

## A Simple “Thank You”

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Recently, I received a handwritten thank you card from an automotive shop! No, you did not misread that sentence. I received a handwritten thank you card from an automotive shop! To say I was surprised is an understatement.

I have received many thank you cards over the years. I have even written a few myself. But I have never received a thank you card from an automotive shop. You probably are wondering about two things: 1). Where does he take his car to get serviced? 2). How much did his repair cost!?! Well, I’m not answering either question.

Thank you. Such small words. Tiny but mighty. They are both expressive and compelling. The Bible has quite a bit to say about thankfulness.

### About Thankfulness

**1. Reasons to be thankful.** It is good to be reminded why we should be thankful. Sadly, we tend to forget our blessings. We can take God’s graces for granted. This is not good. So, let us be reminded of the many reasons to be thankful to God and one another.

**Psalms 136:1-3:** “Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever. Give thanks to the God of gods, for his steadfast love endures forever. Give thanks to the Lord of lords, for his steadfast love endures forever.”

**1 Corinthians 15:57:** “Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

**Hebrews 12:28:** “Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe.”

**James 1:17:** “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.”

**2. Thankfulness cultivates humility.** We have been greatly blessed. The Bible begins by showing how God created us in His image and entrusted us with His world. In Romans chapter eight, Paul writes about how God rescued us from our sins through Jesus. We are adopted into the family of God. The Spirit leads us to an inheritance and intercedes on our behalf. Nothing can separate us from the love of God. Such blessings must overwhelm us.

But, why has God enriched our lives to such an extent? In a word, love. God loves us and wants us to be with Him. His graces are designed to convince us of His pure intention. God draws us to Him by self-giving love. An awareness of God’s love will cultivate humility and produce loving obedience with us.

**3. Thankfulness reinforces relationships.** One of the common features of Paul's letters is his expressions of thankfulness. He loved the Lord's people. He was grateful for people who sought salvation in Christ. In his letter to the saints at Colossae, he wrote, "We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you" (Col. 1:4). Thankfulness fortified their relationship.

Also, Paul cared deeply about the unity of saints. In the same letter, he wrote, "And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful" (Col. 3:14-15).

Unity is challenging. Only love can bind us together. The type of love Paul wrote about is the kind that is meek, forgiving, and peaceable. Also, in this text, Paul admonished the saints to be thankful. We will become less inclined to hurt someone for whom we are genuinely thankful. And, if we do hurt them, we will be faster to seek reconciliation.

Like most blessings, though, we can take one another for granted. Ingratitude strains relationships and will break them if not corrected. Thankfulness will help bring us together and keep us together.

**4. Ingratitude is destructive.** In his sad assessment of the Gentiles, Paul wrote, "For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened" (Rom. 1:21). When placed alongside the grace of God, ingratitude is stunning! The ingratitude of the Gentiles is obvious. We are amazed by their carelessness. Less obvious, though, maybe our ingratitude. Just like the Gentiles, we are prone to express ingratitude to God. Notice several forms of ingratitude:

- Only praying when we are in trouble.
- Worshipping only when it is convenient.
- Thinking we can sin tonight and ask forgiveness in the morning.
- Expecting help, but never offering to help.

Ingratitude incrementally pushes us away from God. Bit by bit, ingratitude will harden our hearts and warp our minds. Paul finishes his description of these ungrateful pagans by saying they were fit for destruction; yet, they did not care. Ingratitude is destructive. So, we must count our blessings. We must teach our hearts and mouths to say, "Thank you."

## **Conclusion**

We live in a fast-paced world. We are mostly focused on ourselves. In the daily grind of life, we expect to be promptly served when we need something done. Payment is thanks enough, so we think. Yes, thankfulness seems to be in short supply.

Letting others know they are appreciated is a simple way that we can influence others. Telling people that we value their work can be greatly encouraging to them. Letting our lights shine through gratitude is one way we can help lead others to Jesus.