

QUALITY
OF
LIFE
BIBLE
STUDY



Thankfulness®

COMPILED BY
S.MCRAE

A THANKFUL HEART Quality of Life Series

LEADER: How was your Thanksgiving?

Did you have anything to be thankful about?
And how important is it to our health to have a thankful heart?

READER: "Blessed"

Source ~ <http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon2/blessed.htm>

If you own just one Bible, you are abundantly blessed 1/3 of the world does not have access to even one.

If you woke up this morning with more health than illness, you are more blessed than the million who will not survive the week.

If you have never experienced the danger of battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture or the pangs of starvation, you are ahead of 500 million people around the world.

If you attend a church meeting without fear of harassment, arrest or torture of death, you are more blessed than almost three billion people in the world..

If you have food in your refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof over your head and a place to sleep, you are richer than 75% of this world.

If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish someplace, you are among the top 8% of the worlds wealthy.

If your parents are still married and alive, you are very rare, even in the United States.

If you hold up your head with a smile on your face and are truly thank- ful, you are blessed because the majority can, but most do not.

If you can hold someone's hand, hug them or even touch them on the shoulder, you are blessed because you can offer God's healing touch.

If you prayed yesterday and today, you are in the minority because you believe in God's willingness to hear and answer prayer.

If you believe in Jesus as the Son of God, you are part of a very small minority in the world.

If you can read this message, you are more blessed than over two billion people in the world that cannot read anything at all.

Author unknown.

READER: "The Seven Wonders" by Alan Smith

Source ~ http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon2c/seven_wonders.htm

I heard about a group of Geography students who studied the Seven Wonders of the World. At the end of that section, the students were asked to list what they each considered to be the Seven Wonders of the World. Though there was some disagreement, the following got the most votes: Egypt's Great Pyramid, the Taj Mahal, the Grand Canyon, the Panama Canal, the Empire State Building, St. Peter's Basilica and China's Great Wall.

While gathering the votes, the teacher noted that one student, a quiet girl, hadn't turned in her paper yet. So she asked the girl if she was having trouble with her list. The quiet girl replied,

"Yes, a little. I couldn't quite make up my mind because there were so many."

The teacher said, "Well, tell us what you have, and maybe we can help."

The girl hesitated, then read, "I think the Seven Wonders of the World are to touch and to taste, to see and to hear . . . " She hesitated a little, "and then to run and to laugh and to love."

It is far too easy for us to look at the exploits of man and refer to them as "wonders" while we overlook all

that God has done, regarding them as merely “ordinary.” May you be reminded today of those things which are truly wondrous.

“I will remember the works of the LORD; Surely I will remember Your wonders of old. I will also meditate on all Your work, and talk of Your deeds.....Who is so great a God as our God? You are the God who does wonders.” (Psalm 77:11-14a).

Praise be to “the God who does wonders”!

LEADER: Are you thinking of more things to be thankful for now?

Here’s a prescription:

READER: “Being Thankful” By Peter Kennedy

Source ~ http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon3/being_thankful.htm

“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.” - Colossians 3:15

A. J. Cronin was born in 1896 in Cardross, Scotland. He was educated at Dumbarton Academy where he received baccalaureates in medicine and surgery. In 1914, he entered the Glasgow University Medical School, graduating in 1919. During World War I Cronin served as a surgeon in the Royal Navy. After the war, he worked as a ship’s surgeon on a liner bound for India, and then served in various hospitals. In 1930, his health broke down and he turned to writing as a profession. In 1931 he produced his first novel, “Hatter’s Castle,” which became an immediate success. He followed it with several best-selling books including “The Citadel,” “The Stars Look Down,” and “The Keys of the Kingdom.” Once Cronin told about a colleague who gave an unusual prescription to patients afflicted with worry, fear, discouragement or self-doubt. The doctor called it his thank-you cure. “For six weeks I want you to say thank you whenever anyone does you a favor. And to show you mean it, emphasize the words with a smile.” Within six weeks most of the doctor’s patients showed great improvement.

Giving thanks should not be a once a year event. It should be practiced daily for all the blessings that we receive. Are you feeling worry, fear, discouragement or self-doubt? Today in prayer, thank Christ and thank others whenever anyone does you a favor.

“Gratitude is born in hearts that take time to count up past mercies.” - Charles E. Jefferson

God’s Word: *“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.” - Colossians 2:7*

READER: “It’s Yours Teacher”

Source ~ http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon3a/its_yours_teacher.htm

Thanksgiving Day was near. The first grade teacher gave her class a fun assignment -- to draw a picture of something for which they were thankful.

