

An Attitude of Gratitude

Sermon Title: An Attitude of Gratitude

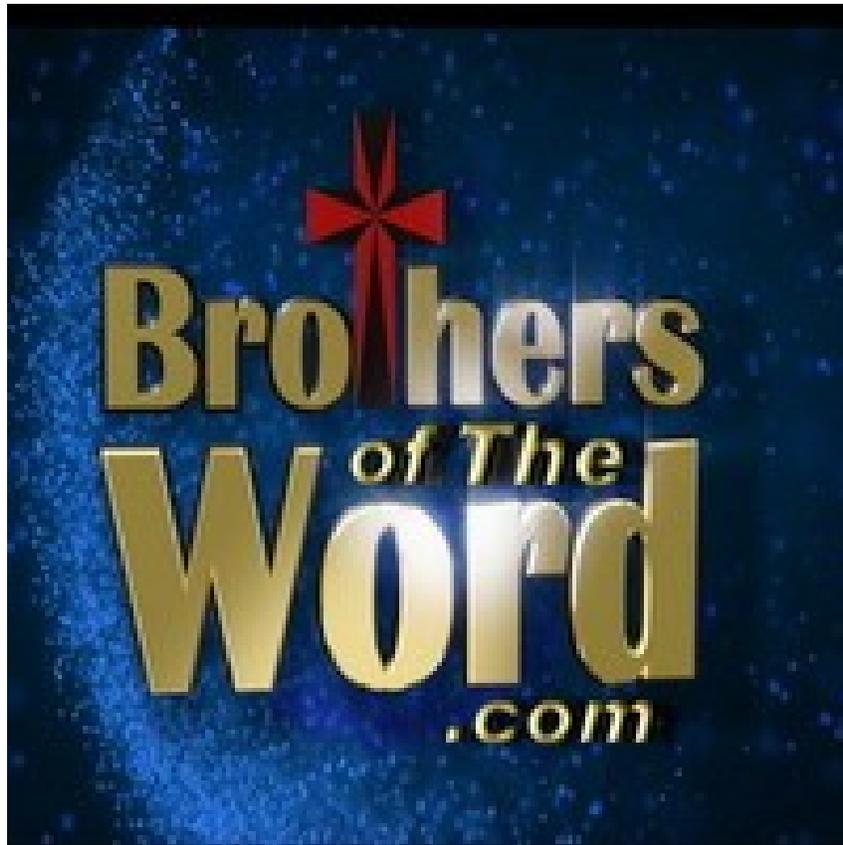
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Speaker: **Elijah Bronner Jr.**

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Thank you for joining Brothers of the Word, because brother, you need the Word. We are delighted and excited to have you to tune in and worship with us today in today's broadcast. I would like to read a few scriptures. We'll begin reading over the Book of Colossians. The Book of Colossians, Chapter 3. Let's read that. We may read some other scriptures as well. The Book of Colossians, Chapter 3 and let's read Verses 15 through 17. The Book of Colossians Chapter 3:15-17. When you get that, say Amen.

Well, let's begin reading there at Verse 15. Colossians 3 Verse 15, ready? Read with me. "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." And I just want to focus in on Verse 15 where it says, "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also ye are called in one body and be ye thankful and singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." And so I just want to use that subject having Attitude of Gratitude. Notice Verse 15 says, "Be ye thankful." Be ye thankful. Notice it said, "Be thankful." It didn't tell you give things. It says be thankful. So Thanksgiving, giving thanks is not something we simply do in something that we are. It's a part of our being. So it says be thankful. it's an attitude of the heart. It's an attitude of the heart. It's not lip service.

I like something that J.A. Shedd said, he says, "He who thanks but with the lips, thanks but in part; the full, the true Thanksgiving comes from the heart." I like that. "He who thanks but with the lips, thanks but in part; the full, the true Thanksgiving comes from the heart." So it's an attitude of the heart, it's not just simply something we say with our mouths. Thanksgiving is an attitude of gratitude in the heart and now we know that it's constant attitude. And that's why it says, "Be thankful." It's not something you just move in and out of. It's something that is a part of you, it's a constant attitude. It's a constant action, it's a continuous.

We find in other scriptures in the New and Old Testament. It lets us know that as continuous action. We find in Ephesians Chapter 5, Verse 18, 19, and 20. It says, "Giving thanks always." Giving thanks always for all things, giving thanks always. In 1Thessalonians Chapter 5, Verse 16, 17, 18, says, "Rejoice ever more. Pray without ceasing. In everything, give thanks for this is the will of the God concerning you in Christ Jesus." I love that little instruction He gives us in 1Thessalonians, because it's so short. It's so short, but it's so powerful. Those three things He tells us there, they're easy to remember. They're short, but they have long lasting powerful effect on our hearts, our spirits, our minds and our lives. He tells us to be joyful, to be prayerful, and to be thankful, just those three things. I believe man, if you can just do those things, that would take to eternity. That would last until Jesus got back. I really don't think you need much more instruction if you can just learn to be

joyful, prayerful, and thankful, I really believe that would take -- it would kind of take care of everything else will take care of itself.

