SERMON BASED STUDY GUIDE

Pastor Charlie Riley

GRATITUDE - WEEK 1

OPENING & PRAYER:

Gratitude belongs at the center of Christian life because believers recognize what life is really all about. Gratitude is inward; thankfulness is its outward action. Like love, a grateful heart becomes visible through appreciation, kindness, worship, and praise. Thanksgiving gives specific thanks to God for spiritual, physical, and material blessings. That response belongs in every situation, not just when everything is perfect.

"Lord, we thank You for everything You provide for us. Please continue to lead us through Your Word and the blessings it provides. In Jesus's name we pray, amen.

SCRIPTURE:

"It is good to praise the LORD and make music to your name, O Most High to proclaim your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night." **Psalms 92:1-2**

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. **Colossians 4:2**

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. **Philippians 4:6**

Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. And they lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" **Luke 17:11-13**

So when He saw them, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. **Luke 17:14-16**

So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?" And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well." **Luke 17:17-19**

Bless the Lord, O my soul; And all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits: Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases, Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, Who satisfies your mouth with good things, So that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. **Psalms 103:1-5**

The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God; God is in none of his thoughts. **Psalms 10:4**

Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character" **1 Corinthians 15:33**

And they journeyed from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came to the Wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they departed from the land of Egypt. Then the whole congregation of the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. **Exodus 16:1-2**

And the children of Israel said to them, "Oh, that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat and when we ate bread to the full! For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger." **Exodus 16:3**

We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise. **2 Corinthians 10:12 NIV**

indeed it came to pass, when the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying: **2 Chronicles 5:13-14**

Now the people complained about their hardships in the hearing of the Lord, and when he heard them his anger was aroused. Then fire from the Lord burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp. **Numbers 11:1**

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice **Philippians 4:4**

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**

Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days**. Daniel 6:10**

GO DEEPER:

A grateful heart does not pretend the world is fine. The world is a "fixer upper," but Jesus remains the anchor in the middle of the chaos. Negativity comes easily to the fallen nature, and constantly feeding on it works against the life God intends. Christian hope makes room for honest awareness of trouble without allowing trouble to have the final say.

Forgetfulness, pride, negative company, temporary circumstances, and comparison all choke gratitude. Forgetfulness receives God's help and then leaves God behind. Pride takes the credit. Negative company spreads its atmosphere, while comparison measures another person's positives against personal negatives. Israel's wilderness complaints show how a temporary hardship can overshadow the memory of deliverance.

The ten lepers bring the contrast into focus. All ten were cleansed, but the Samaritan returned to glorify God and give thanks. His being "made well" points to a work inside as well as outside. Gratitude is an avenue toward completeness and wholeness, while

grumbling delivers no one from a difficult condition. Psalm 103 calls the soul to remember the God who forgives, heals, redeems, and satisfies.

A grateful life therefore requires deliberate choices. Praise pleases God, complaining must be resisted, and rejoicing cannot wait for favorable feelings. Daily discipline can become a habit of thanksgiving. Naming reasons for gratitude every morning and evening for twenty-one days gives believers a practical way to remember God's faithfulness and see life through a different lens.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. Gratitude Takes Shape Through Thankful Action. Gratitude lives in the heart, but it does not stay hidden there. Appreciation, kindness, worship, and giving thanks put that inward response into action. A grateful Christian life becomes recognizable through the way God is honored and other people are treated. **[04:16]**

2. Remembering God Guards Against Spiritual Drift. Receiving help from God does not remove the danger of forgetting him once life settles down. Psalm 103 calls the soul to remember forgiveness, healing, redemption, and the good things God provides. Remembering those benefits keeps thanksgiving tied to God himself rather than merely to relief from trouble. **[21:28]**

3. Returning Thanks Reaches Beyond Receiving Help. Ten lepers received cleansing, but only one returned to give glory to God. The distinction between being cleansed and being made well points toward gratitude opening into inward wholeness, not merely outward relief. The Samaritan's return shows that receiving a gift and responding gratefully to the giver are not the same thing. **[20:13]**

4. Temporary Trouble Cannot Define Christian Hope. Israel's complaints turned present hunger into an argument against the deliverance God had already accomplished. Joshua and Caleb responded differently, trusting God rather than allowing the difficulty

ahead to dictate their outlook. Gratitude does not deny a hard stage of life; it refuses to treat that stage as the whole story. **[32:28]**

5. Daily Thanksgiving Begins With Deliberate Discipline. A thankful outlook can be cultivated rather than left to the mood of the moment. Naming reasons for gratitude in the morning and evening creates regular space to notice God's faithfulness in both little things and big things. Daniel's steady practice of prayer and thanksgiving gives that discipline a concrete biblical example. **[42:31]**

LEARNING AND GROWING:

1. What three practices appear together in 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18, and what words show when believers are to practice them? **[40:39]**

2. All ten men received cleansing, but the Samaritan returned to Jesus. What does that difference reveal about receiving God's help versus responding to God himself? **[20:16]**

3. How can a believer give thanks in every situation, as 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 instructs, without pretending that suffering is good or that nothing is wrong? **[12:05]**

4. Think of a time God helped you through something difficult. Now that some time has passed, how are you continuing to acknowledge him? What could help you keep that memory alive? **[16:36]**

5. When you compare your life with someone else's, what blessings in your own life become harder to notice? How could you practice appreciating what God has given you without minimizing your real needs? **[36:24]**

CLOSING PRAYER:

"Father, thank you for the opportunities to grow in our faith. We will continue to lean on Your Word as we grow to bring people to know you. In Jesus' name we pray, amen."