



4 COMMON OBSTACLES TO FULLY APPRECIATE GOD'S BLESSINGS
 Drawn from <https://www.tommynewberry.com/obstacles-to-gratitude/>

1. Excessive "noise."

The sheer velocity of life; the constant connection to commitments, obligations, and looming deadlines keep us preoccupied with urgency throughout the day and it makes it easy for thankfulness to get suppressed under the busyness of daily life.

2. The "owe-me" attitude.

The notion that someone or some group owes us; that we deserve something from others. With this mentality, even if we receive something, it's not a gift but a right. This attitude dissolves thankfulness on the spot.

3. Materialism and consumerism.

We are bombarded with thousands of marketing images every day reminding us that we could be thinner, our breath could be fresher, our whites could be whiter, and our carpets could be cleaner. Gratitude, on the other hand, makes us feel that we have enough.

4. Lack of a connection and intimacy with God.

When we are right with God, we naturally and humbly cherish life for what it is—a temporary gift, and this connection with God breeds in us an awe for life; thankful for what life has to offer us and what we have been given to offer to one another.

BENEFITS OF PRAISE & THANKFULNESS

1. Thankfulness is Good for Us and One of Best Ways to Praise God

One of the best things we can do throughout the day is to look for ways to praise God by being thankful, including things that are easily overlooked like breathing, being able to think, walk, or speak, having friends, having enough food to eat, clothes to wear, and shelter, living in America, having so many freedoms, etc.

2. Praising God with Thankfulness Brings us Closer to Him

We are always drawn closer to people we appreciate for the good things they contribute to our lives.

3. Thankfulness Brings Perspective

The truth is, God doesn't need our praise or approval. We don't have to thank Him in order to make Him happy, to satisfy some spiritual requirement, or to try to get Him to do something else for us. Giving thanks throughout the day is simply a way to show God we praise Him for who He is and appreciate all He provides for us moment by moment that we can't provide for ourselves.

Regularly giving thanks to God not only helps us fully realize how He's working in our lives, it gives us a new perspective—our mind is renewed, our attitude is improved, and we are filled with joy. "You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in Your presence, with eternal pleasures at Your right hand." Psalm 16:11

4. Thankfulness facilitates contentment

Practicing thankfulness is one of the most reliable methods for increasing contentment and life satisfaction, improving our mood by enhancing feelings of optimism, joy, pleasure, enthusiasm, and other positive emotions, while conversely, reducing anxiety and depression.

5. Thankfulness promotes physical health.

Studies suggest helps to lower blood pressure, strengthen the immune system, reduce symptoms of illness, and makes us less bothered by aches and pains.

6. Thankfulness Enhances Sleep.

Thankful people tend to get more sleep each night, spend less time awake before falling asleep, and feel more rested upon awakening, which suggests that counting your blessings is much more effective than counting sheep.

7. Thankfulness Strengthens Relationships.

It makes us feel closer and more connected to others when people in a relationship feel and express thankfulness for each other, they each become more satisfied with their relationship.

8. Thankfulness Encourages "Paying It Forward."

Thankful people are generally more helpful, generous of spirit, and compassionate with these qualities spill over in the form of being a blessing to others.

THE BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR THANKFULNESS

1. Living a thankful life must begin with giving God the glory as the source of all our benefits as His children.

¹ Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!² Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits,
³ who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases,
⁴ who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,
⁵ who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Psalm 103:1-5

2. Offering the sacrifice of thanksgiving glorifies God.

The one who offers thanksgiving as his sacrifice glorifies me... Psalm 50:23a

3. Being thankful to God is a freewill sacrifice.

With a freewill offering I will sacrifice to you; I will give thanks to your name, O Lord, for it is good. Psalm 54:6

4. Giving thanks to God involves the whole heart.

I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart. Psalm 86:12

5. We are to give thanks to God in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ always and for everything.

²⁰ *[Give] thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ephesians 5:20*

6. No matter the situation don't let anything keep us from the habit of giving thanks.

¹⁰ *When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously. Daniel 6:10*

7. The first marks of rejecting God are failing to honor God as God and not to give thanks to him.

²⁰ *For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world,^[g] in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. ²¹ For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Claiming to be wise, they became fools, ²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.*

Romans 1:20-21

WHAT SHOULD I BE THANKFUL FOR?

