



Cultivating a Thankful Heart

With Diana de Fouler, Central America Director
of Moms in Prayer International

To view the accompanying video, go to
MomsinPrayer.org/Cultivating-Thankful-Heart-Bible-Study/

Group Discussion Question: *Did you offer thanks for something this past week, that in the past you might not have acknowledged?*

1. The Greek verb, *εὐχαριστέω*, means “to give thanks”, and is mentioned 39 times in the New Testament. It’s a compound word comprised of *εὖ*, meaning “well”, and *χαρίζομαι* meaning “to give freely”. Diana mentioned in the video that giving thanks is a choice we make.

Take a look at the list below and circle the human condition that most often hinders you from choosing to give thanks:

- Not trusting fully in God’s faithfulness
 - Not yielding to God’s plans for my life
 - Pride or arrogance
 - Discontentment
 - Anxious thoughts
 - Focusing only on the negative
 - Jealousy or envy of others
 - Holding on to anger or bitterness
2. A fellow co-worker had a choice to make when her young adult son decided to get a tattoo. Now, in her generation tattoos were not the norm, so she had a choice to make. She could be annoyed, or she could thank God that her son chose to get a Christian-themed tattoo. She chose to thank God as that tattoo opens the door to Christian conversations.

In the book, *Standing in the Gap for your Children*, Fern Nichols, Moms in Prayer Founder, says:

“Giving Thanks doesn’t have to originate with our feelings. Instead, by faith, we choose to thank God. That’s what He has commanded us to do. And God never gave a command that isn’t for our benefit, and He never will give us a command that He doesn’t provide the strength and power to accomplish. When we choose to give thanks, we are giving a beautiful expression of confidence in God’s perfect plan. And it’s always a choice we’re faced with – will we give thanks for this incident, or won’t we?”

Have your children made decisions that were different from what you may have made? How have you reacted? Was there something you could have thanked God for in that situation?

3. I used to keep a journal by my bed and would write things in it. However, somewhere along the way, it became more of a ‘complaint journal’. One day, as I was thinking of a circumstance that was annoying me, God impressed upon me that I was focusing on the wrong thing. I needed to recognize what He was doing amidst the circumstances in my life. As I took my eyes off myself and focused on Him, my perspective changed. I began to use my new ‘gratitude journal’ to record His goodness and provisions in my life, regardless of the circumstances, and God used it to cultivate a deeper trust in Him.

Giving thanks builds our faith and trust in God. It helps us recall how God has worked in our lives. Read **Joshua 4** and record the reason behind God instructing one man from each of the 12 tribes to pick up a stone from the Jordan river.

4. **Mark 5:30-34** highlights a woman who had a ‘rock of remembrance’ experience.

At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, “Who touched my clothes?” “You see the people crowding against you,” his disciples answered, “and yet you can ask, ‘Who touched me?’” But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole

truth. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace, and be freed from your suffering."

The Bible does not specifically record that the woman was thankful, but it's not a far stretch to believe she was. Could she have put a rock of remembrance on this day in her life? The next time she has a need do you think she sneaks in a touch fearfully or do you think she enters into Jesus's presence with faith-filled confidence? What are a few of your personal 'rocks of remembrance'?

5. In the video Diana emphasizes, the need to give God our pain. She shares the example of Hannah, who was barren and unable to conceive a child. In ancient Israel, infertility brought severe disgrace to a woman, because in those days it meant she could not fulfill her role of producing offspring for her family. Adding to Hannah's pain was the fact that her husband had a second wife, who had given him many children, and continually mocked Hannah cruelly (1 Samuel 1:6-7).

Read 1 Samuel 1:9-18 where Hannah poured out her pain to the Lord in prayer.

The Lord answered Hannah's prayer. She gave birth to a son and named him Samuel, which means "Asked of God." Read Hannah's prayer offering of thanksgiving in **1 Samuel 2:1-10**.

Are you struggling with an issue that brings you deep pain? If so, take a few minutes and offer it to God in prayer.



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