Most of the class might be considered economically disadvantaged, but still many would celebrate the holiday with turkey and other traditional goodies of the season. These, the teacher thought, would be the subjects of most of her student’s art. And they were.

But Douglas made a different kind of picture. Douglas was a different kind of boy. He was the teacher’s true child of misery, frail and unhappy. As other children played at recess, Douglas was likely to stand close by her side. One could only guess at the pain Douglas felt behind those sad eyes.

Yes, his picture was different. When asked to draw a picture of something for which he was thankful, he drew a hand. Nothing else. Just an empty hand.

His abstract image captured the imagination of his peers. Whose hand could it be? One child guessed it was the hand of a farmer, because farmers raise turkeys. Another suggested a police officer, because the police protect and care for people. Still others guessed it was the hand of God, for God feeds us. And so the discussion went -- until the teacher almost forgot the young artist himself.

When the children had gone on to other assignments, she paused at Douglas’ desk, bent down, and asked him whose hand it was.

The little boy looked away and murmured, "It's yours, teacher."

She recalled the times she had taken his hand and walked with him here or there, as she had the other students. How often had she said, "Take my hand, Douglas, we'll go outside." Or, "Let me show you how to hold your pencil." Or, "Let's do this together." Douglas was most thankful for his teacher's hand.

Brushing aside a tear, she went on with her work.

The story speaks of more than thankfulness. It says something about teachers teaching and parents parenting and friends showing friendship, and how much it means to the Douglasses of the world. They might not always say thanks. But they'll remember the hand that reaches out.

LEADER: Is there someone in your life you need to say thank you to?

READER: "Unthanked People" by Steve Goodier

Source ~ http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon2d/unthanked_people.htm

When William Stidger taught at Boston University, he once reflected upon the great number of un-thanked people in his life. Those who had helped nurture him, inspire him or who cared enough about him to leave a lasting impression.

One was a schoolteacher he'd not heard of in many years. But he remembered that she had gone out of her way to put a love of verse in him, and Will had loved poetry all his life. He wrote a letter of thanks to her.

The reply he received, written in the feeble scrawl of the aged, began, "My dear Willie." He was delighted. Now over 50, bald and a professor, he didn't think there was a person left in the world who would call him "Willie." Here is that letter:

My dear Willie,

I cannot tell you how much your note meant to me. I am in my eighties, living alone in a small room, cooking my own meals, lonely and, like the last leaf of autumn, lingering behind.

You will be interested to know that I taught school for 50 years and yours is the first note of appreciation I ever received. It came on a blue-cold morning and it cheered me as nothing has in many years.

Not prone to cry easily, Will wept over that note. She was one of the great un-thanked people from Will's past. You know them. We all do. The teacher who made a difference. That coach we'll never forget. The music instructor or Sunday school worker who helped us to believe in ourselves. That scout leader who cared.

We all remember people who shaped our lives in various ways. People whose influence changed us. Will Stidger found a way to show his appreciation -- he wrote them letters.

Who are some of the un-thanked people from your past? It may not be too late to say, "Thanks."

READER: QUOTE #1

At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us. - Albert Schweitzer

READER: QUOTE #2

Appreciation can make a day, even change a life. Your willingness to put it into words is all that is necessary. - Maragret Cousins

READER: "General George Patton" by Dick Innes, Daily Encounter

Source ~ http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon2a/general_george_patton.htm

"A soldier in the American Third Army was sent to a rest camp after a period of active service. When he returned to his outfit, he wrote a letter to General George Patton and thanked him for the splendid care he had received. General Patton wrote back that for thirty-five years he had sought to give all the comfort and convenience he could to his men, and added that this was the first letter of thanks he had received in all his years in the Army."

How sad it is when we don't live with an "attitude of gratitude" and remember to continually thank our loved ones, our friends, our work mates and how about our employees and/or employer for all the many blessings they continually give to us.

How much sadder when we don't continually thank God and express our heart-felt appreciation to him for his innumerable blessings to us -- especially for and to Jesus for his dying on the cross in our place to give us the gift of forgiveness and eternal life. Which is the greatest gift in all the world.

READER: "Be Thankful" (Poem) From Simply Inspirational, Author unknown

Source ~ http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon2/be_thankful.htm

Be thankful that you don't already have everything you desire.
If you did, what would there be to look forward to?
Be thankful when you don't know something,
for it gives you the opportunity to learn.

Be thankful for the difficult times.
During those times you grow.
Be thankful for your limitations,
because they give you opportunities for improvement.