1. That the Lord is good. *Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good... 1 Chronicles 16:34a (cf 2 Chronicles 5:13; Ezra 3:11; Psalm 106:1, 107:1, 8, 15, 21, 31, 118:1, 136:1)*

2. That the Lord's steadfast love endures forever. *Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever! 1 Chronicles 16:34b (cf. 2 Chronicles 5:13; Ezra 3:11; Psalm 106:1, 107:1, 8, 15, 21, 31, 118:1, 138:2)*

3. For God's righteousness. *I will give to the Lord the thanks due to his righteousness, and I will sing praise to the name of the Lord, the Most High. Psalm 7:17*

4. For God's wonderful deeds. *I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart; I will recount all of your wonderful deeds. Psalm 9:1 (cf. 75:1, 138:2)*

5. That God answers me. *I thank you that you have answered me... Psalm 118:21a*

6. That God has become our salvation *I thank you that you ... have become my salvation. Psalm 118:21b*

7. That God is faithful. *I bow down toward your holy temple and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness, for you have exalted above all things your name and your word. Psalm 138:2*

8. That God may get angry with us, but He turns from anger that He might comfort us. *You will say in that day: "I will give thanks to you, O Lord, for though you were angry with me, your anger turned away, that you might comfort me. Isaiah 12:1*

9. That though I was a slave to sin, I am now free to be a slave to righteousness. ¹⁷ *But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed,¹⁸ and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. Romans 6:17-18*

10. That the Lord Jesus delivers us from our body of sin. ²¹ *So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. ²² For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, ²³ but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. ²⁴ Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin. Romans 7:21-25*

11. That Jesus, who knew no sin became sin and who was rich became poor for our sake, is God's inexpressible gift of the gospel given to us. *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. 2 Corinthians 5:21*

⁹ *For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich. ¹⁵ Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift! 1 Corinthians 8:9, 9:15*

12. That God gives us the victory over sin and death through the Lord Jesus Christ, allowing me to be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord my labor is not in vain. ⁵⁶ *The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.* ⁵⁷ *But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* ⁵⁸ *Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.* 1 Corinthians 15:56-58

13. That Christ always leads us in triumphal procession and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. *But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere.* 2 Corinthians 4:14

14. For others in the family of God who are living out in their faith. ² *We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers* ³ *remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.* 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3 (cf Romans 1:8; 1 Corinthians 1:4; Ephesians 1:15; Philippians 1:3; Philemon 1:4)

15. That everything God created is good and to be received with thanksgiving. ⁴ *For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving,* ⁵ *for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer.* 1 Timothy 4:4

16. That we have received a kingdom that cannot be shaken. *Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe,* ²⁹ *for our God is a consuming fire.* Hebrews 12:28

17. Give thanks that God, with His great power, reigns! ¹⁷ ... *“We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign.* Revelation 11:17

Start your day by declaring thankfulness for God’s steadfast love. *It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to your name, O Most High;* ² *to declare your steadfast love in the morning... Psalm 92:1-2*

End your day with thankfulness for His faithfulness. *It is good to give thanks to the Lord,*
to sing praises to your name, O Most High;
² *to declare your steadfast love in the morning,*
and your faithfulness by night... Psalm 92:1-2

Filling our lives with rejoicing, praying, and giving thanks are God’s will for us. ¹⁶ *Rejoice always,* ¹⁷ *pray without ceasing,* ¹⁸ *give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*

Note that verse 18 is literally saying:

“Be thankful –

inside, in the realm of, during, in the course of –
all, the whole, every kind of, one piece at a time
– for God’s good grace.”

Not forgetting that this is God’s will for us, and all of things previously listed can be done at any time in everything and in all circumstances because:

1. They are based in God’s goodness and promises which never change.
2. They are not dependent on me being happy or liking my present circumstances.
3. I can rest in God’s promises that no matter what is going on in the visible circumstances God is at work behind the scenes, will supply grace sufficient for each situation, will never leave us, will work all things together for our good and I can always be thankful for who He is and what He promises to do on my behalf.

WEEKLY GOING DEEPER STUDY GUIDE
Producing Thankful Living

- Before beginning each day simply ask God to help you see things that He would have you to see.
- When finished, pray again asking for the faith and the courage to follow His lead in areas He speaks to you about.
- Continue to work on your Life Assessments.

DAY 1

1. Read through and meditate on the ***“4 common Obstacles to Fully Appreciate God’s Blessing”***
2. Write a few thoughts about how one or more of these interfere with you being appreciative.

DAY 2

1. Read through and carefully think about each of the ***“Benefits of Praise & Thankfulness.”***
2. Identify the one that you most would like to experience and write a short prayer asking God to help you.

DAY 3

1. Read through & meditate on each entry & scriptures under ***“The Biblical Foundation for Thankfulness.”***
2. Write down the thing you see that you would really like to see become part of your life.

DAY 4 & 5

Pray through the 17 things listed in the lesson under “What should I be thankful for?” sometime during your day (maybe divide up in sections through the day) and journal some thoughts of your experience of how thankfulness impacted your day.

DAY 6-7

Jot down some things that God has been doing in your life through Compassionate Recovery that you could share with your small group.