness in our life. If we are always looking behind or ahead, we may miss the lesson.



Are we observing our experiences in the moment?

This conversation of gratitude framed by the discipline necessary for spiritual growth is actually encouraging.

How do we approach our experiences when we see them as hampering our Christian abilities?



Human perception can mess up gratitude.



Talent is God-given; be humble. Fame is man-given; be thankful. Conceit is self-given; be careful. — Harvey Mackay

(1) The Plea, Laurie F.

• I have a bulletin board with Scriptures, positive sayings, notes from friends, things like that, that I look at often each day to keep me from getting discouraged. One particularly bad night, I was trying to pray but, as usually happens when I'm flooded with pain, I couldn't keep my mind focused. My thoughts were flitting around, and all I could say, through tears, was, "Please help me, Heavenly Father." I didn't mean, please take the pain away, but the Lord knew I was asking for help to endure.



Laurie boldly asked God for endurance. It was a prayer to rise above that which had been given.

4. Thankfulness can be a result of realizing the profound spiritual value of our hardships and pain.

The next step is to be able to embrace such gratitude in the midst of our issues. The Apostle Paul had to learn this very lesson.

Apostle Paul is reporting his experience with the insight of hindsight:

<u>2 Corinthians 12:7-10:</u> (NASB) ⁷Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from <u>exalting <5229</u>> myself (from being egotistical), there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to <u>torment <2852</u>> me to keep me from exalting myself. ⁸Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me.

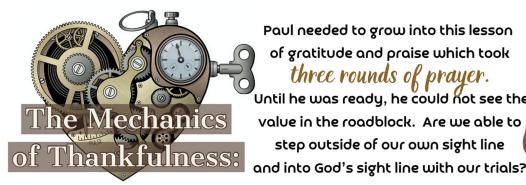
Exalting: Strongs #5229 huperairomai; to raise oneself over, i.e. (figuratively) to become haughty

Torment: Strongs #2852 kolaphizo; to rap with the fist

Paul's hindsight: "I know I was in danger of self-exaltation, and therefore the hardship Satan sent to beat me down was in fact able to be a tool of growth in the hand of God through Christ."



⁹And he has said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. ¹⁰Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake for when I am weak, then I am strong.



Paul needed to grow into this lesson of gratitude and praise which took three rounds of prayer. Until he was ready, he could not see the value in the roadblock. Are we able to step outside of our own sight line

Paul was not praying because he was uncomfortable, but because he wanted to

do more for God. God's response - My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness. Paul's response - "I will glory in my infirmities."

Whose eyes are we looking at our trials with - our own or our Heavenly Father's?



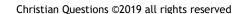
This makes me think of the personal experience my wife and I are going through. The perception of obstacles is brought out in our lesson. Our life truly changed when we took my parents in to give them a safe and healthy environment. With this experience of having caregivers in our house for 15 hours each day, our life has completely changed. We are not free to do what we used to do. We need to have my mom's best interests in mind. With so much responsibility, it is hard to get personal time and hard to find time to be with my wife. I truly believe it was the Lord's will to step up and care for them. Keeping thankfulness in mind, the lessons from our experience will help us to sympathize with other families going through the same experience. Also, the experience takes self-interests away, which may be a good thing. I think about Jesus and all the people crowding him and demanding his attention and time. If in a small way we can feel what he felt, it can help us grow closer to God and rely more on Him. I am grateful for this lesson and we are going to keep plowing through and try to bring praise, honor and glory to our Heavenly Father.

The hardship is the tool through which we can grow.

Do we want our hardships to be a tool of destruction or construction?

5. Thankfulness can be a result of lifestyle and discipline regarding our core values and thoughts.

To rejoice in the Lord is to live our Christian gratitude daily. This does not just happen; it is a learned behavior.