Be thankful for each new challenge,
because it will build your strength and character.
Be thankful for your mistakes.
They will teach you valuable lessons.

Be thankful when you're tired and weary,
because it means you've made a difference.
It's easy to be thankful for the good things.
A life of rich fulfillment comes to those who
are also thankful for the setbacks.

Gratitude can turn a negative into a positive.
Find a way to be thankful for your troubles,
and they can become your blessings.

READER: "I Was Dying"

Source ~ http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon2/don't_quit.htm

First I was dying to finish high school and start college.
And then I was dying to finish college and start working.
Then I was dying to marry and have children.
And then I was dying for my children to grow old enough so I could
go back to work. But then I was dying to retire.
And now, I am dying . . . And suddenly I realized I forgot to live.

Don't let this happen to you. Appreciate your current situation and thank God for the good and bad in your life. If you are living for God, your current situations are working for good. Remember that everyday is a day of thanksgiving. Give God the praise for what He is doing in your life right now. Perhaps something is amiss or has gone awry, but the Lord is still in charge and He has promised never to leave you nor forsake you. The song declares that, "This Too Shall Pass", because God is working it out for you. While you are in the now, God is in the NOT YET!!!

LEADER: "Give Thanks In All Circumstances"

Source ~ http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon4/give_thanks_in_all_circumstances1.htm

"Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." - 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Helen Keller was born in Tuscumbia, Alabama on June 27, 1880. At 19 months of age, she contracted meningitis. The disease rendered her both deaf and blind. Through the help of Anne Sullivan, who was partially blind, Helen started learning how to write and read. Anne started teaching Helen the names of objects by pressing the manual alphabet into her palm. She learned to speak by placing her fingers on Sullivan's larynx to hear the vibrations. In what was seen as a miracle, Helen learned to read and write in

Braille and became exceptionally proficient in the ordinary educational curriculum. She graduated cum laude from Radcliffe College. Despite her handicaps, Helen was not only grateful; she devoted her life to assisting the deaf and the blind. She toured the world to promote the education of the persons similarly disabled. "For three things I thank God every day of my life," Helen said. "Thanks that He has [given me] knowledge of His works; deep thanks that He has set in my darkness the lamp of faith; deep deepest thanks that I have another life to look forward to - a life joyous with light and flowers and heavenly song."

Each of us has a special circumstance, a special hardship, given to us to draw us closer to the Lord. Are you grateful for the circumstances in your life? Today in prayer, give thanks to the Lord for the hardships in your life that you may depend more fully upon Christ's grace.

"I thank God for my handicaps, for through them I have found myself, my work, and God." - Helen Keller

God's Word: *"But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong."* - 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

READER: "Count Your Blessings" (Poem) (Or How to Observe Thanksgiving) From: Wit & Wisdom

Count your blessings instead of your crosses;
Count your gains instead of your losses.
Count your joys instead of your woes;

Count your friends instead of your foes.
Count your smiles instead of your tears;
Count your courage instead of your fears.

Count your full years instead of your lean;
Count your kind deeds instead of your mean.
Count your health instead of your wealth;
Count on God instead of yourself.

READER: "Pao, Senior" From: "No Wonder They Call Him the Savior, Max Lucado, 1986

Read from Book

READER: "Thanksgiving" (Poem) by Lizelia Augusta Jenkins Moorer

Source ~ <http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/thanksgiving-3/>

Let us give thanks to God above,
Thanks for expressions of His love,
Seen in the book of nature, grand
Taught by His love on every hand.

Let us be thankful in our hearts,
Thankful for all the truth imparts,
For the religion of our Lord,
All that is taught us in His word.

Let us be thankful for a land,
That will for such religion stand;
One that protects it by the law,
One that before it stands in awe.

Thankful for all things let us be,
Though there be woes and misery;
Lessons they bring us for our good-
Later 'twill all be understood.

Thankful for peace o'er land and sea,
Thankful for signs of liberty,
Thankful for homes, for life and health,
Pleasure and plenty, fame and wealth.

Thankful for friends and loved ones, too,
Thankful for all things, good and true,
Thankful for harvest in the fall,
Thankful to Him who gave it all.

READER: Psalm 69:30

"I will praise the name of God with a song, And will magnify Him with thanksgiving."

READER: "Thank You, Lord" Hymn...chorus only:

Music and words by Seth Sykes 1892-1950, and Bessie Sykes, 1905-

"Thank you, Lord, for saving my soul, Thank you, Lord, for making me whole; Thank you, Lord, for giving to me Thy great salvation so rich and free."

