

Introduction



Brandon

One of the most amazing things about the story of the pilgrims and thanksgiving is that they came up with the idea that would become a national tradition. **The pilgrims first thanksgiving was in October of 1621.**

Jerry

It is amazing they started this tradition because of what they had suffered.

- **They had to leave their nation to have religious liberty**
- **They suffered the loss of their loved ones due to the harsh conditions in a new land**

Forty-five of the 102 Mayflower passengers died in the winter of 1620–21. They suffered greatly during their first winter in the New World from lack of shelter, scurvy, and general conditions on board ship.

- **They were poor**

They were poor materially and relationally.

Brandon

Seriously! For the pilgrims to be the ones to start this tradition of thanksgiving in our country is incredible! They have left Christians in our nation an amazing legacy of faith.

What made it possible for the pilgrims to start this tradition was the training they had received about the forefathers of their biblical faith. They had learned from people like...

- **Joseph**-He was a grateful guy even though his brothers sold him into slavery.
- **David**-He was a grateful guy even when he was a fugitive in the cave of Adullam.
- **Daniel**-He was a grateful guy even when his nation was being judged by God and he was exiled to a foreign nation.
- **Mary**-She was a grateful gal even though she was pregnant out of wedlock.
- **Paul**-He was a grateful guy even when though he was in shackles in a prison in Rome.
- **The reformers**-They were a grateful group of people even though they were severely persecuted and even martyred for their faith.

By being a grateful people despite their suffering, the pilgrims were just doing what the forefathers of their faith had done. They were just obeying the Word of God.

1 Thessalonians 5:18

In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

NKJV

Jerry

They believed that obeying the Word of God was good for them.

They understood that the attitude of gratitude was important to their....

- **Health (emotionally and physically)**
- **Relationships**
- **Mission**

They knew that the Indians would never believe in their God unless they were grateful people. This is why they invited them to the celebration.

So, no one is going to be a good witness for Jesus if they are whiners, gripers, murmurers, sour pusses, grouches, sore heads, belly achers, crybabies, and grumblers. Do you know anyone like that?

Brandon

The world has always been and will always be filled with people that are very ungrateful people.

The church of Jesus should be known as the most grateful people on the earth.

Everyday should be Thanksgiving to us!

Body



Jerry

How do we become grateful people like the pilgrims?

- **Gratitude is an attitude that we must put on.**

Romans 13:12-14

12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.

13 Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy.

14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

NKJV

We are followers of Jesus and Jesus was a grateful person.

Gratitude is not just an emotion of happiness that comes from our circumstances.

Gratitude is an attitude that you must put on despite your circumstances.

Gratitude comes from finding reasons to be grateful even when the happenings of life are not happening the way you want them to happen.

Brandon

That sounds difficult.

Jerry

It is difficult! Life is hard. Have you ever heard the country western song, “It sounds like life to me”?

Got a call last night from an old friend's wife

Said I hate to bother you

Johnny Ray fell off the wagon

He's been gone all afternoon

Well I know my buddy so I drove to Skully's
And found him at the bar
I say hey man, what's going on?
He said I don't know where to start

Sarah's old car's about to fall apart
And the washer quit last week
We had to put momma in the nursing home
And the baby's cutting teeth
I didn't get much work this week
And I got bills to pay
I said I know this ain't what you wanna hear
But it's what I'm gonna say

Sounds like life to me it ain't no fantasy
It's just a common case of everyday reality
Man I know it's tough but you gotta suck it up
To hear you talk you're caught up in some tragedy
It sounds like life to me

Well his face turned red and he shook his head
He said you don't understand
Three kids and a wife depend on me
And I'm just one man
To top it off I just found out
That Sarah's two months late
I said hey bartender set us up a round
We need to celebrate

Sounds like life to me plain old destiny
Yeah the only thing for certain is uncertainty
You gotta hold on tight just enjoy the ride
Get used to all this unpredictability
Sounds like life

Man I know its tough but you gotta suck it up
To hear you talk you're caught up in some tragedy
Sounds like life to me
(Sounds like life to me)
Sounds like life

If life were easy the church would not have so many whiners, gripers, murmurers, sour pusses, grouches, sore heads, belly achers, crybabies, and grumblers. Do you know anyone like that?

How do you find reasons to be thankful when the happenings of life are not happening the way you want them to happen?

Brandon

- **Gratitude is an attitude that we put on by faith.**

Romans 1:16-17

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

NKJV

Hebrews 11:6

6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

NKJV

The pilgrims did not start the traditions of thanksgiving because their circumstances were what they wanted. They had learned from the forefathers of their biblical faith to put on gratitude they had to have faith in God.

So, what did they believe specifically about God that enabled them to be a grateful people?

They had faith in....

- 1. The sovereignty of God**
- 2. The love of God**
- 3. The promises of God**

Jerry

- **Faith in the sovereignty of God**

What does it mean to have faith in the sovereignty of God?

Psalms 22:28

28 For the kingdom is the Lord's, and He rules over the nations.

NKJV

To have faith in the sovereignty of God means you believe that God is all powerful and that He rules over everything.

To have faith in the sovereignty of God means that you believe that He rules over...

- 1. Nations**
- 2. Nature**
- 3. Evil people**
- 4. Good people**
- 5. Evil angels**
- 6. Good angels**

Brandon

- Faith in the love of God**

What else do we have to believe to put on an attitude of gratitude?

