

Thank God For You

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[0 : 00] We are in this morning's message this morning. We are taking a little bit of a break this Sunday from our series on spiritual growth. And we're going to be talking this morning about remembering and about being thankful for others in our lives.

We are for sure thankful for those veterans who have sacrificed, who have left home and family to serve this great nation.

And we continue to be thankful for what they've accomplished for us and our continuing freedom. This morning we are going to be in Philippians chapter 1 and verse number 3 primarily.

And we're also welcoming everyone to our old-fashioned Sunday this morning, where quite a few will take opportunities to dress up, some as pioneers, some from different eras.

But it's just a fun time where we are able to gather together, spend time in God's Word, spend time over a meal, and have fun as a family this afternoon after all of this is over.

[1 : 14] We pray that we remember and recognize the relationships that we have in our lives. And this morning we will be looking at the Apostle Paul's tender relationship with the Christians at Philippi.

He thanked God every time he thought of them. And we could use that kind of love today where we remember one another fondly.

Wrong relationships flourish in many churches around the country and around our world. There are many people who cannot forgive. Little groups gather and grumble.

And because of that, the church becomes powerless because of a lack of love. So today we're going to look at the lessons from the Apostle Paul's statement of thanksgiving and remembrance. We see, those of you who are taking notes, we see, first of all, in verse number 3 of Philippians chapter 1, that there is value in remembering.

[2 : 19] There is good that comes from us remembering what the relationship that others have in our lives and the meaning that others have in our lives. Let's take a look at 1 Peter.

Let's begin in verse number 1 and read through verse number 3. Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi with the bishops and deacons. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. And here we have in the third verse where Paul says, I thank my God upon every remembrance of you.

Do you have people in your life that you at least hope remember you? That think of you fondly when they think of your name, when your name comes up, or when your face comes before them in their memory?

And I trust that would be the case, that we have many who would remember us fondly. And I think it's also incumbent upon us as we think of others in our lives, as we remember them, that we are not only thankful for them, but we let them know it.

[3 : 34] The Apostle Paul writes to them in this letter to the Christians in Philippi, telling them that he is thankful to God for them. Also in Paul's first letter to the Thessalonian Christians, he says that he thanks God on every remembrance of them for what they mean in his life.

God has given us the ability to remember. And for many of us who have been gifted with a good memory, now we know that there are those that as time goes on and as their memory begins to fade, and for some long before their body begins to fade.

Remembering is a good thing. Now there are traumas in our life that sometimes we wish we could forget, but for the most part, remembering is important to us, and it's an important part of our relationships.

And we're given instructions to remember in the Bible. God's Word talks about remembering and telling us to remember certain things. Ecclesiastes 12.1, the Bible says, Remember now your

Creator.

It's easy for us when times get good, the Old Testament speaks of this, New Testament as well, that when things are good, we often forget God, and we forget that we would not be able to continue on were it not for God allowing us to live.

[5 : 07] Because every day, if you realize this or not, every day is a gift from God. Every single day that we breathe, God is gifting us with air. He is gifting us with enough strength to draw in another breath.

And so the writer of Ecclesiastes said, Remember now your Creator. Remember God as you go through life. Luke chapter 17 and verse 32.

We're told as we have examples, some good examples in the Bible, but we also have some bad examples. And in Luke chapter 13, excuse me, 17 verse 32, the Bible says, Remember Lot's wife. What did she do? She looked back longingly on that sinful city and the pleasures that she had. And we're told, Remember Lot's wife.

Remember what happened to her. Turn into a pillar of salt as judgment from God. 1 Corinthians 11, where we are told to remember what Jesus did at that last supper where he had his disciples together.

[6 : 18] And he used the elements of that supper to help his followers remember the body, his body that he would give for us, and the blood that would be shed for us on the cross of Calvary.

And he says, To this do, what? In remembrance of me. So we're told to remember. Revelation chapter 2, verse number 5, to the church that had slipped away from their first love, had slipped away from where they were in their relationship with God.

The writer of Revelation, which the angel to the churches, which we believe to be Jesus Christ, talking to these churches there in Asia.

He says, Remember, therefore, from where you have fallen. And I think that's important for us when maybe we drift away in our relationship from Jesus Christ, and we might find ourselves not as close to him as we once were.

And I believe the antidote would be to remember. Remember what it was like when you had a close relationship with him. Remember what it was like. So therefore, remember from where you have fallen.

