

Always Grateful

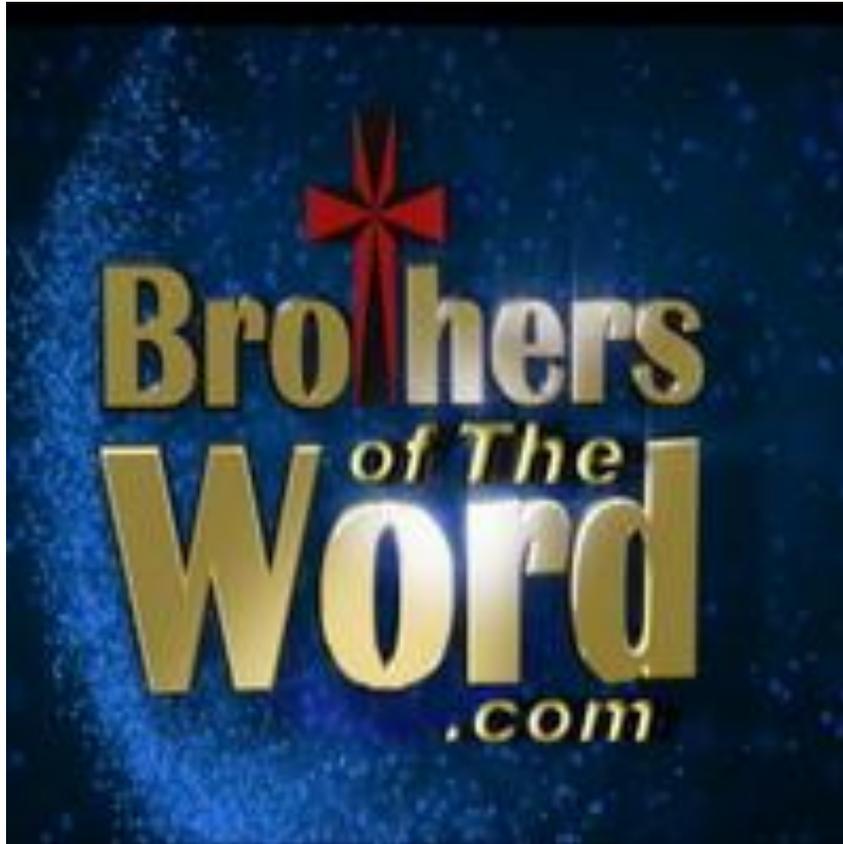
Sermon Title: **Always Grateful**

Sermon Number: **7848**

Speaker: **C. Elijah Bronner**

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C. Elijah Bronner: Goodness and mercies always with us and that's why we can always give thanks.

Female: You are listening to brothersoftheword.com. This is the sermon titled "Always Grateful" by C. Elijah Bronner. This sermon is number 7848.

(Music Playing: 00:00:14 - 00:00:26)

And now for "Always Grateful."

C. Elijah: Well thank you for joining Brothers of the word, because brother, you need the word.

We welcome all of you joining us by television and those of you joining us online at brothersoftheword.com or Facebook live. Delighted to have you. Always a wonderful joy to have to tune in and join us.

I would like to share just a little humor. It's the day before Thanksgiving. And the butcher is just locking up when a man begins pounding on the front door, "please let me in" says the man desperately, "I forgot to buy a turkey and my wife will kill me I don't come home with one." "Okay," says the butcher, "let me see what I have left." He goes onto the freezer and discovers there is only one scrawny turkey left. He brings it out to show the man. "That one is too skinny, what else you got?" Says the man. The butcher takes the bird back into the freezer, he waits a few minutes and he brings the same turkey back out to the man. "Oh no," says the man, "that one doesn't look any better, you better give me both of them."

Well, I want to share some scripture over in Ephesians chapter 5. Ephesians chapter 5. I want to share some scriptures there. I want to share some scriptures there. Ephesians 5:18-21. Ephesians 5:18-21, and it reads there in verse 18, it says, "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."

In verse 20, just to read that one again, it says, “Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” And I just want to use that as a subject, always grateful. Always grateful. Always grateful. Gratitude is not a seasonal thing, it’s not something we do periodically, it’s not something for a special day or special time but we’d always be grateful. We’d always be grateful. And I love something here about Ephesians chapter 5, the way that gratitude is actually tied in to God’s spirit. It’s tied in to God’s spirit. And when we are able to get into God’s word, dig into His word, spend some time with God and His word and get into His presence to worship, to sing, to praise, to pray and spend time with Him, then we’d become filled with the Spirit. There’s no big secret on how to be filled with the Spirit, it’s very simple. You spend time with the Lord and you’re filled with the Spirit. You spend time in His word, you spend time in prayer, and you’re filled with the Spirit.

