

HOW WE SHOW GRATITUDE FOR GOD'S GRACE

Introduction

- A. Text: **1 Cor. 15:9,10**.
- B. The problem of ingratitude is often addressed in the Scriptures. There is no worse sin than to take for granted blessings that have been received from God - **Lk. 17:11-19**.
- C. The person most like to be *really faithful* is always the person who is *really thankful*.
 - 1. What would happen if a person were genuinely and deeply grateful for God's mercy?
 - 2. If the "what" is God's grace, what is the "so what"?
- D. What are some things that grow out of a true appreciation of *God's willingness to forgive us*?

I. HUMILITY

- A. The Prodigal Son exhibited the *profound lowliness* that is produced by *an understanding of grace* - **Lk. 15:18-21**.
 - 1. What do we have that we "did not receive" (**1 Cor. 4:7**)?
 - 2. God "has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished us according to our iniquities" (**Psa. 103:10**).
 - 3. We are "not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant" (**Gen. 32:10**). Cf. **Mt. 8:8**; **Rev. 3:20**.
 - 4. **A recognition of our unworthiness + an awareness of God's grace = a love that is humbly thankful**. Cf. **1 Jn. 4:9,10**.
- B. God wants us to understand: "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness" (**2 Cor. 12:9,10**). Cf. **Rom. 5:1-5**.

II. DEVOTION

- A. *Diligent discipleship* and *service* grow out of a recognition of the unmerited favor that God has shown toward us - **1 Cor. 15:9,10**. Cf. **1 Tim. 1:12-17**.
 - 1. *Personal gratitude* is the primary motive for *personal evangelism* - **Mk. 5:19**.
 - 2. The person grateful for God's grace will not receive that grace "in vain" (**2 Cor. 6:1**).
 - 3. The grace shown at the cross is what will *keep us faithful* - **Gal. 3:1**. Cf. **Phil. 4:6,7**; **2 Tim. 1:12**; **Hb. 10:29**.
- B. The *greatest labor* in the world is the *labor of love* - **1 Thess. 1:3**.

III. GENTLENESS

- A. *Patience toward others* results from an understanding of *how patient God has been with us*. The *impatient* person almost always turns out to be an *unthankful* person - **Mt. 18:21-35**. Cf. **1 Jn. 4:11**.
- B. The person grateful for God's kindness will deal *gently* with others - **Gal. 6:1,2**; **2 Tim. 2:24-26**.
- C. *Forbearance* and *eagerness to forgive* are the natural results of our having been forgiven by God - **Col. 3:12,13**. Cf. **Eph. 4:32**.

D. We should deal with others in just the same way that we want God to deal with us - **Jas. 2:13**.

Conclusion

A. We need to be truly thankful for God's grace, not only in word, but in deed - **1 Jn. 3:18**.

B. *Humility, devotion, and gentleness* are the products of deeply appreciating what God has done for us in our unworthy condition.

C. Yet something else grows out of gratitude, too: *godly character*. Cf. **Tit. 2:11-14**.

1. We will want to be like Christ - **1 Jn. 3:1-3**.

2. We will want to become partakers of the divine nature - **2 Pt. 1:2-4**.

3. We will want to be with Him where He is - **Jn. 14:1-3**. Cf. **Jn. 12:26; 13:36**.

4. We will want Christ to live in us and through us - **Gal. 2:20**. Cf. **Eph. 2:4-10**.

5. The love of Christ will compel us - **2 Cor. 5:14,15**. Cf. **Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:6-11; Eph. 5:2**.

D. **Look at all of the good things that come from gratitude for grace!**

E. Is it any wonder that we have been given *the Lord's Supper* to remind us every week of our debt of gratitude to God?

1. Nothing is more vital to our relationship to God than *gratitude*.

2. Nothing is more productive of gratitude than *meditation on the Lord's sacrifice for us*.

F. "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome" (**1 Jn. 5:3**).