[7 : 37] So Paul remembers those believers at Philippi. Remembering that little group by the river and Lydia's conversion and the Philippian jailer in that relationship that he had with him.

And I think that we ought to remember the high points in our Christian life. Do you remember the day that you chose to trust Christ as your Savior? Do you remember that day when you realized that you were a sinner and that there was no way that you could be good enough to be right with God and that Jesus Christ is God?

He died on the cross in your place and you chose to place your faith and your trust and your eternity on Jesus Christ because he loved you and gave himself for you.

And for so many of us who were old enough to remember, remember that was such an awesome time. And it's like a load is lifted. Our sins are forgiven. And we become a part of God's family.

And we have a brand new life, a brand new nature. We can remember those high points in our life. And for some, it's the day that you fully, another day was the day that you fully surrendered to the Lord Jesus Christ.

[8 : 56] For some, it's that same moment that you trusted Christ. And you said, Lord, you've got all of me and I will serve you till the day that I die. For others, maybe there comes that realization later that God wants all of us and that being a follower of Jesus is more than just a religion.

It's a relationship that requires full and complete surrender and dying to yourself and living for him. So for some of us, it could be around a campfire, a camp.

It could be maybe a time together with the body of Christ after particularly a moving message where you determined that you were going to surrender your life fully and completely to Jesus.

Never a better day. So we are told that we should remember. There is a value in remembering.

That's point number one, I believe, that we see here in this verse. Secondly, what I believe we see here that there's a value in remembering the positive things about others.

[10 : 11] Remembering the things about others that are good, that are right, that are positive. We look in verse number three again.

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, we're told here. And he goes on in Philippians, always in every prayer of mine, making requests for you, every remembrance of you.

The question is, was everyone in the church of Philippi perfect? Answer is, no, of course not. There are no perfect churches. There are no perfect pastors, contrary to popular belief.

There are no perfect people on earth because we are still prone to sin. We still have our moments. And so not everyone in the church of Philippi was perfect, but Paul refused to dwell on the negatives about these people.

Now, in Philippi, were there gossipers? Probably. Were there troublemakers there? Probably. But Paul didn't focus on these negative characteristics.

[11 : 23] He focused on them and said, I fondly remember you on every remembrance of you. I thank God. I thank God that I had the opportunity to be a part of your life.

I thank God that you are growing in Christ. And since we are in the midst of this series, he was thanking God for the faith and the trust they had placed.

And also, verse number six, that what God had begun in their life, that he was continuing to do a good work in their lives as they grew in him.

Paul thought about all those who were faithful to Jesus Christ, and he thanked God for them. Some cared. Some shared.

We see that in the book of Philippians. Some gave sacrificially. Some witnessed fervently. Most of them witnessing of their faith to others and telling others about Jesus and what he had done for them.

[12 : 31] And for those things, Paul is thankful. In this book, he didn't talk about here all the things that were wrong like he did in some of the letter, his letters to the other churches.

But I'm sure there were things Paul could have singled out and said, you know, brother so-and-so, you know, that's a sour attitude you have. Or sister so-and-so, you know, you need to make things right with sister so-and-so.

You know, he didn't point those things out. He says, I thank God on every remembrance of you.

And he's trusting the Holy Spirit takes care of those matters in their life.

And as he teaches them throughout his letter. My question is, what do you think about when you think of others, other followers of Jesus?

Are we prone to always look at the things that are wrong in their life? Are we prone to always think about the things that they could do better?

[13 : 33] Or are we like the Apostle Paul and thank God for the relationship, thank God for the faith that they have, and then when necessary, taking the opportunities to correct, to teach, but overwhelmingly being thankful for the positive things in their life.

So the question is, are we, as followers of Christ, thankful for the relationships that we have in the body of Christ? We are to be thankful.

And then number three, we're going to go through this morning pretty quickly. I know most of you are hungry. We're going to be eating in just a few moments.

So we're not going to belabor our time here in Philippians chapter 1, verse 3. We're talking about remembering. There's value in remembering the positive things about others, but there's also value in expressing that love, expressing appreciation to those we love.

You know, it's one thing to be thankful, but it's quite another to express that gratitude to another person. How does it make you feel when someone comes to you and says, thank you for the job that you do?

[14 : 54] Thank you for whatever. And we need to be specific when we appreciate people, when we show gratitude. You know, thank you for getting that project turned in on time.