He begins to fill you and you begin to overflow with His presence and with His power and with His life and everything that He is. And so, as a result of that, gratitude becomes an automatic flow out of your life, you don’t even really have to try to do it because you’re so full of God Himself, you’re so full of His presence and you’re so full of the Holy Spirit, you find yourself being grateful all day, and grateful all the time, and grateful wherever you go because you always mindful of Him. He’s always on your lips, He’s always on your heart. He’s always on your mind and there is praise giving and thanksgiving. So, you constantly praising God as you drive along or as you’re at work or at different times throughout the day, you’re constantly remembering His presence and having that special time with Him. And so, there’s automatic flow of gratitude. We’re constantly mindful of Him, we’re constantly mindful of His goodness.

00:05:00

And so, when you’re filled with the Spirit, then there’s an automatic flow of gratitude, and likewise, when there is a flow of gratitude, you maintain a Spirit-filled life. And so, they kind of work hand in hand. When you’re filled with the Spirit, gratitude becomes automatic and when you’re grateful all the time, you’re constantly being filled with the Spirit. And so, I love that, it’s kind of a built-in, neat feature that works both ways.

Then notice He says giving thanks always, in verse 20, giving thanks always. In the Greek, that little phrase “giving thanks always,” in the Greek it speaks of being grateful for His grace. Grateful of His grace and you’re grateful of the grace of being redeemed. You’re grateful of the grace of being forgiven. You’re grateful of the grace of being in His family. You’re grateful of the grace of being a son and heir. Part of His family, part of His kingdom. You’re grateful that you’re loved by Him and accepted by Him. You’re grateful that you’re in Him. You’re grateful that He is in you. And so, this is in the Greek rendering of giving thanks always is actually speaking from a place of graces, a heart that is mindful of the grace that you’ve been saved by grace. You had no right, you had no place but by grace, you find yourself in this kingdom, you find yourself in this family, you find yourself accepted, you find yourself loved, you find yourself a son, you find yourself with all of these divine privileges. And so, it’s out of that grace that it gives you that continual always giving thanks because no matter what’s going on this world, I’ll remember that I’m forgiven! I’ll remember that I’m redeemed! I’ll remember that I’m now in His family! And so, you remember all of these things and so it’s out of the heart of grace that allows you to give thanks always for all things because that grace is so powerful, it worked in our lives.

In Colossians 1, you don’t have to turn there, but Colossians 1:12-14, it speaks of the same thing, listen to this, you’ll see what I just told you it’s verified, it’s confirmed in Colossians 1:12-14 that says, “Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son. In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.” So, He’s given Him thanks there for the same thing I just shared with you. It’s out of a heart of grace. It’s out of a heart of grace that you’re able to give thanks always for all things.

Now, we just read this particular account in Colossians. Now, here’s something I realized that Colossians -- and I didn’t read this anywhere. So, I didn’t read in any commentary, I didn’t hear any other preacher say it. It’s just something that I don’t know, I guess the Holy Spirit enlightened me or brought to my knowing, but Colossians is actually the chief gratitude book in the New Testament. Colossians is the chief gratitude book in the New Testament. Now, if you’re talking Old Testament,

Psalms is the chief worship book. Psalms is the chief thanksgiving book in the Old Testament. But in the New Testament, Colossians is the chief gratitude book in the New Testament. Here's some scriptures in Colossians about gratitude. Colossians 2:6 and 7. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him. Rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught -- catch this, abounding therein with thanksgiving."

So, when we have this life in Christ we become rooted and grounded in Him and then we are bound in it with thanksgiving, with thanksgiving. Here is another one, Colossians 3:15 ends by saying, "be ye thankful." It gives some things there in verse 15 and ends by saying "and be ye thankful." It didn't say give thanks, it says, be thankful. It's an attitude of the heart, it's who you are, it's what you do, it's constant, it's all the time, always. Everybody say, always. And then in verse 17, it says, "Whatsoever you say or do, you do it in Jesus' name and give thanks." "Whatever you say or do, you do it in Jesus' name and give thanks."

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Give thanks. It's happening all the time. All of this is in Colossians. In Colossians 4:2 says "continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving." Continue in prayer. I read this translation says maintain your zest for prayer by thanksgiving. Thanksgiving helps you to maintain your zest for prayer. Maintain your zest for prayer by thanksgiving. It also goes on as in King James says continue in prayer and watch the same with thanksgiving. Another translation says be alert or wake yourself up and have a grateful heart in your prayer time. So, I like that. There are two instructions it gives us about prayer. Be alert and be thankful. Everybody say "be alert and be thankful." Anybody ever been sleepy during prayer?

