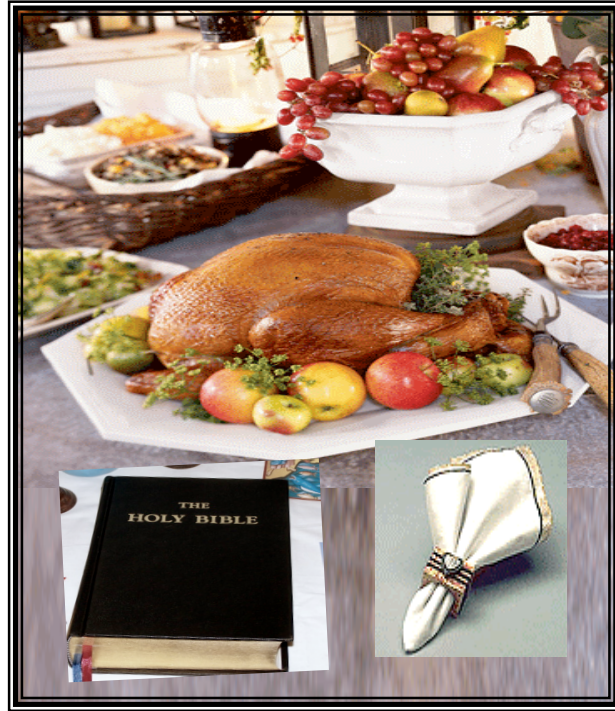


THANKSGIVING CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE



PSALMS 118:1

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ICE BREAKER

ON THE DAY BEFORE THANKSGIVING AN ELDERLY MAN IN PHOENIX CALLED HIS SON IN NEW YORK AND SAID TO HIM, "I HATE TO RUIN YOUR DAY, BUT I HAVE TO TELL YOU THAT YOUR MOTHER AND I ARE DIVORCING; 45 YEARS OF MISERY IS ENOUGH. WE'RE SICK OF EACH OTHER, AND SO YOU CALL YOUR SISTER IN CHICAGO AND TELL HER."

FRANTIC, THE SON CALLED HIS SISTER, WHO EXPLODED ON THE PHONE. "LIKE HECK, THEY'RE GETTING DIVORCED," SHE SHOUTED, "I'LL TAKE CARE OF THIS."

SHE CALLED PHOENIX IMMEDIATELY, AND SAID TO HER FATHER. "YOU ARE NOT GETTING DIVORCED. DON'T DO A SINGLE THING UNTIL I GET THERE. I'M CALLING MY BROTHER BACK, AND WE'LL BOTH BE THERE TOMORROW. UNTIL THEN, DON'T DO A THING, DO YOU HEAR ME?"

THE MAN HUNG UP HIS PHONE AND TURNED TO HIS WIFE. "OKAY, HONEY. THE KIDS ARE COMING FOR THANKSGIVING AND PAYING FOR THEIR FLIGHTS."

INTRODUCTION

ON TODAY WE WILL ALL BE GATHERING TOGETHER WITH OUR FAMILY AND HOPEFULLY WE WILL REMEMBER TO DO MORE THAN EAT A MEAL AND WATCH FOOTBALL OR MAKE A MAD DASH FOR THE MALL.

THE THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY GIVES US THE PERFECT OPPORTUNITY TO TRANSFORM OUR LIVES FROM THOSE OF GRIPING AND DISSATISFACTION, TO LIVES OF JOY AND GRATITUDE.

THANKSGIVING IS A GOOD HOLIDAY FOR US TO TURN THE CORNER AND BECOME GRATEFUL PEOPLE. GOD WANTS NOTHING MORE THAN FOR US TO BE PEOPLE OF THANKSGIVING AND GRATITUDE.

ALAN PERKINS SAYS, "A THANKFUL SPIRIT IS ONE OF THE KEY DISTINGUISHING MARKS OF A CHRISTIAN. IT SETS US APART FROM THE WORLD, IT MAKES US DIFFERENT."

[PSALM 118]:1 SAYS, "GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD FOR HE IS GOOD, HIS LOVE ENDURES FOREVER."

