



Overflowing Thanks.

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BIG IDEA – A simple THANKS frees our heart, frames our attitude and allows for gratitude to flourish in community.

Scripture Focus – Colossians 3:15-17 NLT And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And **always be thankful**. Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. **Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts**. And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father.

The simplicity of a Thank You.

A little word with powerful effects.

THANKS

Thanks, is not only a powerful posture, framing and freeing our mind from anxiety, comparison and negativity; it's a relational glue, bonding friendships for life.

Thanks, is a navigational tool, telling us where our life could be heading – if we choose.

Can a spoken word and an attitude of thanks heal hearts, open doors and help us mature?

How can gratefulness be the guardian of our galaxy?

Thankfulness is God's natural remedy for lowering stress, taking pressure off our heart and helps us to stay out of the fight-flight cycle many of us struggle with.

Thankfulness gives us better sleep with a simple reminder song.

– Count your blessings –

When upon life's billows you are tempest tossed,

When you are discouraged, thinking all is lost,
Count your many blessings, name them one by one,
And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.

Count your blessings, name them one by one;
Count your blessings, see what God hath done;
Count your blessings, name them one by one;
Count your many blessings, see what God hath done.



DIG DEEPER: The story behind Count Your Blessings.

God hardwired into humans the capacity of thanksgiving and those who take advantage of it get these benefits:

- Higher overall happiness and life satisfaction.
- Lower depression and anxiety.
- Greater resilience – ability to bounce back!
- Less envy, entitlement, and chronic dissatisfaction.

And those are just personal benefits!

Even [modern research](#) shows that it benefits us socially:

[gratitude is social glue](#).

- **Thankfulness deepens bonds.** It makes other feel seen and valued. It strengthens friendships, even romantic relationships.
- **It increases empathy and lowers aggression.** We tend to respond with patience instead of hostility.
- **It reduces loneliness.** Helping us feel more connected because being thankful turns our attention toward others, who have shown kindness.
- **It makes families, and even teams more resilient.** It yields better communication, more cooperation and higher trust.

Gratitude can turn “fault-finding” into “gift-finding” in others!

Same mate, same kids, same family, same church-folks – yet we see them with different eyes.

The Apostle Paul was a huge fan and **practitioner of gratefulness and giving thanks**.

In [Acts 9:3-8](#), Luke records that powerful spotlight from Jesus temporarily prevented Paul from seeing physical light, but it opened his spiritual eyes to see more clearly than ever before.

In writing to Epaphras, who planted the church in Colossae. Paul, in one of four prison letters (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon). **Paul wrote about gratefulness or thankfulness a total of 49 times.**



DIG DEEPER: Who was Epaphras in the Bible?

Let's look at one simple but profound passage out of Colossians.

Colossians 3:12-17 NLT

Since **God chose you to be the holy people he loves**, you must **clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you.**

Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. **For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful.** Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts. **And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father.**

THANKS

And let the **peace that comes from Christ** rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. **And always be thankful.** Colossians 3:15 NLT

1. **Thankfulness allows the peace of Christ to “rule” instead of our emotions.**
 - **When we regularly rehearse gifts instead of grudges**, we are actively letting Christ's peace call the shots instead of our fear, anger, or insecurity.
 - **Thankfulness roots us in our new identity, not our old story.**
 - **Our new calling is to live in peace. Our past does not need to dictate our future. We all have a past! Whether it was 50 years ago or 5 minutes ago- we can step into God's mercy each morning and watch God change us!**
 - **Living as one thankful for mercy, not still trying to earn it.** Col 3:12 “Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you...” It is remembering that **God has already been good to me and for me because of Christ.**

THANKS

Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts. Colossians 3:16 NLT

1. **Let Thankfulness rule over entitlement and idolatry.**

- **Thank You is the opposite of “you owe me.”**
- Thankfulness **supplies worship, and suppresses selfishness.**
- Thankfulness becomes **natural when one sees Jesus clearly.**

THANKS

And whatever you do or say, do it as **a representative of the Lord Jesus**, giving thanks through him to God the Father. Colossians 3:17

1. Gratitude is how we **keep the extraordinary working in our ordinary**, daily life. Where we live, work and play. Where we spend our money, where we carpool with our attitude, where we parent our little monsters... I mean angels. **Thankfulness keeps us submitting to Jesus rather than to our less-than-stellar self!**
2. Thankfulness is not God demanding we say “thank you”; it’s the Holy Spirit training our souls to live like people who already have everything we need in Christ.