Thank you for going above and beyond and doing this or whatever it is, taking the time to be thankful for someone else.

You know, Paul wasn't just thankful. He told them so. We see that in Philippians chapter 1, verse 3. I thank my God upon every remembrance of you.

1 Thessalonians chapter 1, verse 2. We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers. Paul talked about praying for the Philippian believers as well in verse number 4.

So Paul was thankful. Paul expressed his gratitude personally to them. And Paul prayed for them. So what good is gratitude and what good is appreciation if it's never expressed?

[16:07] One of the things that I believe all of us could work on is being better at expressing our gratitude, being better at expressing why we are thankful.

One of the habits that I am trying to develop in my, not only in my daily planner, I've chosen to go back to paper on my daily planner, but one side of it has a place for notes and using it as a daily journal.

And one of the things that I'm trying to practice is writing one thing every day for which I am thankful. Writing one thing, choosing one thing. You may have a horribly, terrible, bad day, but I guarantee you there's probably, if you spend enough time thinking about it, there's probably one thing that you can say that I am thankful for, even if it's I'm thankful that it wasn't a worse day. Right? And so be thankful. And then taking the time to express that gratitude. If it's a person, take the time to express that gratitude to them.

Maybe in a phone call. Maybe in a card that, a thank you note that you write out, that you hand write out. But take the time to show that gratitude.

[17:36] Tell them in person as well. Like love, appreciation must be spoken. It must be expressed. So, when we leave here today, maybe there's some letters to be written.

Maybe there's some notes to write. Maybe there's appointments to go in and see people. So a day of tomorrow, Remembrance Day, Veterans Day. Thank you, Veteran.

Take the time to thank them for their service. And be a little bit more maybe descriptive in why you're thankful for their service.

Rather than just a thank you for your service, maybe if you know something about that particular veteran, thank them for whatever.

Take that time to appreciate. Thank your parents. Thank your people that meant something, that have put something, some value into your life.

[18:38] Take the time to express that. So this morning, we are remembering together. Question is, for whom are you? Thankful? And then, I thank God for all of you.

I thank God for the relationship that we have. I am thankful that we are going to have the opportunity to spend some time together this afternoon as we go out of this corporate time of worship to where we take the time to fellowship around a meal.

And fellowship around a meal is very, very important. Jesus did it with His disciples. Jesus did it with those who needed to know Him as their Savior.

and in every culture, meeting together around food is a very, it's a time of intimacy.

It's a time of letting down your guard and eating, taking time to eat with someone else. And then, afternoon, just a time to have fun.

[19:42] Have fun as family, have fun as the body of Christ. So we're looking forward to that this afternoon. So let's be thankful and let's remember those who are important to us.

Most importantly, let's be thankful for our Lord and our Savior Jesus Christ who gave everything for us.

He who, being very God Himself, left heaven, divested Himself of the glory that He was fully eligible to have and to share with God the Father, came to earth, took upon Himself the form of human flesh, and lived as a human, and ultimately walked up that hill to a cross and gave His life for us.

But because He was God and because He was eternal, could pay an everlasting debt for you and for me. And so you and I are able to live in gratitude today for what Jesus Christ did for us.

So most importantly, and above all, let's be thankful for what Jesus Christ did for us. And I trust this morning that you know firsthand that forgiveness that comes from trusting Christ as your Savior.

[21:07] If not, please see someone before you leave to know how you can be sure that your sins are forgiven, to be able to be sure, how you know that you're part of the family of God.

And it's simply admitting that we're a sinner, acknowledging that Jesus Christ is God, trust Him as Savior, and that's it.

The Bible says, all who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved, shall be delivered from the penalty of death. And it's not by works of righteousness which we have done, but it's by His grace that He saves us.

We can never deserve it. Let's pray. Father, this morning as we come together in Your name, may You be able to encourage us, and Father, may we be encouragers of others as well, in gratitude, thanking others for what they mean to us.

So let's consider the value in remembrance, the value in remembering the positive things of others, and the value of expressing that appreciation to those we love.

[22 : 16] We thank You, Father, for this day. We thank You for what You're going to accomplish. And Father, we thank You for the meal that we're about ready to receive. Lord, we praise You.

We thank You for this offering that we're about to receive as well. Father, we pray in the most holy name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Amen. Amen.