I. LET US FIRST LOOK AT THE BENEFITS OF A GRATEFUL SPIRIT.

NOW WHY DO YOU THINK BEING A THANKFUL PERSON IS SO IMPORTANT?

WELL I THINK IT IS BECAUSE GRATEFULNESS IS GOOD FOR US.

THERE ARE A MANY WAYS BEING A GRATEFUL PERSON CAN BENEFIT YOU.

A. FOR ONE, BEING A GRATEFUL PERSON CAN INCREASE YOUR PERSONAL HAPPINESS.

1. MOST OF US THINK THAT OUR HAPPINESS IS DETERMINED BY OUR CIRCUMSTANCES.
2. IF I ASKED YOU, ON A SCALE OF ONE TO TEN HOW HAPPY YOU ARE RIGHT NOW, YOU MIGHT SAY, "WELL, I'M ABOUT A '2' ON THE HAPPINESS METER BECAUSE OF MY CIRCUMSTANCES."
3. WE'VE BEEN TAUGHT THAT OUR HAPPINESS IS SOMEHOW DEPENDENT ON HOW WELL THINGS GO FOR US. BUT REALLY OUR HAPPINESS IS DETERMINED BY ATTITUDE.
4. IT IS REALLY IN HOW WE SEE THINGS.
5. THE APOSTLE PAUL WROTE THESE WORDS FROM PRISON IN [PHILIPPIANS 4:4], "*REJOICE IN THE LORD ALWAYS,*" HE WROTE, "*AND AGAIN I SAY IT REJOICE.*"
 - a. PAUL WAS HAPPY DESPITE BEING IN PRISON.

- b. HE LEARNED TO THANK GOD IN EVERYTHING HE DID.
- c. IT WAS REALLY HIS PERSPECTIVE ON LIFE.

ILLUSTRATION

**A YOUNG WOMAN WROTE HER MOTHER FROM COLLEGE:
"DEAR MOM: SORRY I HAVEN'T WRITTEN SOONER. MY
ARM REALLY HAS BEEN BROKEN. I BROKE IT AND MY LEFT
LEG TOO, WHEN I JUMPED FROM THE SECOND FLOOR OF
MY DORMITORY WHEN WE HAD THE FIRE.**

**WE WERE LUCKY. A YOUNG SERVICE STATION
ATTENDANT SAW THE BLAZE AND CALLED THE FIRE
DEPARTMENT. THEY WERE THERE IN MINUTES. I WAS IN
THE HOSPITAL FOR A FEW DAYS.**

**PAUL, THE SERVICE STATION ATTENDANT, CAME TO SEE
ME EVERY DAY. AND BECAUSE IT WAS TAKING SO LONG
TO GET OUR DORMITORY LIVEABLE AGAIN, I MOVED IN
WITH HIM.**

**HE HAS BEEN SO NICE. I MUST ADMIT THAT I AM
PREGNANT. PAUL AND I PLAN TO GET MARRIED JUST AS
SOON AS HE CAN GET A DIVORCE.**

**I HOPE THINGS ARE FINE AT HOME. I'M DOING FINE, AND
WILL WRITE MORE WHEN I GET THE CHANCE.**

LOVE, YOUR DAUGHTER, SUSIE.

**NONE OF THE ABOVE IS TRUE. BUT I DID GET A "C" IN
SOCIOLOGY AND FLUNKED CHEMISTRY. I JUST WANTED
YOU TO RECEIVE THIS NEWS IN ITS "PROPER
PERSPECTIVE!"**

- 6. **HAPPINESS IS REALLY DETERMINED BY OUR
PERSPECTIVE IN LIFE NOT BY
CIRCUMSTANCES.**
- 7. **IF WE LEARN TO BE GRATEFUL PEOPLE
DESPITE CIRCUMSTANCES, THAT WILL**

GREATLY IMPROVE OUR HAPPINESS.