Let’s be practical for a few minutes...

We just talked about all the great qualities of being thankful.
We also just talked about the spiritual benefits of being thankful.

Is anyone willing to admit this:
Doing what is good and right for us is still **REALLY HARD WORK!**

Here’s the things we can stop doing to be able to start doing what God wants us to do.

GRIT

The work of repetitive grit.

1. **Stop coddling our complaints.**

- Paul does talk about things that need to **quit doing** in [Colossians 3:5-8](#). In fact, he writes, “**They need to die!**”
- Same with complaining.
 - **Name your default GOTO’s: grumbling, comparison, cynicism, entitlement.**

- Catch them in real time: **“What am I rehearsing in my mind right now: gifts or grievances?”**
 - And for goodness’ sake, **quit sharing multiple complaints** with others! I AM HORRIBLE AT THIS.
2. Train our **attention on gifts, not gaps.**
- Our brains naturally focus on what we have **little of and lack first**. We have to re-train it.
 - As a part of a **daily routine in the evening, list three specific things you’re thankful for from that day.**
 - **Tie gratitude to natural triggers,**
 - like starting your car,
 - opening the front door,
 - your head hitting the pillow – each one becomes a cue to thank God for something concrete.
 - **I remember hearings someone talk about their routine about detoxing from work about 15 minutes before they arrive home, start letting those things go, so we can be free to be thankful for who or what is waiting for us at home.**
3. Put **gratitude in our mouth and on our reminders or calendars.**
- **Thankfulness unexpressed gets forgotten!** Say it out loud to God and others. **Text it when you think of someone. Call someone just to hear their voice and let them hear yours.**
 - One of my favorite things to do is keep friend’s birthdays and anniversaries in my calendar. This is one of the few reasons I am still on Facebook because it reminds me of someone’s birthday. **Don’t be offended if I don’t get to yours all the time, I’ve got hundreds of them written down and I still forget!**

Practicing! Not perfecting.

Say this “I AM PRACTICING.” Practicing is the art of trying to do something better.

Forget the phrase, “Practice Makes Perfect!”

It’s a harmful myth and holds little truth! The phrase “practice makes perfect” can **create unrealistic expectations and discourage effective learning.** A more constructive approach focuses on quality practice, embracing mistakes, and understanding that improvement is a continuous journey rather than a destination of perfection.

Let’s just stick to practicing God’s truth to create good heart habits that are pleasing to God, good for us & others!

APPLICATION

Gratitude matures when it moves from “I like my stuff” to “I see the One who gave it.” Thank God for giving the thing we are most grateful for!

- Reframe our “gotta-do” list as a “get-to” list once a day.
- Remember – “A thanks a day keeps grumpy away.”

A simple THANKS frees our heart, frames our attitude and allows for gratitude to flourish in community.

SCRIPTURES

Colossians 3:12-17 NLT

Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful. Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts. And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father.

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DIG DEEPER NOTES



 BibleProject

[A little bit about the book of Colossians](#)

- Prison Epistle – thanks to God for them. A poem by Paul in Chapter 1:15-20.
- Paul's suffering is **not a sign of defeat; it's a way to participate with Jesus own suffering!**
- Epaphras planted the church in Colossae.
- The spiritual powers of the gods never had the power to free them and equally the law also lacked power to free them and change the human heart.
- **We have the power of resurrection life.** "set your mind on things above." **Not one day in the heavens, but now experiencing the messiah ruling in heaven on earth ways.**
- **Living NOW in the present is learning to live the kind of human life we will become.**
- **OLD HUMANITY – sexuality, destructive speech.**
- **NEW HUMANITY – marked by mercy, generosity, forgiveness and love.**
- In the Roman household the male patriarch held the power of life and death over wife and children. In the Jesus household, Jesus is Lord of the House. In the Lord, the wife submits to her husband, allowing him to become responsible for her and leading the family in godly pursuits. The Husband is subject to Jesus, loving his wife, placing her well-being, growth and maturity above his own. and the children are not objects, but learn how to grow and develop, fully mature and confident in their own life and love for God. Paul is reshaping the basic Roman household!