READER: Revelations 7:12

"Amen ,blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen."

READER: QUOTE #3

"O lord, that lends me life, lend me a heart replete with thankfulness." - Wiliam Shakespeare

LEADER: Colossians 3:17

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

MAY WE ALWAYS HAVE A THANKFUL HEART!

COMMENTS IF TIME:

STOP TEN MINUTES BEFORE CLOSING FOR:

PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES:

COPY AND DISTRIBUTE THE FOLLOWING PAGES FOR YOUR READERS:

READERS

“Blessed”

If you own just one Bible, you are abundantly blessed 1/3 of the world does not have access to even one.

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“The Seven Wonders” by Alan Smith

I heard about a group of Geography students who studied the Seven Wonders of the World. At the end of that section, the students were asked to list what they each considered to be the Seven Wonders of the World. Though there was some disagreement, the following got the most votes: Egypt’s Great Pyramid, the Taj Mahal, the Grand Canyon, the Panama Canal, the Empire State Building, St. Peter’s Basilica and China’s Great Wall.

While gathering the votes, the teacher noted that one student, a quiet girl, hadn’t turned in her paper yet. So she asked the girl if she was having trouble with her list. The quiet girl replied,

“Yes, a little. I couldn’t quite make up my mind because there were so many.”

The teacher said, “Well, tell us what you have, and maybe we can help.”

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It is far too easy for us to look at the exploits of man and refer to them as “wonders” while we overlook all that God has done, regarding them as merely “ordinary.” May you be reminded today of those things which are truly wondrous.

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“**Being Thankful**” By Peter Kennedy

“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.” - Colossians 3:15

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God’s Word: *“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.” - Colossians 2:7*

READER: “It’s Yours Teacher”

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But Douglas made a different kind of picture. Douglas was a different kind of boy. He was the teacher’s true child of misery, frail and unhappy. As other children played at recess, Douglas was likely to stand close by her side. One could only guess at the pain Douglas felt behind those sad eyes.

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“A soldier in the American Third Army was sent to a rest camp after a period of active service. When he returned to his outfit, he wrote a letter to General George Patton and thanked him for the splendid care he had received. General Patton wrote back that for thirty-five years he had sought to give all the comfort and convenience he could to his men, and added that this was the first letter of thanks he had received in all his years in the Army.”

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If you did, what would there be to look forward to?
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Be thankful for the difficult times.
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Be thankful for your limitations,
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It's easy to be thankful for the good things.
A life of rich fulfillment comes to those who
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Gratitude can turn a negative into a positive.
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And then I was dying to finish college and start working.
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And then I was dying for my children to grow old enough so I could
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And now, I am dying . . . And suddenly I realized I forgot to live.

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“Give Thanks In All Circumstances”

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"Count Your Blessings"

Count your blessings instead of your crosses;
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Count your joys instead of your woes;
Count your friends instead of your foes.
Count your smiles instead of your tears;
Count your courage instead of your fears.
Count your full years instead of your lean;
Count your kind deeds instead of your mean.
Count your health instead of your wealth;
Count on God instead of yourself.

_____ ■ _____

"Pao, Señor"

"No Wonder They Call Him the Savior by Max Lucado

Read from Book

_____ ■ _____

"Thanksgiving" by Lizelia Augusta Jenkins Moorer

Let us give thanks to God above,
Thanks for expressions of His love,
Seen in the book of nature, grand
Taught by His love on every hand.

Let us be thankful in our hearts,
Thankful for all the truth imparts,
For the religion of our Lord,
All that is taught us in His word.

Let us be thankful for a land,
That will for such religion stand;
One that protects it by the law,
One that before it stands in awe.

Thankful for all things let us be,
Though there be woes and misery;
Lessons they bring us for our good-
Later 'twill all be understood.

Thankful for peace o'er land and sea,
Thankful for signs of liberty,
Thankful for homes, for life and health,
Pleasure and plenty, fame and wealth.

Thankful for friends and loved ones, too,
Thankful for all things, good and true,
Thankful for harvest in the fall,
Thankful to Him who gave it all.

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Psalm 69:30

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“Thank You, Lord” Hymn...chorus only:

“Thank you, Lord, for saving my soul, Thank you, Lord, for making me whole; Thank you, Lord, for giving to me Thy great salvation so rich and free.”

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Revelations 7:12

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QUOTE #3

“O lord, that lends me life, lend me a heart replete with thankfulness.” - William Shakespeare