B. BEING A GRATEFUL PERSON CAN ALSO IMPROVE YOUR WITNESS FOR CHRIST.

1. **HAVING A NOTICEABLE COUNTENANCE OF THANKFULNESS AND JOY WILL CERTAINLY MAKE US BETTER WITNESSES FOR CHRIST.**
2. **WHAT IS SAD IS THAT MOST CHRISTIANS ARE THE MOST NEGATIVE, SOUR PEOPLE IN THE WORLD.**
3. **MOST CHRISTIANS ARE MEAN SPIRITED AND UNGRATEFUL LUGS.**
4. **WE ACT LIKE WE HAVE BEEN BAPTIZED IN VINEGAR, NOT IN THE HOLY SPIRIT.**
5. **IT IS NO WONDER PEOPLE DON'T WANT TO HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH US.**
6. **BUT WHEN WE ARE THANKFUL, JOYFUL, UPBEAT PEOPLE, WE ATTRACT THE LOST WITH OUR SPIRIT OF GRATITUDE BECAUSE THE WORLD IS SO DARK AND DEPRESSING AND UNGRATEFUL.**
7. **HAVE YOU LOOKED AT THIS WORLD LATELY? PEOPLE ARE SO DISCOURAGED. YET IF WE CAN LEARN TO BE DIFFERENT, UPBEAT AND THANKFUL, WE WILL ATTRACT THEM**
8. **WE HAVE SOMETHING THEY DON'T.**
 - a. **[1 PETER 2:12] SAYS, "*LIVE SUCH GOOD LIVES AMONG THE PAGANS THAT THEY MAY SEE YOUR GOOD DEEDS AND GLORIFY GOD ON THE DAY HE VISITS US.*"**
9. **LIVING A LIFE OF THANKFULNESS WILL ATTRACT THE LOST.**

C. BEING A GRATEFUL PERSON WILL ALSO ENHANCE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS.

- 1. THERE IS ONE THING I NOTICE ABOUT SOME MARRIED COUPLES. AFTER AWHILE MANY OF THEM BECOME UNGRATEFUL AND UNAPPRECIATIVE OF THEIR SPOUSES. OVER TIME THEY TAKE EACH OTHER FOR GRANTED.**
- 2. SOMEBODY DESCRIBED THE FIRST FEW YEARS IN A MARRIAGE THIS WAY:**
 - a. THE FIRST YEAR, THE HUSBAND SEEING THE WIFE HAS A COLD, SAYS, "YOU DON'T LOOK GOOD. YOU SHOULD GO TO THE HOSPITAL. I HAVE ALREADY ARRANGED IT. I KNOW THE FOOD IS BAD THERE, BUT WE ARE GOING TO HAVE MEALS CATERED IN."**
 - b. THE SECOND YEAR HE SAYS, "YOU DON'T LOOK SO GOOD. I HAVE CALLED THE DOCTOR. GO AND LAY DOWN. I WILL TAKE CARE OF THE KIDS. THE DOCTOR WILL BE RIGHT OVER."**
 - c. THE THIRD YEAR HE SAYS, "YOU KNOW YOU ARE NOT LOOKING SO HOT. WHEN YOU ARE DONE FEEDING THE KIDS AND CLEANING UP THE KITCHEN, YOU OUGHT TO GO LAY DOWN."**
 - d. THE FOURTH YEAR HE SAYS, "WOULD YOU QUIT WALKING AROUND HERE BARKING LIKE A SEAL, YOU'RE GOING TO GIVE ME YOUR COLD?"**
- 3. THE LONGER WE BECOME FAMILIAR; THE LESS THANKFUL WE ARE FOR EACH OTHER.**
- 4. BUT HUSBANDS, IMAGINE ABOUT HOW MUCH YOUR MARRIAGE WOULD IMPROVE IF YOU CAME HOME ONE DAY WITH SOME FLOWERS AND JUST TOLD YOUR WIFE HOW THANKFUL YOU ARE FOR ALL SHE DOES.**
 - a. YOU MIGHT GIVE HER A HEART ATTACK.**