Two simple steps to attaining a rejoicing Christian attitude of gratitude:

<u>Philippians 4:4-8</u>: (NASB) ⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! ⁵Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. ⁶Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

- 1. Let your Christlike life be made public.
- 2. Live your Christlike life in private as well.

Focus on Christlike behavior and prayerful, thankful living, and allow the door of God's peace to open:

⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Rick: Jonathan, in your experience of taking care of your parents, have you experienced seeing the peace of God override the difficulties and intrusions in your life?

Jonathan: Absolutely. It feels rewarding to know we are helping when someone needs help and they cannot do it on their own.

Live your Christlikeness outwardly; live your Christlikeness inwardly - and the peace of God...will guard your hearts and your minds.

Once we find this state of mind, we need to learn how to keep this state of mind. The best learning comes by doing:

⁸Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.



Another key to living a grateful life is to live a mindful life. *Dwell/think on these things* - be mindful of what our mind is full of. If we allow our minds to be full of social media, politics, or the grumblings of our workplace, we do not find gratitude there. Let your mind be full of gratitude.



For gratitude to continually dwell with us we must be willing to continually

dwell where it will flourish



- in the presence of godly thoughts and behavior. What is my choice?

Where will I live? Is my address going to be the place where godly thoughts and behavior live, or is my address going to be the place where my own broken mind is always putting myself down? It is a choice!

Thankfulness can only be a choice if we are committed to ALL of what our lives bring us as followers of Christ.



How do we find God's peace when we suffer regularly? How does this translate into gratitude?

The key to God's peace during trials is found in our power to choose. This power of choice is not necessarily natural or easy, but it is lifechanging. As with the Apostle Paul and the current example of our Sister Laurie, finding the choice that brings gratitude is a result of truly looking for it.

When you are grateful - when you can see what you have - you unlock blessings to flow in your life. — Suze Orman

How does Laurie find a way to see through her constant daily pain and find something better and higher?

)) The Answer, Laurie F.

• I went over to my bulletin board and read <u>Psalms 94:18-19</u>: "When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O LORD, held me up. In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul." I read it again: "In the multitude of my thoughts…" My thoughts were going through my head at

lightning speed, but my Father put it in my mind to realize that was the "multitude of thoughts." So, that Scripture took on a very personal meaning for me. I was better able then to concentrate on the next part — "thy comforts delight my soul." Sitting for very long to read or study doesn't work well for me anymore, so I love to

Psalm 94:18-19: When I said,
My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O
LOKO, held me up. In the
multitude of my thoughts within
me thy comforts delight my soul.

keep short snippets of positive, spiritual messages in my house, like on my bulletin board, that I can look at often throughout the day. I'm very thankful for this experience that has brought me closer to my Lord and given me a deeper sense of compassion for other people that deal with pain.

Laurie is thankful for the experience because it has taught her something she never would have known before.

6. Thankfulness can be a result of diligent searching and genuine desire for the peace of God in trial.

Laurie's psalm again gives us the power of hindsight:

<u>Psalms 94:17-19</u>: (NASB) ¹⁷If the LORD had not been my help, my soul would soon have dwelt in the abode of silence. ¹⁸If I should say, my foot has slipped, Your lovingkindness, O LORD, will hold me up. ¹⁹When my anxious thoughts multiply within me, Your consolations delight my soul.

- Verse 17: Acknowledge the Lord is your help you will not be alone.
- <u>Verse 18</u>: Embrace the protective care that God gives you will not be left broken.





 Verse 19: Rest in the authority of God's consoling power - you will not face your own racing thoughts alone.

When we get into difficult experiences, our thoughts race in our minds - anxious thoughts multiply within me - and it is difficult to tame them. Laurie's revelation is she can let those thoughts be background noise or white noise and focus on God's consolation.

God's peace invites thankfulness! We need to frame our racing thoughts as being under the jurisdiction of God's peace:

Colossians 3:14-17: (NASB) ¹⁴Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. ¹⁵Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. ¹⁶Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ¹⁷Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father.

