



Sermon – Somebody Has Bumped Their Head – The Spirit of an Ingrate

Preached at Cloverdale 11/26/2023

2 Corinthians 9:15

¹⁵ Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!

Background: Paul writes this follow-up letter to the Corinthian Church and in this chapter encourages them on the principles of giving. If you don't plant much, you won't reap much. If you sow much seed, you get so much more in return. This is a spiritual and natural principle. God wants us to give; there is a great reward behind our giving; give with the right attitude. Paul also describes four benefits for giving.

- Supplies the needs for others
- Causes others to give thanks to God; gives them a reason to thank God because of our giving.
- Gives evidence of God's work in us
- Encourages others to pray and support us for future giving.

But he ends the chapter letting us know that no matter how much we give, God has given us so much more. Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift.

Indescribable = cannot be described, surpassing description. Too unusual, extreme to be adequately described.

That's what kind of gift God has given us. Jesus Christ is the indescribable gift (John 3:16).

- We get what He has.
- Eternal life, grace, truth, favor, mercy, His plan for our lives, a future, His Spirit, unbelievable power, joy unspeakable (1 Pet 1:8).
- Eternal life in Jesus Christ (Rom 6:23)
- Grace and truth (John 1:14-17)

When you understand the awesomeness of the gift of God, and have received and experienced it, it's hard to not give thanks. If you can't give thanks for all that He has done through this great gift, then you must have bumped your head.

I have run across these folks in my lifetime, and maybe you have too. They are who I call ingrates. They don't give thanks. They are not influenced by the Spirit of Thanksgiving but instead are ungrateful. I call this condition the Spirit of the Ingrate.

Merriam-Webster – Ingrate = an ungrateful person.

Further research from Google on why people are ingrates revealed:

- People who are ungrateful tend to be characterized by an excessive sense of self-importance, arrogance, vanity, and an unquenchable need for admiration and approval. They expect special favors and feel no need to pay back or pay forward.
- Ingrates are programmed to view favors as never being good enough. They think it's other people's failure to do right by you.
- A team of psychologists from American University found that people who are more autonomous in the way they interact with others are also more ungrateful. Specifically, they tend to experience less gratitude and to feel less positive when other people do favors for them.
- For example, people who are less grateful have lower overall well-being and lower emotional intelligence. In fact, gratitude is part of the link between emotional intelligence and well-being.
- However, gratitude is not just an emotion, it also has a cognitive component. In order for us to feel grateful, we must first be able to appreciate. Appreciate the gesture they had for us, appreciate its positive effects and the effort or intention of the other. And appreciation is a skill that ungrateful people have not developed.

Chat GPT

It's tough when it feels like younger generations don't appreciate things in the same way. Sometimes it might seem like ingratitude, but it's often a mix of factors. One reason could be a difference in perspective—what might seem like ingratitude might actually be a result of changing societal norms, different values, or evolving circumstances.

Sometimes, younger people might not fully understand or recognize the efforts or sacrifices made by older generations. It's also possible that they have different priorities, experiences, or challenges that make it harder for them to connect with or appreciate certain things in the same way.

What I have experienced some people are ingrates because:

- They feel they are privileged and that they are due things because of their status or situation.
 - Example of the bicycle guy who asked for assistance and then rebuked us for not being better prepared to meet his needs. He must have bumped his head!
 - They feel like you owe them.
- What they receive isn't what they were expecting or asked for. Example, I'm not thanking you for this.
- They are only thinking about themselves.
- Lack of consideration.
 - They don't understand what others have gone through to bless them.
- They are sometimes unaware of what they have received.
 - Also unaware of how giving thanks impacts and ministers to the giver.



- They may thank you yesterday but quickly forget, or their thanks is just lip service.

What can fix this condition? How can an ingrate be transformed into a grateful person who gives thanks?

Understand the amazing and indescribable gift God has given us.

- Christ paid the debt you couldn't pay...he doesn't owe you, we owe Him.
- Understand what He gives you is better than what you were expecting. His plan is better than your plan.
- When you understand what Christ went through for you, you can't help but give thanks.
- Never forget what He has done and is still doing for you.

When I think of the goodness of Jesus and all that He's done for me, my soul cries out hallelujah, I thank God for saving me. I can't tell it all. If you knew the darkness I was in, couldn't find peace, bad decisions, poor choices, hopelessness. And then someone showed me love said not so.

I don't want to ever forget what He has given me.

I want to mature and develop my level of thanksgiving.

1. Thank Him, for the cross. For paying my sin debt. For being there everyday and every time I need Him.
2. Thank Him, for removing my mistakes, the impact of poor choices; for taking care of my past.
3. Thank Him, for new hope. A bright future. My light in the dark and showing me the way to go.
4. Thank Him, for the blessed assurance and presence of the Holy Spirit who gives me wisdom to understand and do things that bring Him glory.
5. My level of thanks just hit another gear as He shows me how to extend mercy and serve others. I thank Him for His mercy. I thank Him for service opportunities.
6. I thank Him for giving me victory when tough times arrive. I thank Him for His encouraging word during these times. I thank Him in advance because He's coming.
7. Thank Him for peace, my peace that surpasses all understanding.