5. **WIVES, JUST THINK ABOUT HOW MUCH YOUR MARRIAGE WOULD IMPROVE IF YOU TOLD YOUR HUSBAND HOW MUCH APPRECIATE HIM ONCE AND AWHILE.**
6. **KIDS, THINK ABOUT HOW MUCH BETTER THINGS WOULD GO FOR YOU IN THE HOME IF YOU TOLD MOM AND DAD ONCE AND AWHILE HOW GRATEFUL YOU ARE FOR THE MONEY THEY SPEND ON YOU AND THE STUFF THEY GET YOU? AND THE THINGS THEY DO FOR YOU?**
7. **JUST IMAGINE HOW MUCH BETTER OUR CHURCH RELATIONSHIPS WOULD BE, IF WE EXPRESSED OUR THANKS FOR EACH OTHER FROM TIME TO TIME.**
 - a. **INSTEAD OF PICKING AT EACH OTHER'S FAULTS SO MUCH, WHAT IF WE JUST STOPPED AND BECAME GRATEFUL FOR EACH OTHER.**
8. **DO YOU KNOW HOW THE APOSTLE PAUL BEGAN MOST OF HIS LETTERS IN THE BIBLE?**
 - a. **TO THE CHURCH IN ROME HE WROTE. *"FIRST, I THANK MY GOD FOR ALL OF YOU."* [ROMANS 1:8]**
 - b. **TO THE CHURCH IN CORINTH. *"I ALWAYS THANK GOD FOR YOU"* [1 CORINTHIANS 1:4].**
 - c. **TO THE CHURCH IN EPHESUS, *"I HAVE NOT STOPPED GIVING THANKS FOR YOU; REMEMBERING YOU IN MY PRAYERS."* [EPHESIANS 1:16].**
 - d. **TO THE CHURCH IN PHILIPPI, *"I THANK MY GOD EVERY TIME I REMEMBER YOU."* (PHILIPPIANS 1:3).**
 - e. **TO THE CHURCH IN COLOSSI, *"I ALWAYS THANK GOD WHEN I PRAY FOR YOU."* [COLOSSIANS 1:3].**

9. PAUL MADE SURE THAT HE LET PEOPLE IN THE CHURCHES KNOW THAT HE WAS THANKFUL FOR THEM.

10. IMAGINE HOW MUCH BETTER OUR CHURCH AND OUR RELATIONSHIPS WOULD BE IF WE EXPRESSED OUR THANKS FOR EACH OTHER.

D. I'LL TELL YOU ANOTHER WAY HAVING A GRATEFUL HEART WILL BENEFIT YOU. IT WILL SOLIDIFY YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

1. THIS IS THE TOP BENEFIT.

2. SOMEONE ONCE SAID THAT GOD LIVES IN TWO PLACES.

a. HE LIVES IN HEAVEN AND IN A HUMBLE, GRATEFUL HEART.

b. [HEBREWS 12:25] SAYS, "*LET US PLEASE GOD BY SERVING HIM WITH THANKFUL HEARTS.*"

3. YOU KNOW WHAT I HAVE FOUND TO BE TRUE IN MY LIFE? I HAVE FOUND THAT I HAVE AN OVERWHELMING NEED TO GIVE THANKS.

a. THERE IS A DESIRE WITHIN ME TO GIVE THANKS TO SOMEONE FOR WHAT I HAVE.

b. HAVE YOU NOTICED THAT EVERY NOW AND THEN, EVEN THE ATHEIST OR NON-BELIEVER FEELS THE MOOD TO BE THANKFUL.

ILLUSTRATION

HARRIET MARTINEAU WAS AN ATHEIST. ONE MORNING SHE AND A CHRISTIAN FRIEND STEPPED OUT INTO THE GLORIES OF A BEAUTIFUL FALL MORNING.

AS HARRIET SAW THE BRILLIANT SUN PEAKING THROUGH THE HAZE, AND THE FROST ON THE MEADOW, AND THE

BRIGHTLY COLORED LEAVES MAKING THEIR WAY LAZILY TO THE GROUND, SHE WAS FILLED WITH THE BEAUTY AND SAID: "I AM SO THANKFUL. I'M JUST SO GRATEFUL FOR IT ALL."

AND HER BELIEVING FRIEND ASKED, "GRATEFUL TO WHOM, MY DEAR?"

