



GRATITUDE

by Whitney Davis

“We would worry less if we praised more. Thanksgiving is the enemy of discontent and dissatisfaction.”

-Harry Ironside

I found myself frustrated the other day with a doorknob that wouldn't work correctly, a cabinet door that wouldn't shut all the way, a board on the porch that wasn't intact and tripped me, and the list went on. I realized the posture of my heart and immediately stopped myself and repented for my petty complaints. In truth, I am immensely grateful for my home and all the ways the Lord has provided for me; however, at that moment, I allowed minor inconveniences to cause dissatisfaction to creep in. We all do this in many different scenarios. Furthermore, I often tell my children they need to be more grateful for what

they have amid all their complaints and desire for greener grass on the other side. I find such truth in the above quote, for when we choose to live a life full of gratitude, it dispels the discontentment that can so easily distract and deter us from the abundant life God has promised.

So we, Your people and sheep of Your pasture, will give You thanks forever; We will show forth Your praise to all generations. Psalm 79:13

This verse helps us to understand why giving thanks is so important on our journey as a follower of Christ.

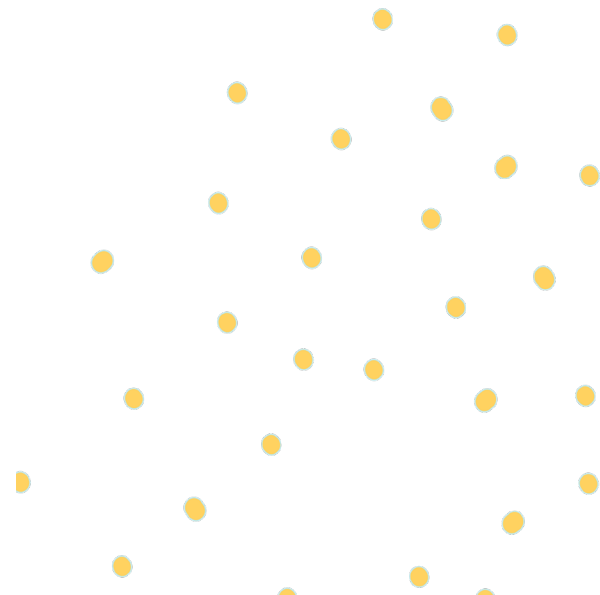
1.) WE ARE HIS!

It's powerful to know that we are children of God. We aren't alone as we navigate this life. Furthermore, we can find rest in being lost sheep in need of a shepherd. This verse reminds us that we are sheep in His pasture. It's much easier to face victory and defeat in our life knowing that Christ is on our side and in control of everything. Jesus, the Shepherd, leaves the ninety-nine to go after the one – we can't even fathom how great His love is for us. How can we not give thanks? Our hearts can't help but be postured in gratitude when we reflect on what it means to be a sheep in His pasture, tended to, protected, guided, and loved. So next time you feel overwhelmed by a circumstance stealing your thanks, remember who you are in Christ!

2.) OUR GRATITUDE IS A WITNESS TO OTHERS

The second portion of this scripture states, “we will show forth Your praise to all generations.” When we fully grasp our identity in Christ, our Shepherd, not only should our hearts give thanks to Him, but also our praise sets an example to others, the generations to come. Other people will see and experience Jesus through our attitudes of gratitude (pardon the cliché). We praise Jesus for who He is, which models to others how to follow Christ. We also can change atmospheres and attitudes in an environment simply by being someone who verbalizes thankfulness. When others are complaining and discontent, we can step in and promote thanksgiving to bring God's glory in places and situations.

We have so much to be thankful for because of Jesus. Let this serve as a reminder to you to fix your eyes on Jesus. Life gets messy and complicated, but if we do some inventory of our hearts and lives, there is much to be grateful for. Allow gratitude to be a powerful tool for giving praise to Jesus, for it silences the enemy and impacts generations to come.





CONVERSATION STARTERS:

- 1.) Do you find it challenging to make gratitude your response to hard things?
- 2.) What does it mean to know that Jesus is a Shepherd?
- 3.) Talk about a time when it was hard to be thankful.
- 4.) How can your gratitude impact generations to come?

CALL TO ACTION:

- 1.) This week, reflect on what you are grateful for—Journal what He speaks to you or what you feel during this time.
- 2.) Think of someone who has meant a lot to you. Reach out to them this week and tell them why you are thankful for them.

Commit to choosing gratitude this week, no matter what comes your way.

MEMORIZE: "So we, Your people and sheep of Your pasture, will give You thanks forever; We will show forth Your praise to all generations." Psalm 79:13

