**Title:** The Grace of Gratitude – Giving Thanks at All Times

1 Thessalonians 5:15-18 (AMPC)

***15****See that none of you repays another with evil for evil, but always aim to show kindness and seek to do good to one another and to everybody.*

***16****Be happy [in your faith] and rejoice and be glad-hearted continually (always);*

***17****Be unceasing in prayer [praying perseveringly];*

***18****Thank [God] in everything [no matter what the circumstances may be, be thankful and give thanks], for this is the will of God for you [who are] in Christ Jesus [the Revealer and Mediator of that will].*

In many cultures around the world, certain days or seasons are set aside for giving thanks.  However, rather than this, God wants us to be intentional about our thankfulness on a daily basis. He wants us to develop the spiritual habit of an attitude of Gratitude - one that is reflected in the life of a radical believer.

Radical Gratitude: the more deeply we understand God’s unconditional love and truly experience His Grace - the more grateful we’re going to be.

***What does it mean to be radically grateful?***

Radical gratitude means that you can experience gratitude even in your toughest of times.

Where thankfulness is an emotion, radical gratitude is an attitude of appreciation under any circumstance. Yes - gratitude involves being thankful, but it is more than just that. Radical Gratitude means expressing thankfulness and being appreciative of God’s Grace daily; even when nothing exciting is happening.

***Paul’s message to the Thessalonians***

During one of his missionary journeys, Apostle Paul ran into some trouble in Thessalonica. Due to this, he had to leave rather abruptly which left many new converts exposed to persecution without support from more established believers.

In his first letter to the Thessalonians, he writes to encourage them and offer them some instruction in Godly living and wisdom.

To become radically grateful, here are some steps to bring these words to life:

**Rejoice always.**

Making the conscious decision to look beyond one’s circumstances in challenging times and seasons and to see God’s hand at work in and around us through the eyes of faith.

John 16:33 (NKJV), Philippians 4:4-7 (MSG)

**Pray continually.**

This is about maintaining a constant connection to our heavenly Father. Maintaining disciplined prayer times is critical but a radically grateful believer learns how to preserve that dependence throughout their day by practicing awareness of Jesus’s presence at every moment.

Daniel 6:10-12 (MSG). Jonah 2:1-2 (NLT)

**Give thanks in all circumstances.**

Apostle Paul encourages us to give thanks ***in all*** circumstances and not ***for all*** of them, but he understands the power of being thankful no matter what.

Thank God during all circumstances because His presence is with you at all times.

Isaiah 43:2 (NLT), Hebrews 13:5b (NKJV),

Be thankful that God is working for the good.

Romans 8:28 (NIV)

**This is God’s will for you.**

Giving thanks in all situations is God’s will for you and the more thankful you are, the closer you’ll get to God!

Radical gratitude, that is being thankful in all circumstances is God’s will because it creates fellowship. Gratitude always builds deeper relationships between you and other people and between you and God.

***A few instances of Radical Gratitude:***

Jonah prayed and gave thanks in the belly of the fish. Jonah 2:1-2

Daniel prayed and gave God Thanks despite the risk. Daniel 6:10-12

David gave thanks to God in the midst of betrayal and distress. Psalm 69:30-31 (NLT)

Apostle Paul in the storm and shipwrecked in Malta. Acts 27:33-37

Jesus prayed and gave thanks before there was enough to feed the 5000 plus.

Mathew 14:16-19 (NIV)