

Gratitude For The Character of God

Habakkuk 3:17-18; Hebrews 12:26-29

Introduction:

Learning to be grateful is about much more than just your immediate circumstances. You can't let what's going on in your life determine the level of thanksgiving in your life. Instead, let your thankfulness spring from your understanding of God's character.

When you dig into the back story of Habakkuk, you'll quickly realize it's a dark book. Israel's reform-minded king Josiah has been killed, and the nation of Israel has slid back into sin and apostasy. The prophet Habakkuk struggles with God's silence and His unwillingness to judge Israel.

- In Habakkuk's third chapter, the prophet prays for God to revive His work in Israel. Toward the end of the prayer (v. 17-18), Habakkuk recognizes the potential hardships that will come with God's judgment. Despite those difficulties, he resolves to take joy in God's salvation. We tend to judge everything from our own limited perspective. Unless we have what we believe we should, we see no reason to be thankful. That's not Habakkuk's perspective. He tells us to show gratitude even if we don't have what we want—or need. We need to prioritize what God is doing in a situation over our own wants and needs. We can learn from Habakkuk to rejoice even during troubling times.
- Our ultimate source of thanksgiving should come from what God has revealed about himself in the Word and in the person of Jesus Christ:

1. Thank God For His Love

“God bestows His blessings without discrimination. The followers of Jesus are children of God, and they should manifest the family likeness by doing good to all, even to those who deserve the opposite.” –F.F. Bruce

2. Thank God For His Patience

“Quite honestly, most people are quick to “write someone off.” But our God is a God of the second chance. Learn from One who is patient with you, and you'll learn to be patient with others.” –Woodrow Kroll

3. Thank God For His Salvation

“Since no man is excluded from calling upon God the gate of salvation is open to all. There is nothing else to hinder us from entering, but our own unbelief.” –John Calvin

4. Thank God For His Sovereignty

“What does it really mean to affirm God’s sovereignty...? It means that God rules over all space and time and history. It means that He created the world for His glory and directs the cosmos to His purpose. It means that no one can truly thwart His plans or frustrate His determination. It means that we are secure in the knowledge that God’s sovereign purpose to redeem a people through the atonement accomplished by His Son will be fully realized.” –Al Mohler

5. Thank God For His Wisdom

“Wisdom is the power to see, and the inclination to choose, the best and highest goal, together with the surest means of attaining it. Wisdom is, in fact, the practical side of moral goodness. As such, it is found in its fullness only in God. He alone is naturally and entirely and invariably wise.” –J. I. Packer

6. Thank God For His mercy

“The mercy of God is an all-embracing mercy and it breaks down the barriers that man erects.” –Allstair Begg

Conclusion:

“Everything about God is great, vast, incomparable. He never forgets, never fails, never falters, never forfeits His word.” –Arthur W. Pink

As we’re told in the book of Hebrews, we are receiving an unshakable kingdom (Heb. 12:26–29). Why is this coming kingdom so firm? Because the Author and Finisher of this kingdom is Himself unshakable. This means we can look past our immediate situation towards a kingdom that we’re inheriting—one we can trust is steadfast and trustworthy. This should cause thanksgiving to constantly well up within us.