

B. HEARING IT reminds us of God's power or our self-worth. When we think of what God has done for us, how can we have an inferior feeling?

C. SINGING IT. Primarily to God. Some of the old hymns are only distant history, but they are so rich in meaning, that they should be brought back into our singing arsenal. This one is a masterpiece:

Lyrics by F. S. Pierpoint (1835-1917)

Arrangement from Conrad Kocher (1786-1872) by W. H. Monk (1823-1889)

For the beauty of the earth, for the glory of the skies,
for the love which from our birth over and around us lies;
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.

For the beauty of each hour of the day and of the night,
hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon, and stars of light;
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.

For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's delight,
for the mystic harmony, linking sense to sound and sight;
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.

For the joy of human love, brother, sister, parent, child,
friends on earth and friends above, for all gentle thoughts and mild;
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.

For thy church, that evermore lifteth holy hands above,
offering upon every shore her pure sacrifice of love;
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.

For thyself, best Gift Divine, to the world so freely given,
for that great, great love of thine, peace on earth, and joy in heaven:
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.

CONCLUSION:

1. Sadly, extensive words of thanksgiving have been replaced with one word by a newer generation: COOL
2. Determine to make an abrupt increase in thanking God for the rich blessing that we are experiencing.
3. Ask the Lord for added insight to see more of the blessings that we experience each day. There are lots more to identify.

Additional Copies:



THANKSGIVING, A Time to Grow

By Charles Dailey

1. Thanksgiving can change us more than just about any other Christian virtue. I cannot think of any subject that can so impact our day-to-day lives as this one.
2. When Thanksgiving is lacking in our lives, the omission is transparent to others looking on.

I. THANKSGIVING ENABLES US TO KEEP OUR PERSPECTIVE.

We are reminded that we do not operate in our own strength.

- A. The idea of giving of thanks implies a Higher Power.

1. The word blessing implies a higher power who controls the circumstances surrounding our days.

2. The word thanksgiving implies that we believe in a higher power who has blessed us.

3. Abraham Lincoln led the way in calling attention to the blessings of God in 1863.

"The year that is drawing towards its close, has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature, that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever watchful providence of Almighty God." - Abraham Lincoln



We easily grumble about what we do not have. That takes ZERO skill. Thanksgiving keeps us in balance.

II. GIVE THANKS FOR:

1. Personal Health. God may have a reason for allowing us to suffer now. Ruth in the Old Testament could not understand why she lost her husband, but from our perspective, we know that as a result, she is immortalized in the line of Jesus the Messiah. She would not have known that at the funeral of Mahlon, her first husband.

God sees a much larger picture than we can. Some of us are going through troublesome times. You may be experiencing some heartbreaking sorrow. Or perhaps you are enduring some painful physical illness. Or it may be something else - maybe even too excruciating to talk to anyone about.

But hold on. These difficulties need not get you down. They are only temporary. Glory is coming. It is the harsh blows to the outward man that often bring the greatest strength to the inner man.

2. Thankful for Safety: After a shipwreck or two, Paul was thankful:

MSG: *Act 28:15 Friends in Rome heard we were on the way and came out to meet us. One group got as far as Appian Court; another group met us at Three Taverns--emotion-packed meetings, as you can well imagine. Paul, brimming over with praise, led us in prayers of thanksgiving.*



3. Be thankful for Friends. Tell them we are thankful for them, as well as telling God.

A doctor wrote a letter of thanks to a school teacher for having given him so much encouragement when he had been in her class 30 years before. He later received this reply: "I want you to know what your note meant to me. I am an old lady in my eighties, living alone in a small room, cooking my own meals, lonely, and seeming like the last leaf on the tree. You will be interested to know that I taught school for 50 years, and yours is the first letter of appreciation I have ever received. It came on a cold, blue morning and cheered my lonely old heart as nothing has cheered me in many years."

4. Employment - work is seldom ideal, but it does provide food and housing for us.

5. Family, Parents

6. Mates: Be thankful that someone is willing to put up with us and that we have a mate in life. A day rarely passes that I don't thank God for Lois.

7. Children

8. Church:

9. Peace

III. THANKSGIVING ENABLES US TO APPRECIATE OTHER PEOPLE MORE.

A. There is almost nothing in the Scripture about criticism.

1. Some saints have the gift of identifying other people's failures. What to do?

2. Having thought about this for a while, I concluded that God's way of reducing our criticism level is to raise our thankfulness level.

B. We are surrounded by people that have some very great strengths, but we are much better at seeing their weaknesses. That is a problem with our eyes, not their situation.

Msg: Eph 5:4 Though some tongues just love the taste of gossip, Christians have better uses for language than that. Don't talk dirty or silly. That kind of talk doesn't fit our style. Thanksgiving is our dialect.

Msg: Col 2:7 You're deeply rooted in him. You're well constructed upon him. You know your way around the faith. Now do what you've been taught. School's out; quit studying the subject and start living it! And let your living spill over into thanksgiving.

C. The step beyond seeing that others have things to be thankful for is to express thankfulness TO them. It will not swell their heads or stunt their growth.

IV. THANKSGIVING TOWARDS GOD MAKES LIFE A RICHER EXPERIENCE.

How to increase thankfulness:

A. SAYING IT does something for us. How we need to tell God what he means to us and praise Him for it. Note the use of the word praise in scripture.

Count your blessings instead of your crosses;
Count your gains instead of your losses.
Count your joys instead of your woes;
Count your friends instead of your foes.
Count your smiles instead of your tears;
Count your courage instead of your fears.
Count your full years instead of your lean;
Count your kind deeds instead of your mean.
Count your health instead of your wealth;
Count on God instead of yourself.