

Expecting one thing - don't see good // Someone telling you you should be more grateful // Save up and get the thing - then opened...

Is gratitude a reaction or a practice?

American Brain Foundation - How would you describe the experience of gratitude? You might say it's a warm, fuzzy feeling you get when other people express their appreciation for you, or when you appreciate them. Gratitude is a feeling, but it's also the deliberate act of acknowledging an external source for something you value, whether that source is another person, a community, or a deity or spiritual concept.

- **For the disciple of Jesus, gratitude doesn't come from people alone, or gifts alone, or status alone, but from practiced thanksgiving towards God alone.**
- Paul is expressing and modeling gratitude - the mess of the Corinthians (bootstrapping, competition, personal agency and wealth)

GRATITUDE FOR EACH OTHER (1 Corinthians 1:4)

- Thanksgivings given for good travel, personal stuff. Not here.
- Give thanks - same language used for institution of communion. Thanksgiving is directed towards God for people and for grace.

Are we people that have come together by chance, algorithmic channels, liturgical preferences, and search engines, or are we people worth deep gratitude for?

Paul isn't speaking this into a vacuum - he is speaking it to a church that will need correction on how they view each other.

- **Do you see the people around you as expressions of God's grace?** Corinthians world like our world - people are a means to an end.
- So much church community can be worldly community - if I'm only here because of the resources I can extract from those around me or for the feelings I get when I'm around people or the status I receive from being connected to certain people, then we are no different from the world.
- Paul here is expressing gratitude for the people in this church despite their many problems, not once they have them sorted out.
- "You aren't the friends I would have picked." Jesus models this with the twelve. He saw things we would not have seen.

People are hard, but life with people is better than life without. People are the problem, but Paul doesn't start there. He starts with gratitude.

- If you have gratitude for the people around you in this room, the disciple of Jesus must ask and answer why that is.
- I'm not saying we can't have any feelings of mutual benefit from our relationships. I'm saying we can't only have this, because life and ability change.
 - Do we have gratitude for the people in this body who have nothing or very little to give?
 - If we don't start with gratitude, no matter your thoughts on what we could all do better, you will be let down.
 - Has our gratitude increased because we are getting something from someone? Has it decreased because we aren't as close to someone as we once were?

The gospel doesn't wait for gratitude to hit once we get what we feel we need.

The gospel generates gratitude because of God's grace, shown to us through his people, as imperfect as we all are.

GRATITUDE FOR GIFTS AND STRENGTH (1 Corinthians 1:5-8)

General speech (logos), general understanding (gnosis) - gifts from God that were valued by the Corinthians, but there's a danger here.

Paul isn't speaking this into a vacuum - he is speaking it to a church that is constantly clamoring for more.

Paul isn't speaking this into a vacuum - he is speaking it to a church that is used to bootstrapping and working in selfish scarcity.

Gifts can be abused, but this doesn't mean the gifts are corrupted - they are gifts.

Any gift can be taken and used for good or for evil. Money. Time. Technology.

Paul doesn't condemn the gifts - he gives thanks for them

Do we believe we have been enriched and equipped?

Do we believe that God holds us? (Sustain)

Even though the Corinthians had made a mess of their gifts, Paul had a confidence that God had this thing under control.

Paul's gratitude is not in the people and their use of the gifts, but in the one who provides the gifts and holds the people.

GRATITUDE FOR CHRIST HIMSELF (1 Corinthians 1:9)

Fellowship - koinonia - communal participation in the sonship of Christ. Stakeholders.

David E. Garland - This union is not a relationship between an individual believer and Jesus. God has called believers into fellowship with other believers, and they become one people under Christ's lordship. All followers of Christ are in Christ Jesus together, and none should imagine himself or herself as self-sufficient or detached from or grander than other believers.

Paul isn't speaking this into a vacuum - he is speaking it to a church that is competitive and that perceives status based on who they follow.

It's easy to look at our lives and feel like God isn't effective, so we instead follow others. but the problem isn't with God.

Trying to see something far off, but it's hard.

Paul doesn't say don't worship or don't look up - he just redirects their gaze.

Do we believe that God is faithful? He is the one who will accomplish growth, health, healing, and wholeness, not just us in our strength.

Team Jesus above all others.

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Paul gives thanks for all the things God has done, not the things the Corinthians have done. This clears up our hearts to be grateful for each other, regardless of our inconsistencies and failures.

Paul's history - he is not an ivory tower theologian. He has seen this true in his own life.

COLOSSIANS 3:15-16

Gratitude born out of testimony (telling), remembrance (reflecting), and practice (expressing truth even when not believed). Worship

You're not a hypocrite. You're human. We need the practice. If nothing changed, could you still find gratitude for the people God gave you?