Some of you sleepy now. Wake up. Wake up. He says wake up. Wake yourself up and give thanks. That's the two instructions. So, evidently, he was right into a sleepy church. He says "wake up and give thanks. Wake up and give thanks." And so, when you're dozing off in prayer, wake yourself up. Be vigilant to stir yourself up. I don't know, go outside, get some cold air in your face or throw some water on your face. Do whatever you going to do. Wake yourself be alert and have a grateful heart. Those

are the two conditions he wanted to enter in the end of prayer. I like that. Be alert and wake up and be thankful.

Here's another when I was thinking about in terms of prayer Philippians 4:6. Be careful for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And so there we see thanksgiving incorporated into our prayer life. So, wake yourself up, be alert and be thankful. Be thankful heart. So, we understand that Thanksgiving it unlocks something in prayer. It unlocks something in prayer. Someone said that gratitude in prayer breaks the habit of weary and care. Gratitude in prayer breaks the habit of weary and care. Gratitude and prayer breaks the habit of weary and care.

And so, we don't worry. No, you don't worry. You pray and give thanks. So, thanksgiving is the antidote to worry. Antidote to worry. I remember one time I was praying for something I didn't received it. And so, I just threw my hands up so well I didn't receive it but I just give thanks anyway. And so, I just given thanks and I spent several moments in gratitude just God's spirit filled me. I just thanking God and just thank God. The next day my prayer was answered. Isn't that awesome? Isn't that awesome? I had given up on a prayer and I had just said, well, you know if it didn't come to path, thank God anyway. As I begin to thank God you know I just thank God for all its goodness in my life. The very next day, my prayer was answered.

So, I begin to see gratitude unlocks your prayer. Gratitude unlocks your prayer. Gratitude unlocks your prayer. Someone said that gratitude is a magnet for miracles. Gratitude is a magnet for miracles. It's actually the password. Gratitude is the password. Psalms 100, make a joyful noise until the Lord all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness. Come for his presence with singing. You know that the Lord He is God for it is he who has made us and that we are selves, we are his people and the sheep of his pasture enter -- hear this, enter into his gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise. Be thankful unto Him and bless His name for the Lord is good as mercies everlasting and His truth endures to all generations.

And so, we enter into his gate with thanksgiving. That's the password to get in. So, it's like a key. It unlocks something and

therein with thanksgiving. What's the password? What's the password? So grateful heart is the password. Grateful heart is the password. It unlocks something in prayer. Gratitude is a magnet for miracles. Say that with me, gratitude is a magnet for miracles. I'd love Ephesians 4. We open our text in Chapter 5 Verse 1 says giving thanks always for all things and I love this because giving thanks always for all things. So that includes big things. There are big things that we give thanks for like grace you know, like the fact that we're forgiven, like the fact that we've been made errors, like the fact that we are citizens of heaven. And so, there are big things you know that we are redeemed and we are healed and delivered and all of these things. Man, there are big things you give thanks for the fact that God hears your prayers and you have what you say and you have what you pray, you have angels on command. You know there are big things we give thanks for, but then there are little things. Everybody says little things. There are big things we give thanks for. There are small everyday miracles that happen. And I love giving thanks for those. I love giving thanks for small everyday miracles.

00:15:00

Maybe two weeks ago, two weeks ago I was I was doing some grocery shopping for my mom and my mom would always call me and she'd say "get me some bananas" because you know she would always be out of bananas every couple of weeks. So, whenever I'm on the way to the store or if she knows I'm going to the store that day she'll always call me separately and say "get my bananas. Give me some bananas." And so, this particular time I went to the store. She didn't call me and I was really out of the produce section and so I was walking through the store to get her bacon. I know she needs her bacon. So, I was going to get her some bacon. So, I was done with the produce. I got all the produce but I didn't get bananas. You know I wasn't on my mind and she didn't call me that day to tell me to get my bananas. So, I wasn't on my mind but I thought I was going to get her bacon.

And so, I was in the store pushing the buggy toward the bacon. A lady passed me and as the lady passed me, I heard her say to herself "I didn't get any the bananas." And when she said it, I say "Oh my God, I didn't get any banana?" And I'll be all right back around. And I followed the lady and I got me a bunch of

bananas. Then there was a small miracle. That was a small miracle. I knew that lady had been sent by God. I knew that there was a small touch of God's favor and his grace and his blessings. It was a small miracle.

What would the odds of me crossing somebody, scented themselves, "I didn't get any bananas" and that's a chief item my mother always reminds me to get. Small miracles. So, miracles, I like something someone said, in fact I said this. I actually said this. We give thanks always because His goodness is always with us. We're able to give thanks always because His goodness is always with us. His goodness is always with us. Goodness and mercy shall follow you all the day. So, goodness and mercy is always with us and that's why we can always give thanks.