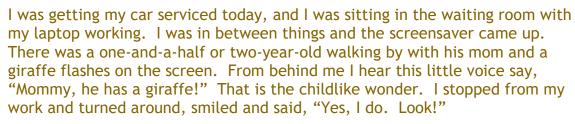
If we - Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts - our internal joy can overwhelm the internal sorrow and suffering.

Our efforts, even when handicapped, are acceptable, as God judges our hearts and intentions. What if our best efforts are just not good enough? He accepts us because we keep trying to get up.

<u>1 Thessalonians 5:16-24</u>: (NASB) ¹⁶Rejoice always; ¹⁷pray without ceasing; ¹⁸in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. ¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit; ²⁰do not despise prophetic utterances. ²¹But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; ²²abstain from every form of evil. ²³Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify (set apart for a holy purpose) you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.

When we have trials and life is hard, it is for the purpose of being set apart for a holy purpose and for glorifying God.





When we are in severe circumstances, seeking true fellowship can help us stand in thanksgiving:

Acts 16:22-25: (NASB) ²²The crowd rose up together against them, and the chief magistrates tore their robes off them and proceeded to order them to be beaten with rods. ²³When they had struck them with many blows, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to guard them securely; ²⁴and he, having received such a command, threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. ²⁵But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.

They suffered and were humiliated and in physical pain and did not know what their outcome was going to be, but they (together) were praying and singing hymns of praise to God.





Find someone who is suffering also and build one another up.



As followers of Jesus we are assured that whatever hinders us cannot put us beyond the reach of

God's peace and providence and negate our gratitude.

Do you believe it?

What effect does our gratitude in our trials have on those around us? Can we lift others up?

This is like the bonus round of the thankfulness conversation. What we will find here is that people notice things. Whether a fellow Christian or not, they may go through their whole lives not seeming to "get it," but they absolutely notice when you live a life that expresses thanks in trial.

Our gratitude can be a witness.

Keep your eyes open to your mercies. The man who forgets to be thankful has fallen asleep in life. — Robert Louis Stevenson

Many people go through the motions of life without the zeal of gratitude, without the energy that comes with looking up, and truly saying, "Thank you."

7. Thankfulness can be a result of and witness to faith in action, especially when there is great pressure.

Daniel's life path was an unpaved road through uncharted territory. He was able to navigate that road with the compass of faith, the staff of courage and the sustenance of gratitude.

For more on the life of Daniel, please search our archives for Episodes 806, 808 and 813: Why Was Daniel So Special? (Parts I, II and III)

The following event is about King Nebuchadnezzar who had a dream which no one could interpret.

The revealing of the dream by Daniel and its meaning:

<u>Daniel 2:19-23</u>: (NRSV) ¹⁹Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night, and Daniel blessed the God of heaven (Daniel expressed the greatness of God and his gratitude for Him and then he thanked Him). ²⁰Daniel said: Blessed be the name of God from age to age, for wisdom and power are His ²¹He changes times and seasons, deposes kings and sets up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding. ²²He reveals deep and hidden things; He knows what is in the darkness, and light dwells with Him. ²³To You, O God of my ancestors, I give thanks and praise, for You have given me wisdom and power, and have now revealed to me what we asked of You, for You have revealed to us what the king ordered.





As a very young man, Daniel already had the solid habit of prayer and praise and such profound habits would undoubtedly be witnessed by those around him, especially the king.



Heartfelt thanksgiving can only come from heartfelt conviction.

To live a life of gratitude comes from deeply devoted discipleship.

What does our discipleship look like?





The fourth key is the question, "What is that in thy hand?" Daniel's faith and mind were in his hand. He took his faith in God and the mind God had given him and put those things to work and became the chief counselor to King Nebuchadnezzar. Whatever is in our hand, even if it is pain and suffering, do we say, "thank you" for it and look to see how we can bless others with it?