We must have faith that God loves us.

To have faith in the love of God means that you believe that God is good and that His plan for you is good. It means you believe that He rules over every circumstance in your life; every event in your life; the good; the bad; and the ugly.

To have faith in the love of God means that you believe that He is using those circumstances to accomplish His good plan for you.

Romans 8:28

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

NKJV

So, I can put on gratitude when my relationships break down, my job breaks down, my car breaks down, or even my health breaks down because I believe in a sovereign God who loves me and He is using my suffering to fulfill His good plan for me.

Jerry

Why should we have faith that God loves me?

Love is something that should be proven to us before we believe it. There are a lot of young ladies that have married a dude because he said he loved them; he said he wanted to spend his life with them; he said that he would make them happy; he said they were the most beautiful human being they had ever seen. They marry the guy, and they find out quickly that the guy has no idea what love is. It happens a lot!

Love is something that should be proven to us before we believe it.

Brandon

So how has God proven that He loves us?

Romans 5:8

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

NKJV

Jerry

Why should I believe that it really happened?

Ephesians 2:19-20

19 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, NKJV

The prophets of the bible and the apostles that were eyewitnesses of the resurrection of Jesus.

What else do we have to believe to have an attitude of gratitude?

Brandon

- **Faith in the promises of God**

To put on gratitude, we must have faith in the promises of God. The promises of God reveal specific details about what God is doing in our lives through our difficult circumstances. In a general way, we know that God is using our circumstances for our good. But the promises of God reveal to us the specific good that God is doing.

The pilgrims came to America for religious liberty. But they believed they were a part of the fulfillment of a greater plan, the promises of God to Abraham.

What are the promises of God to Abraham?

- **He would be the father of a great nation**
- **This nation would dwell in the land of Canaan**

- **From his seed, the whole world would be blessed**

The pilgrims believed they were sent by God to the new world to propagate the gospel to fulfill the promise God made to Abraham. They believed that the losses they suffered were a part of the fulfillment of that promise. It is why they were willing to risk everything.

When they suffered loss, they believed the promise that God would use their loss to make them more effective as ambassadors for Christ. They believed that God would use their loss to change them into better people. They believed that God was preparing them for another new world where they would be with Christ forever. This life is like the rehearsal.

Conclusion

Brandon

The pilgrims were a grateful people because they understood that...

- **Gratitude is an attitude you must put on**
- **Gratitude is an attitude you must put on by faith in....**
 - 1. The sovereignty of God**
 - 2. The love of God**
 - 3. The promises of God**

It sounds simple enough. What makes it so difficult?

Jerry

What makes it so difficult is pride!

1 Peter 5:5-6

5 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

**6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,
NKJV**

Pride is a belief that what you want is a right that you are entitled too. This explains why so few people are known as grateful people.

**The bible says we are born with a sinful nature. Because of this sinful nature we believe that we are entitled to what we want. We naturally turn what we want into a right!
That is the nature of Satan!**

Because we have a sinful nature, as we grow, our focus can easily become life is not fair.

Life is not fair. That is a fact! But because of our sinful nature, we can develop this sinful prideful attitude of entitlement that we are not getting what we deserve.

This sinful attitude of pride causes all kinds of problems for us and others.

- **This sinful attitude is the cause of mental and emotional disorders.**
- **This sinful attitude is the cause of addiction.**
- **This sinful attitude is the cause of irresponsibility.**

The Godless federal public education system in America has now disciplined several generations of our children to believe they are entitled.

How do you overcome pride and become a grateful person?

Brandon

Jesus said because we are born sinners against God, we do not deserve to be alive.

Jesus said if we are alive, what we deserve from God is death and hell!

In the book of James, the bible says that every good thing we experience is a gift of God. In other words, the fact that you are alive, and you are here listening to us this morning is due to the grace and mercy of God.

Humbling yourself means you acknowledge that you are a sinner against God and what you deserve from God is death and hell.

When you humble yourself, God gives you more grace. He reveals to you His Son Jesus and what He did for you.

From this point forward, you always have something significant to be grateful for no matter what you are suffering. You know that you deserve death and hell, but God has given you life in Christ!

It is why we gather to sing every week! It should be the reason we get up and sing every day!

Christians should be the most grateful people in the world!

Are you one of them?

Have you ever humbled yourself before God and told Him that you are a sinner that deserves death and hell?

Are you saved?

Invitation

Jerry

- **To be a grateful person you must humble yourself before God and confess you are a sinner against Him that deserves death and hell.**

Will you humble yourself before a holy God today?

Brandon

- **To be a grateful person you must receive the Lord Jesus Christ as your savior and Lord.**

Will you receive the Lord Jesus Christ?

Jerry

- **To be a grateful person you must put on gratitude by having faith in...**
 - 1. The Sovereignty of God**
 - 2. The Love of God**
 - 3. The Promises of God**

Will you make a commitment to grow in your faith in these truths?

Brandon

Since this is difficult, how did the pilgrims preserve their faith in God?

They understood that the Holy Spirit was in Christ's church and that they needed one another to walk in faith. They understood that their growth in faith was

dependent upon their connection to one another. It is not good for man to be alone.

- **To be a grateful person you must share life with a Christian community.**

Will you share life with our community of Christians to help you grow in your faith in God?