- 4. THERE IS SOMETHING INSIDE OF EACH OF US THAT NEEDS TO GIVE THANKS TO GOD.**
- 5. I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT WHEN I SPEND TIME GIVING THANKS TO GOD FOR ALL I HAVE, I JUST FEEL CLOSE TO HIM.**
- 6. I THINK THAT IS EXACTLY WHY, 1 THESSALONIANS 5:18 SAYS, "IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS; FOR THIS IS THE WILL OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS FOR YOU."**
- 7. IT IS GOD'S PLAN, IT IS HIS WILL FOR US TO GIVE THANKS TO HIM.**
- 8. HE MADE US TO GIVE THANKS TO HIM.**

II. LET US LOOK SECONDLY AT WAYS TO DEVELOP THANKSGIVING IN OUR LIVES.

WELL, WHAT ARE SOME WAYS WE CAN BECOME MORE GRATEFUL PEOPLE?

A. FIRST, IF WE WANT TO BE THANKFUL, REMEMBER THAT EVERYTHING WE HAVE IS FROM GOD.

- 1. WE MUST ACKNOWLEDGE THAT EVERYTHING WE HAVE IS GOD'S AND NOT OURS.**
 - a. [PSALM 24:1] SAYS, "*THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S AND EVERYTHING IN IT.*"**
- 2. WHEN WE DO THIS, IT REMINDS US THAT IT IS A PRIVILEGE THAT GOD HAS LOANED US EVERYTHING WE HAVE.**
 - a. [CORINTHIANS 4:7]SAYS, "*WHAT DO YOU HAVE THAT YOU DID NOT RECEIVE FROM***

GOD? AND IF YOU DID RECEIVE IT, WHY DO YOU BOAST AS THOUGH YOU DID NOT?"

ILLUSTRATION

THE STORY IS TOLD OF A POOR MAN WHO WAS GIVEN A LOAF OF BREAD.

HE THANKED THE BAKER, BUT THE BAKER SAID, "DON'T THANK ME, THANK THE MILLER WHO MADE THE FLOUR."

SO HE THANKED THE MILLER, BUT THE MILLER SAID, "DON'T THANK ME. THANK THE FARMER WHO PLANTED THE WHEAT."

SO HE THANKED THE FARMER, BUT THE FARMER SAID, "DON'T THANK ME. THANK THE LORD. HE GAVE THE SUNSHINE, THE RAIN, AND FERTILITY TO THE SOIL, AND THAT'S WHY YOU HAVE BREAD TO EAT."

3. EVERYTHING WE OWN, WE ULTIMATELY RECEIVED FROM GOD AND WE OWE HIM THANKS.

a. [AMES 1:17] *"EVERY GOOD AND PERFECT GIFT IS FROM ABOVE COMING DOWN FROM THE FATHER OF HEAVENLY LIGHTS, WHO DOES NOT CHANGE LIKE THE SHIFTING SAND."*

B. SECONDLY, IF WE WANT TO BE THANKFUL WE NEED TO AVOID COMPLAINING.

ILLUSTRATION

THERE WAS A PASTOR WHO CHALLENGED HIS CHURCH TO FAST FOR SIX WEEKS FROM COMPLAINING.

AND EVERY SUNDAY HE ASKED EVERYONE HOW THEY HAVE BEEN DOING, AND THEY ALL ADMITTED THAT THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE HAD IMPROVED SINCE THEY QUIT COMPLAINING AND STARTED PRAISING.

ILLUSTRATION

DR. DALE ROBBINS WRITES, "I USED TO THINK PEOPLE COMPLAINED BECAUSE THEY HAD A LOT OF PROBLEMS.

BUT I HAVE COME TO REALIZE THAT THEY HAVE PROBLEMS BECAUSE THEY COMPLAIN.

