



Power in Gratitude

Caregiving is not easy. It is easy to get caught up in all the complications, changes, dynamics and worries. What helps when it seems overwhelming hurdles seem to be everywhere or events don't progress according to plan? Help is found by not looking at the shadow cast by difficulty, but by looking to the light that shines its blessings.

George Herbert wrote: "Thou hast given me so much, give me one more thing; a grateful heart."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote: "We pray for the big things and forget to give thanks for the ordinary, small (and yet not really small) gifts. How can God entrust great things to one who will not thankfully receive from Him the little things?"

Paul writes in Philippians 3:6, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with **thanksgiving**, present your request to God."

How different and how much more joyful would be our lives, if, instead of forever indulging in self-revolving thinking, we would take our experiences, day by day, and lift them up, and praise God for them. We can sing our cares away easier than we can reason them away.

Henri Nouwen says: "Gratitude as a discipline involves a conscious choice."

The Book of Psalms describes so many feelings and circumstances common to life. Psalm 1 begins by saying the Lord watches over the way of the righteous. Do you have a favorite Psalm? What does it mean to you? Read the first and last verses of Psalm 146-150. What does this say to you?

Revelation 5:9-13 is a word picture of ultimate gratitude resulting in great praise as the Lamb of God is in His rightful place on the throne of heaven. Doesn't Psalm 150 call us to praise God in this life in a similar way the faithful will praise God in heaven.

The story of the ten lepers illustrates what nine lepers missed by not returning to say "thank you" to Jesus. The nine were thankful for being healed. They went to see the priest and had their life restored in the community of Israel. They could be with family again. They could work again. They were thankful for what happened to them.

The one who returned to thank Jesus gained much more than the other nine. He was grateful to the person of Jesus, very different from being grateful for the healing. How would describe the added benefit of the one who returned to Jesus?

Are there other benefits in being grateful? Can it lighten the load?



How would you describe a grateful heart?	Does a grateful heart help us to see things we would otherwise miss?	What are the benefits or the power of gratitude?

“Silent gratitude isn’t much use to anyone.” G. B. Stern

“We should spend as much time in thanking God for His benefits as we do asking Him for them.” St. Vincent De Paul

“No duty is more urgent than that of returning thanks” St. Ambrose

“Love is a child of gratitude. Love grows as gratitude is felt, and then breaks out into praise and thanksgiving to God.” E. M. Bounds

“How many times do we miss God’s blessings because they are not packaged as we expect.” Author Unknown

“Gratitude is the mother of all virtues.” G. K. Chesterton

“The unthankful heart discovers no mercies; but let the thankful heart sweep through the day and, as the magnet finds the iron, so it will find, in every hour, some heavenly blessing!” Henry Ward Beecher

Grace is always given to those ready to give thanks for it.” Thomas A Kempis