I thank Him for His plan for my life.

Don't be an ingrate. You have a reason to give thanks every day and in every situation.

Gratitude is the fruit of grace, gratitude is the work of the Spirit, and gratitude is the only reasonable approach to life if you understand the sovereign purpose of God. As Christians, we often sin the sin of ingratitude. We want what we don't have; we don't want what we do have. We are jealous or envious of what someone else might have; we feel somehow that we have been left out, that we've gotten the short end of the stick; and for a believer to feel that way is to call into question the divine purpose of God for one's life. John MacArthur



I don't let an ingrate keep me from serving the Kingdom. My reward is coming from above.

Guzik

Thanks be to God: This means God's indescribable gift should fill us with gratitude. If we really understand and appreciate the indescribable gift God gives us, our lives will be saturated with gratitude.

i. "Our affliction we scarcely ever forget; our mercies we scarcely ever remember! Our hearts are alive to complaint, but dead to gratitude. We have had ten thousand mercies for one judgment, and yet our complaints to our thanksgivings have been ten thousand to one! How is it that God endures this, and bears with us?" (Clarke)

e. His indescribable gift: How fitting for Paul to conclude these two chapters about giving with a focus on this! The best motivation for giving is always gratitude for the indescribable gift of God to us. God's indescribable gift is what inspires all true giving.

2 Corinthians 9:15

⁶ But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷ So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. ⁹ As it is written: "He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever."

¹⁰ Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness, ¹¹ while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God. ¹² For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God, ¹³ while, through the proof of this ministry, they glorify God for the obedience of your confession to the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal sharing with them and all men,

Negative Impact from Studies of Being Ungrateful

1. Chronic unhappiness. *"Unhappiness is a contagious disease caused by a chronic deficiency of gratitude"*, Mokokoma Mokhonoana wrote and science confirms: the ability to experience gratitude has been linked to high levels of happiness. In fact, the study conducted at Hope College in Michigan proved that gratitude is an excellent predictor of the level of happiness, well-being and satisfaction in life.

Ungratefulness, on the contrary, would condemn us to a loop of chronic unhappiness. Since gratitude is not experienced only towards people who give us their help but also in life, ungrateful people would be

doomed to a loop of dissatisfaction. Not being able to appreciate life as an extraordinary gift, they are more likely to feel permanently dissatisfied.

2. Tied to trauma. There is no better tool than gratitude to deal with adverse situations and [psychological traumas](#). Several studies have shown that we can feel grateful in different conditions, even in difficult ones. In fact, the people who recover more quickly from a trauma are those who learn to focus on the positive things in their lives, feeling grateful for them, instead of focusing on what they have lost or do not have.

The benefits-centered reassessment implies a more positive approach that activates beneficial emotions and causes positive neurophysiological reactions. Gratitude helps us disconnect from toxic emotions and ruminant thoughts, allowing us to focus on the positive. Or as Sonja Lyubomirsky said *“Gratitude is an antidote to negative emotions, a neutralizer of envy, hostility, worry and irritation.”*

3. More mental disorders. In the long run, ungratefulness generates an unhealthy psychological state characterized by cycles of unrealistic expectations and frustrations in which the person is unable to appreciate in a fair measure the positive that has happened to him.

That is why it is not strange that a study conducted at the Virginia Commonwealth University reveals that ungrateful people have a higher risk of suffering from mental disorders such as major depression, generalized [anxiety](#) disorder, different types of phobias, bulimia nervosa, as well as falling into addictive behaviors, either to nicotine, alcohol and drugs.

4. Condemned to despair. One of the greatest dangers that ungrateful people face is that their life becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Ungratefulness makes others give up being kind to them, so ungrateful people end up trapped in the trap they have set. When they stop receiving help, they will think that the world is a hostile place where there is no goodness, without realizing that it has been their attitudes that moved them away from the others, leaving them alone.

An investigation conducted at the University of Manchester showed that ungrateful people are more dependent and less autonomous than those who experience gratitude, which means that they are in deep need of the others. These people also have problems of self-acceptance and often lack a purpose in life.

5. Worse health. Ungratefulness not only condemns the person to bitterness, but can also take a toll on their physical health. It has been proven that gratitude decreases the level of stress, anxiety and worries, so it is not strange that a study conducted at the University of Michigan found that ungrateful people often report higher levels of stress and a greater number of physical symptoms

Gratitude also improves greatly the quality of sleep. Not only does it allow us to fall asleep faster but it ensures us a deeper and more restful sleep. Why? Gratitude inhibits the automatic negative thoughts that prevent us from falling asleep when we put our head on the pillow.

The good news is that gratitude can be developed. An ungrateful person is not doomed to ungratefulness for life. The secret is very simple: do not take anything for granted. Start thinking of your life as a wonderful gift.



There is no doubt that helping is an act that makes us feel good in itself. But there is also no doubt that receiving thanks for the effort, attention or time provided is very comforting. Because by force of helping, without receiving anything in return, the heart also runs out.