



EMBRACING THE CALL

You & Titus 2 Newsletter

OCTOBER 2021

Polite etiquette doesn't come naturally. It is something we are trained for from one generation to the next. Social norms help direct appropriate behavior between the individuals in a culture. Saying "Thank you" is a common example of a socially appropriate interaction. The original term "thank" is a phonetic evolution of an Old English word for "thinking," and it indicates that a deed has not gone unnoticed in your thoughts.

If you were raised to show manners, you probably say "Thank you" very often as you are out and about. You thank the waitress. You thank the store clerk. You thank the gentlemen who held the door. You thank the bank teller. You may even thank the officer who gave you a ticket (I actually did that). Total strangers are acknowledged for their actions. However, are you as conscientious to notice familiar deeds from those closest to you? It's easy to take things for granted that are anticipated and have become a normal part of life. I remember my own mom's realization that the car care would be her responsibility after daddy died. It was one of many moments reflecting on how conscientious he had been.

Romans 1:20-21 provides a sad commentary on humanity when it comes to gratitude concerning all God has provided for which we have become accustomed to: "For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened." People can know and yet be careless to acknowledge God's many created blessings. In fact, there are those who refuse to give thanks and they have no excuse. The majesty and perfection of a sunrise as the earth orbits the sun or the tides of the ocean as the earth interacts with the moon's orbit around the earth are examples of what has been clearly seen.

Jesus experiences this lack of appreciation when He healed the ten lepers: "Then Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But the nine—where are they? Was no one found who returned to give glory to God, except this foreigner?" (Luke 17:17-18). How often do we act like one of the nine as we begin our busy day? Do we pause to show gratitude to our Lord by turning our hearts toward Him in prayer and the reading of His Word? We have no excuse, as Christian women, to neglect honoring Him and giving Him thanks (Romans 1:21).

Younger women need older women to help them appreciate the glorious wonder of each season of their lives. The evil one would like to cause them to be discontented, frustrated, and anxious. In 1 Chronicles, we are told, "Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; for His steadfast love endures forever!" (16:34). Our personal testimonies can reassure a younger woman of the steadfast love of the Lord and remind her to give thanks in trust that He is good! Just as polite etiquette is trained from generation to generation in every culture, we have the spiritual responsibility to train younger women so that their lives display the appropriate behavior of a citizen of heaven.

Learning to Keep a Grateful Heart

So often a heart of gratitude is the beautiful testimony that God uses to draw others to Himself. Christian women must keep their eyes upon their good God being confident that His love endures forever (Psalm 106:1). God's will for us in Christ Jesus is that we would give thanks in all circumstances (1 Thessalonians 5:18). This is the appropriate etiquette of our hearts toward God. It is something we train ourselves to do through prayer and the study of His Word. If it came naturally, we wouldn't need the following verses:

Psalm 106:1 ESV

1 Praise the LORD! Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!

Philippians 4:6-7 ESV

6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:15-19 ESV

15 See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone. 16 Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 19 Do not quench the Spirit.

Discussion Questions:

1. What might be reasons people neglect to be thankful for the expected acts of others? Is it also true that people can neglect to be thankful for the expected acts of God? Identify some of His expected blessings in your life.
2. Consider Psalm 106:1. Why is it hard to imagine that God, who is perfectly good in every way and at all times, has an enduring love for you? How does that inspire a thankful heart?
3. Why do you think the peace of God will guard your heart when you take everything to Him in prayer with thanksgiving (Philippians 4:6-7)? What are things about ourselves we must overcome in order to sincerely have a thankful heart to the Lord? Why would the things you have identified be able to take your peace? Describe a time when peace that surpasses all understanding (Philippians 4:7) was obvious in the life of another person or in your own life?
4. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:15-19 twice. What is the most difficult command in that passage and explain? The attributes listed in these verses are God's will for His children. How do you think obeying these commands could impact those around you? How do you think disobeying them could quench the Spirit of God in your life?

Trainer's Prayer List

Pray that they will beneficially love their husbands

Pray that they will beneficially love their children

Pray for their self-control

Pray for their purity

Pray for their work at home

Pray for their hearts to show kindness

Pray for wisdom in following their husband