- 1. COMPLAINING DOESN'T CHANGE ANYTHING OR MAKE SITUATIONS BETTER.**
- 2. COMPLAINING AMPLIFIES FRUSTRATION, SPREADS DISCONTENT AND DISCORD, AND CAN INVOKE AN INVITATION FOR THE DEVIL TO CAUSE HAVOC WITH OUR LIVES."**
- 3. COMPLAINING MAKES US MISERABLE.**

a. **[SALM 77:3]SAYS, "*I COMPLAINED AND MY SPIRIT WAS OVERWHELMED.*"**

- 4. COMPLAINING IS THE ARCHENEMY OF THANKSGIVING.**

a. **THE TWO CANNOT CO-EXIST IN THE SAME HEART.**

- 5. AND SO I CHALLENGE YOU TO TRY TO QUIT COMPLAINING FOR A WHOLE MONTH.**

- 6. JUST TRY IT. WHEN YOU FEEL TEMPTED TO COMPLAIN, INSTEAD OF FILING YOUR COMPLAINT, FILE A PRAISE. IT WILL CHANGE YOUR LIFE.**

a. **[PHILIPPIANS 2:13] SAYS, "*DO EVERYTHING WITHOUT COMPLAINING OR ARGUING, SO THAT YOU MAY BECOME BLAMELESS AND PURE, CHILDREN OF GOD WITHOUT FAULT IN A CROOKED AND DEPRAVED GENERATION, IN WHICH YOU SHINE LIKE STARS IN THE UNIVERSE.*"**

C. ONE LAST THING WE CAN TO DO TO PRODUCE A SPIRIT OF THANKSGIVING IS TO DEVELOP THE DAILY DISCIPLINE OF GIVING THANKS.

- 1. IN ORDER TO BE THANKFUL PEOPLE, WE NEED TO START TO GIVE THANKS EVERYDAY. NOT JUST ONCE A YEAR ON THANKSGIVING.**

2. **WE NEED TO DISCIPLINE OURSELVES TO FIND SOMETHING EACH DAY THAT WE SHOULD BE THANKFUL FOR AND EXPRESS OUR THANKS TO GOD.**
3. **PERHAPS CREATE A JOURNAL OR A FILE ON OUR COMPUTERS WHERE WE LIST THE THINGS GOD HAS DONE FOR US.**
 - a. **CALL IT A PRAISE FILE.**
4. **THANKSGIVING MUST BECOME A DAILY HABIT.**
 - a. **[PHESIANS 5:19]SAYS, “*SING AND MAKE MUSIC IN YOUR HEART TO THE LORD, ALWAYS GIVING THANKS TO GOD THE FATHER FOR EVERYTHING.*”**
 - b. **ALWAYS IS THE KEY WORD. NOT JUST ON THANKSGIVING. EVERYDAY.**
5. **IN DANIEL 6 WE READ THAT DANIEL GOT DOWN ON HIS KNEES THREE TIMES EVERYDAY AND PRAYED AND GAVE THANKS TO HIS GOD.**
6. **AND HOW MANY OF US DO THAT?**
7. **(THE ONLY TIME IN OUR LIVES WE GIVE THANKS IS ON THANKSGIVING DAY ONCE A YEAR BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT MANDATES IT AS A HOLIDAY.**
8. **REMEMBER THE OLD HYMN?**

**“WHEN UPON LIFE’S BILLOWS YOU ARE
TEMPEST TOSSED,**

**WHEN YOU ARE DISCOURAGED THINKING ALL
IS LOST.**

**COUNT YOUR MANY BLESSING, NAME THEM
ONE BY ONE.**

**AND IT WILL SURPRISE YOU WHAT THE LORD
HAS DONE.”**

9. THANKSGIVING IS A DAILY DISCIPLINE.

ILLUSTRATION

I READ RECENTLY THAT IF YOU OWN ONE BIBLE, YOU ARE ABUNDANTLY BLESSED, BECAUSE A THIRD OF THE PEOPLE IN THE WORLD DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO A BIBLE.

IF YOU AWOKE THIS MORNING WITH MORE HEALTH THAN ILLNESS YOU ARE MORE BLESSED THAN 1 MILLION PEOPLE WHO WILL NOT SURVIVE THE WEEK.

IF YOU HAVE NEVER EXPERIENCED THE DANGER OF WAR, THE LONELINESS OF IMPRISONMENT, THE AGONY OF TORTURE, OR THE PANGS OF STARVATION, YOU ARE MORE FORTUNATE THAN 500 MILLION PEOPLE ON EARTH.