Count Your Blessings

Story behind the song: "Count Your Blessings"

The Baptist Hymnal No. 644

1. When upon life's billows you are tempest tossed,
When you are discouraged, thinking all is lost,
Count your many blessings, name them one by one,
And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.
(Refrain)

2. Are you ever burdened with a load of care?
Does the cross seem heavy you are called to bear?
Count your many blessings, ev'ry doubt will fly,
And you will be singing as the days go by.
(Refrain)

3. When you look at others with their lands and gold,
Think that Christ has promised you His wealth untold;
Count your many blessings, money cannot buy
Your reward in heaven, nor your home on high.
(Refrain)

4. So, amid the conflict, whether great or small,
Do not be discouraged, God is over all;
Count your many blessings, angels will attend,

Help and comfort give you to your journey's end.
(Refrain)

Refrain:

Count your blessings, name them one by one;
Count your blessings, see what God hath done;
Count your blessings, name them one by one;
Count your many blessings, see what God hath done.



[Instances of Gratefulness in Paul's Prison Epistles](#)

Paul wrote four letters during his imprisonment, known as the Prison Epistles: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. In these letters, he frequently expressed themes of gratitude and thankfulness.

Frequency of Gratefulness

EPISTLE	MENTIONS OF "THANKS" OR RELATED TERMS
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Ephesians	3
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Philippians	6
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Colossians	3
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Philemon	1
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[Who was Epaphras in the Bible?](#)

Epaphras is mentioned three times in the New Testament, twice in Colossians and once in Philemon. He was a believer in Christ who served with the apostle Paul, who referred to him as a “fellow servant,” “faithful minister,” and “servant of Christ Jesus” (Colossians 1:7; 4:12).

Epaphras was a Gentile. We also surmise that he was from Colossae in Asia Minor, since his name appears in the letter to the church there and Paul says that he “is one of you” (Colossians 4:12). According to Paul, writing during his first Roman imprisonment, Epaphras was the one who shared the gospel with the Colossians and possibly started the church there: Paul speaks of “the day you heard [the gospel]” and reminds them that “you learned it from Epaphras” (Colossians 1:6–7). Epaphras traveled to Rome to visit Paul, informing Paul about the Colossians’ “love in the Spirit” (Colossians 1:8).



[Limitations of "Practice Makes Perfect"](#)

The proverb “practice makes perfect” can be traced back to its Latin roots “**Use maketh mastery**” in the **1500s and as it first appears in the United States in the Diary of John Adams from 1761.**

The phrase "practice makes perfect" can be misleading and unhelpful for several reasons.

[Re-think your relationship to practice and perfectionism.](#) Psychology Today - Yesel Yoon Ph.D.

[Why 'practice makes perfect' is a myth.](#) Fast Company - Stephanie Voza

Unrealistic Expectations

Perfection is Unattainable: The idea of achieving perfection is unrealistic. No matter how much one practices, perfection is subjective and often impossible to reach.

Discouragement: Striving for perfection can lead to feelings of failure and disappointment when individuals inevitably fall short of this ideal.

Ineffective Practice Methods

Quality Over Quantity: Simply practicing without focusing on the quality of practice can reinforce bad habits. For example, practicing a skill incorrectly can lead to developing poor techniques.

Deliberate Practice: Effective practice should be deliberate, targeting specific skills for improvement rather than mindlessly repeating tasks. This method enhances performance more effectively than just practicing for the sake of it.

Fear of Mistakes

Avoiding Risks: The pressure to achieve perfection can make individuals hesitant to experiment or take risks in their practice, which is essential for growth and learning.

Mistakes as Learning Opportunities: Mistakes should be viewed as valuable learning experiences rather than failures. Embracing errors can lead to better understanding and skill development.

Conclusion

Overall, the phrase "practice makes perfect" can **create unrealistic expectations and discourage effective learning**. A more constructive approach focuses on quality practice, embracing mistakes, and understanding that improvement is a continuous journey rather than a destination of perfection.