

Gratitude Sermon Guide

In a world that often rushes from one holiday to the next, this timely message challenges us to pause and cultivate genuine thankfulness. Drawing from both Scripture and contemporary examples — including the powerful story of Corrie Ten Boom — this sermon explores how gratitude can transform our perspective, deepen our faith and bring joy even in difficult circumstances. Let's discover together how we can combat the thieves of gratitude and develop hearts full of thanksgiving and go deeper through this sermon guide.

This sermon emphasizes:

- Gratitude is a central theme throughout Scripture and directly linked to experiencing joy
- Four main thieves rob us of gratitude: entitlement, comparison, distraction and pain
- Entitlement focuses on what we don't have but think we deserve, while gratitude recognizes everything as a gift
- Comparison makes us discontent with what previously satisfied us
- Our distracted culture makes it difficult to pause and notice God's blessings
- Pain challenges our ability to be grateful, but we can thank God for what He's producing through trials
- Creating space for undistracted reflection helps us notice and appreciate God's blessings
- Expressing gratitude to others strengthens relationships and builds community

Section 2: Key Scriptures:

- "Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." - 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.
- "Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing." James 1:2-4.
- "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." - Philippians 4:6-7.

Section 3: Table Questions:

1. In what ways has our culture's sense of entitlement affected your own perspective on gratitude? How can we combat this mindset?
2. The sermon mentioned the "monkey experiment" — what's your "cucumber" (something you were content with until comparing it to someone else's "grape")?
3. How has social media impacted your ability to be grateful? What boundaries might help protect your contentment?
4. Think about the last 24 hours. Where do you need to "circle back" and thank God for something you may have overlooked?
5. The sermon discusses three mental states: directed thought, distracted thought and undistracted-undirected thought. When do you experience each of these, and how might you create more space for gratitude?
6. How has pain or difficulty in your life affected your ability to be grateful? What helps you maintain thankfulness during challenging seasons?
7. Share about a time when — like Corrie Ten Boom's fleas — something you initially viewed negatively turned out to be a blessing in disguise.
8. What practical steps could you take this week to become more intentional about expressing gratitude to others?
9. How might focusing on God's character help us maintain gratitude even when circumstances are difficult?
10. The sermon mentioned that gratitude is often a choice rather than a feeling. What makes it challenging to choose gratitude, and how can we support each other in making that choice?