Here's something that Henry Ward Beecher said, he said, the unthankful discovers no mercies but the thankful heart will find in every hour some heavenly blessings. The unthankful discovers no mercies but the thankful heart will find in every hour some heavenly blessing. So, there are little miracles that happen every day. Sometimes we are not conscious of them. Sometimes we are not aware of them. But there are miracles are working every day in our lives. God's goodness is always with us and that's why we can always give thanks.

I love something that G.K. Chesterton said, he said the most profound thing. I never heard anything this profound though, I love the way he put it he said. You say grace before meals. That's all right. But I say grace before the concert and the opera and grace before the play and pantomime and grace before I open a book and grace before sketching, painting, swimming, fencing boxing, walking, playing, dancing. I say grace before I dip the pen in ink. Man, I love that. Isn't that powerful? We have relegated giving thanks to just a brief breath of prayer before we eat a meal but everything we do is a reason to give thanks. Everything we do is a reason to give thanks. So, we are able to say grace for all things always.

We're always saying grace because it's God's goodness that we can enjoy anything! It's God's goodness that we can do anything! So, we always saying grace! We're always saying "God, I thank you!" "Father, I thank you!" And so, always grace no matter what we do. Father is your grace that I can drive!

It's your grace that I can walk! It's your grace that I can see! It's always God's grace! So, we're always able to say grace at all times! No matter what we're doing, it's the grace of God! It's the grace of life that we're enjoying! We learn to say grace in whatever we do. Give things always for all things. Always grateful. Always grateful. William Ward said that gratitude can transform common days into thanksgiving, can turn routine jobs into joy and change ordinary opportunity into blessings.

00:20:02

Gratitude. Gratitude. There are so often, so many things that we take for granted in life. There was one young man. He played high school football and he was injured in a game, and upon first examination, the doctors thought that they would have to amputate his legs because he had suffered an injury that impaired his legs and they thought his legs would need to be amputated. But upon further research and further testing and so forth, he was able to keep his legs. That young man says every morning, he passed his legs and he gives thanks for his legs. He gives thanks for his leg, but he had never thought about it until he was about to lose them.

He's grateful for just his leg! If nothing else happens for him, he's grateful for just his legs! So often, we take for granted all the things that we have all the time that we have every day. If stars came out every ten years, we would stay up all night to see them but because they're out every night, we don't even pay them any attention. We take for granted. We take so much for granted that we are not grateful for it.

AV if you could roll a little bit of it. This is just a one-minute clip. I want you to see this.

(Video Playing: 00:21:16 - 00:22:23)

Male: Okay, they're all yours.

Female 1: (00:21:20)

Male: Okay, they're all yours. Let's see what it does. So, what do you think? Looks pretty cool? That's awesome. Hey, come here. Come here dude.

C. Elijah Bronner: Her little brother was color-blind. He had never seen color, until he put on those glasses that his principal gave him.

Male: Okay. Now, that just tells you how beautiful the world you have. You had to see it for the first time. Right?

Female 2: Yeah.

Male: So, be happy (00:21:59).

Female 2: Stand up.

Male: Right? That is so cool.

C. Elijah Bronner: Now, he can see color.

(Voice Overlap: 00:22:10)

Female 1: --colors on that periodic table.

(Voice Overlap: 00:22:14)

Male: Don't you want to touch them? I wanted to touch every color. Right? Go ahead. You can touch it.

C. Elijah Bronner: Okay. You can cut it off AV.

He had never seen color, and he cried just to be able to see color. And we see color every day and don't think anything of it. Man, so many blessings that we take for granted. That's why we are able to give thanks always, for all things, because everything is a grace, everything is a gift, everything is a blessing that God has given us.

Praise God. Praise God. We are always grateful, always grateful. Always grateful, always grateful. It is powerful. Gratitude will actually change your life, will change your life, and we are just so grateful. It's a magnet for miracles, when we just focus on what is right, when we focus on the blessings that we do have, when we focus on God's goodness to us in life, when we realize there's really nothing to complain about. We've been blessed with so much. We're always grateful, always grateful, always grateful. Praise God. Amen. Praise God.

I'm going to stop right there. I'll share the next half next year. Praise God. Those of you who are watching via television, I want you to go to BrothersOfTheWord.com and you can listen to this message in its entirety. You can also email it to a friend, absolutely free of charge. Thank you so much for joining us today at Brothers of the Word because, brother, you need the Word.

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Female: Listen to brothersoftheword.com often because, brother, you need the Word.

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00:24:47