IF YOU HAVE FOOD IN YOUR REFRIGERATOR, CLOTHES ON YOUR BACK, A ROOF OVER YOUR HEAD, TWENTY DOLLARS IN YOUR POCKET AND A PLACE TO SLEEP, YOU ARE RICHER THAN 75 PERCENT OF THE WORLD.

O, GOD FORGIVE ME WHEN I WHINE.

10. I FOUND THIS LIST OF QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK TO TEST WHETHER YOU ARE A GRATEFUL PERSON OR NOT?

- a. **#1 WHICH DO YOU TEND TO TALK ABOUT MORE – YOUR BLESSINGS, OR YOUR DISAPPOINTMENTS?**
- b. **#2 ARE YOU A COMPLAINER, ALWAYS GRUMBLING, ALWAYS FINDING FAULT WITH YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES?**
- c. **#3 ARE YOU CONTENT WITH WHAT YOU HAVE, OR DO YOU ALWAYS WANT MORE?**
- d. **#4 DO YOU FIND IT EASIER TO COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS OR TO COUNT YOUR AFFLICTIONS?**

- e. **#5 DO YOU EXPRESS THANKS TO OTHERS WHEN THEY HELP YOU, OR DO YOU JUST EXCEPT IT AS YOUR DUE?**
- f. **#6 WOULD OTHERS SAY THAT YOU ARE A THANKFUL PERSON?**

11. WE'VE ALL ADMITTED THAT THE QUALITY OF OUR LIVES HAVE IMPROVED SINCE WE QUIT COMPLAINING AND STARTED PRAISING.

ILLUSTRATION

ONE OF THE MOST THANKFUL PERSON I KNEW WAS A WOMEN I KNEW FROM DOWN SOUTH IN GEORGIA.

WHEN SHE WAS IN THE PRIME OF HER LIFE, SHE HAD SEVERAL STROKES AND WAS CONFINED TO A WHEEL CHAIR.

SHE WAS STILL MENTALLY ALERT BUT SHE COULDN'T WALK AND DO A LOT OF OTHER NORMAL ACTIVITIES.

SHE LIVED IN A CONVALESCENT HOME AND THE ONLY TIME SHE REALLY GOT OUT WAS ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH TO COME TO CHURCH.

THE HIGHLIGHT OF HER WEEK WAS SUNDAY MORNING WHEN SOMEONE CAME FROM OUR CHURCH TO PICK HER UP.

ONE DAY I WENT TO PICK HER UP. IT WAS HARD TO GET HER INTO MY CAR BECAUSE ITS SO COMPACT.

WE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GET HER IN IF IT WASN'T FOR HER FIBERGLASS SLIDE BOARD THAT FITTED UNDER HER LEGS AND ALLOWED HER TO SLIDE FROM THE WHEEL CHAIR TO THE CAR MORE EASILY.

IT WAS NOTHING FANCY, JUST AN INEXPENSIVE PIECE OF FIBERGLASS.

WELL, ONE DAY SHE PULLED ME ASIDE AND SAID, "PASTOR, YOU KNOW WHAT I THANK GOD FOR EVERYDAY?"

I SAID, WHAT MOTHER ETHEL? AND SHE SAID, "I AM THANKFUL FOR MY SLIDE BOARD, BECAUSE, BECAUSE OF MY SLIDEBOARD, I CAN COME TO CHURCH."

THERE WAS MOTHER ETHEL, A PERSON WHO HAD ALL THE REASON TO BE ANGRY AND BITTER ABOUT HER CIRCUMSTANCES.

ALL THE REASON TO SHAKE HER FIST AT GOD. BUT INSTEAD, SHE IS THANKFUL FOR WHATEVER LITTLE BLESSING SHE HAS.

SHE EVEN TOOK THE TIME TO THANK GOD FOR HER SLIDE BOARD.

SISTER ETHEL HAS COUNTED HER BLESSINGS. AND LIKE SISTER ETHEL, YOU SHOULD:

**COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS, NAME THEM ONE BY ONE,
COUNT YOUR BLESSING, SEE WHET GOD HAS DONE.**