8. Thankfulness can be a result of being worn down by godly input and God-driven discipline.

Sometimes the path to gratitude is protracted. Early in King Nebuchadnezzar's life he appreciated God, specifically after the dream interpretation, but gradually the king lost any godly perspective, did not heed the warnings and became a god in his own eyes.

God punished the king and set him low for seven years. He became like a beast of the field.

King Nebuchadnezzar's realization after the seven years:

<u>Daniel 4:34,36,37</u>: (KJV) ³⁴And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured Him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation (The first thing the king does is thank the God of Daniel). ³⁶At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. ³⁷Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and His ways judgment: and those that walk in pride He is able to abase.

The foundation of the king's blessing was the gratitude of and realization of the power of God. God granted him back his kingdom. He found humility in his last days. Daniel's example was a powerful part of Nebuchadnezzar's realization of God being God.





Whether we come from a place of sure and humble faith or pride and ego, gratitude can be equally

powerful and transformative.

Gratitude can reign in our life if we allow it to. It can become contagious to those around us, so let's be the best example.

We can be the thermostat in the room, not just the thermometer. We can either take the temperature of what is going on around us or we can set the temperature. We can set the temperature for gratitude and thanksgiving.



Hebrews 4:15-16: (NASB) ¹⁵For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

We can rely on Jesus, and because he opened the door, we have the opportunity to pray through his name. What a great way to start with gratitude. We can pray to God because Jesus came and gave his life for us. Look up and learn to say, "Thank you!"

2 Corinthians 9:15: (KJV) Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift!

How can we be thankful when life is so hard? For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions... Think about it...!



Join us next week for our podcast on December 2, 2019:

Ep. 1102: How Can Criticism Help Us Grow?



Bonus Material

Make it a habit to tell people thank you. To express your appreciation, sincerely and without the expectation of anything in return. Truly appreciate those around you, and you'll soon find many others around you. Truly appreciate life, and you'll find that you have more of it.—Ralph Marston



<u>Deuteronomy 31:6</u>: (KJV) Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

<u>Isaiah 41:10</u>: (KJV) Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness.

<u>Isaiah 26:3</u>: (KJV) Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

<u>John 14:26-27</u>: (KJV) ²⁶But the comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. ²⁷Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

<u>Proverbs 3:5-6</u>: (KJV) ⁵Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. ⁶In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.

<u>Psalm 34:17-18</u>: (KJV) ¹⁷The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. ¹⁸The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

<u>2 Corinthians 12:9-10</u>: (KJV) ⁹And he said unto me, my grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

<u>1 Peter 4:7-8</u>: (KJV) ⁷But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. ⁸And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

<u>1 Peter 4:12-13</u>: (KJV) ¹²Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you ¹³But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

<u>Hebrews 12:1-3</u>: (KJV) ¹Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, ²Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.



Demonstrating gratitude also comes through in our daily thoughts and actions:

Psalm 100:1-5: (NASB) ¹Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth. ²Serve the LORD with gladness; come before Him with joyful singing. ³Know that the LORD Himself is God; it is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture. ⁴Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him, bless His name. ⁵For the LORD is good; His lovingkindness is everlasting and His faithfulness to all generations.

How do we produce thanksgiving to God in others?

<u>2 Corinthians 9:10-15</u>: (NASB) ¹⁰Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness; ¹¹you will be enriched in everything for all liberality, which through us is producing thanksgiving to God. ¹²For the ministry of this service is not only fully supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing through many thanksgivings to God. ¹³Because of the proof given by this ministry, they will glorify God for your obedience to your confession of the gospel of Christ and for the liberality of your contribution to them and to all, ¹⁴while they also, by prayer on your behalf, yearn for you because of the surpassing grace of God in you. ¹⁵Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift.

Jesus did what needed to be done and then paved the road for us to do what needs to be done:

Hebrews 12:1-3: (NASB) ¹Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ²fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³For consider him who has endured such hostility by sinners against himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

