

The Gratitude Trade

Lakewood Family Church | Pastor Jonathan L. Vorce | November 2, 2025

Sermon Theme: **Gratitude Shifts the Atmosphere.**

Philippians 2:14 (KJV), *"Do all things without murmurings and disputings,"*

1 Thessalonians 5:18 (KJV), *"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."*

Introduction

- As we gather here today, let's pause and reflect on how our words shape our world.
- Complaints drain life, but gratitude fills us with joy and peace.
- Today, we're diving into how replacing complaints with gratitude can truly shift the atmosphere around us.
- This week, we're learning to speak words of thanks that shift the atmosphere.

Illustrative Story

I remember a young man named John who worked in a demanding job. Every day, he'd come home complaining about his boss, the long hours, and the endless tasks. His home felt heavy, his family tense. One Sunday, after hearing a message much like this, John decided to try something different. Instead of venting complaints, he started listing three things he was thankful for each evening—his health, his supportive wife, and even the job that provided for his family. Within weeks, the atmosphere in his home changed; laughter returned, peace settled in, and even his work seemed less burdensome.

John's story reminds us that gratitude isn't just a feeling—it's a powerful choice that invites God's presence into our lives.

I. Understanding the Power of Complaining

- A. **Complaining Stems from Discontentment:** As seen in the children of Israel in the wilderness.

#5 Speak Life Series

Exodus 16:2-3, KJV: *"And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness: And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt..."*

1. Murmuring arises when we focus on what's lacking rather than God's provision.

B. Complaining Drains Our Joy:

Proverbs 18:21 (KJV) warns, *"Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof."*

1. Constant complaining sows seeds of negativity, robbing us of the joy God intends.

C. Complaining Hinders God's Work:

Philippians 2:14 (KJV), *"Do all things without murmurings and disputings,"*

1. Paul instructs us to avoid murmurings so that we may shine as lights in the world, unhindered by self-imposed darkness.

II. Embracing the Discipline of Gratitude

A. Gratitude is God's Will:

1 Thessalonians 5:18 (KJV), *"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."*

1. Commands us to give thanks in everything, not for everything, but recognizing that even trials can draw us closer to Him.

B. Gratitude Invites God's Presence:

Psalms 100:4 (KJV) says, *"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name."*

1. When we choose thanks, we open the door for God's peace and joy to flood in.

C. Gratitude Transforms Our Perspective:

Colossians 3:15 (KJV) encourages, *"And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful."*

1. Shifting from complaints to thanks reframes our challenges as opportunities for growth.

III. Practical Steps to Replace Complaints with Gratitude

- A. **Daily Thanksgiving Practice:** Start each day with prayer, listing specific blessings:

Ephesians 5:20 (KJV): *"Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

- B. **Speak Life Over Situations:** Use words of gratitude in conversations:

Proverbs 15:4 (KJV): *"A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit."*

- C. **Surround Yourself with Reminders:** Create habits like journaling or sharing testimonies in community, fostering an atmosphere where gratitude multiplies:

Hebrews 10:24-25 (KJV): *"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together..."*

Conclusion

- As we wrap up today's message, remember that gratitude isn't just a response—it's a revolutionary act that shifts the atmosphere from despair to divine presence.
- We've seen how complaints drain us, but thankfulness fills us with God's joy and peace.

This Week's Challenge:

- Commit to the "Gratitude Trade." – **Each time you catch yourself complaining, pause and replace it with a statement of thanks.**
- Share one gratitude moment daily with a family member or friend.
- Meditate on our Life Word Card: **"My words overflow with gratitude."**
- Let's watch how this simple shift invites God's blessings into our lives.
- Go forth and #SpeakLife!