Think about it. If you were joyful, prayerful, and thankful. If you're joyful, prayerful, and thankful. And so I just love it when He gives us that little snippet there, that's really, is enough to last us for eternity just in those three things. To be joyful, be prayerful, and be thankful. Say it with me, say be joyful, be prayerful, and be thankful. I like that. Turn your name and say, "I'm a thankful, person." I am a thankful person. It's not just something that we do, it's who we are. I'm a thankful person. This is an attitude of our heart. I love Psalms 34:1, it says, "I will bless the Lord at all times. His praise shall continually be in my mouth." Notice the continuous action, notice it's constant. Notice, it's not something we start and stop. It is a part of us, that we are always giving thanks. We're giving thanks on our needs. We're giving thanks. We're giving thanks when we're driving. We're giving thanks while we're working. We're giving thanks while we're with our families. We're giving thanks, so it's all the time, it's always, always.

I love something the Bible teaches and says, "This is really powerful in prayer." It says, "When you are praying, when you're supplicating to God for something, you're trying to get your need or prayer request answered." The Bible always says, "Do it with thanksgiving." Do it with thanksgiving. Don't answer God for anything without including thanksgiving. The Bible teaches us in the Old Testament, that's how you approach God. You just don't walk out to God. The Bible says, "Come before Him with thanksgiving. Come before His presence with thanksgiving. Come before His gates with thanksgiving. Enter into His courts with praise." If you want an audience with God, if you want to be able to get into the courts and in God's presence, the Bible says, "God, in heaven, these are the praises of His people." It's what thanksgiving that we get entrance into God's presence. And that God, He comes in and inhabits and lives with us is through our thanksgiving.

So that's what the Bible says that if you're going to pray, you got some request that you need to be made known, make sure you do it with thanksgiving. Do it with thanksgiving, that's said in Philippians Chapter 4 Verse 6. Philippians Chapter 4 Verse 6, "Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication. Let your request be made known to God with thanksgiving." With thanksgiving. So in other words, if you face some problems and stress and so forth, it says don't stress out. Take it to God and pray with thanksgiving. Give Him thanks.

In other words, you're already thanking God before the answer comes. Notice that. You're already thanking God before the answer comes. So you thank God before the answer come, everybody say, "Thank God before the answer comes." Thank Him before the answer comes. Thank Him before the answer comes. I like that. You can thank God beforehand. Thank Him before the answer comes. Thank Him before the answer comes.

Now I also, not only do we thank God before the answer comes, but also thank Him after the answer comes. And so often, when we get the answer, we run off. We run off once we get it, we run off. It reminds me of the children of a man whose -- he was trying to -- he was late for a meeting, an important meeting and he couldn't find a parking spot. Now he looked up and down the street and there were no parking spot, and he was running late for his meeting and he prayed, he said, "Oh, God if you'll give me a parking spot, I'll promise you, I'll go to church every Sunday." And at that said moment, as he prayed, a parking spot opened up. And he said, "Never mind God, I found one." So often, we forget, we forget to thank God after the answer comes. So remember, to thank God before the answer come and thank God -- say that with me, thank God before the answer and thank God after the answer comes.

I like something that Johannes Gaertner said. She said, "To speak gratitude is courteous and pleasant. To enact gratitude is generous and noble, but to live gratitude is to touch heaven." To live, when you live gratitude, that touches heaven and that's what we're talking about an attitude of gratitude, where it's a part of our lives. I found something interesting, the two words. They're very similar: think and thank. They both came from the same Latin root word, think and thank, which lets us know the more you think, the more you ought to thank. The more you think, the more you ought to thank. When you realize and recognize the wonders of His grace, the wonders of His goodness, the wonders of His blessings, it will call you to really have an attitude of gratitude.

Just a few days ago, I was studying and reading and preparing, and my little three-year old daughter, she was in the room with me and she was just being a busybody. I mean she was just getting in to everything and I'm sitting there and trying to be holy and be spiritual. And she was just getting in everything. She didn't give a hoot about my spirituality or my holiness. And she was just in to everything. She reached on my dresser and I had a big container on my dresser. I had all type of coins and chains and little items in it. She just pulled that up and just emptied it on the carpet. I turned around and stuff was everywhere. I said, "Oh, my God." And then I saw her putting it back in the can. I said, "Well okay, well at least she's cleaning up it herself." So, she put it all back in the can. Little that I know she was going to take the can and dump it all on my bed. And so she just dumped it out on my bed, so my kind of just about to just about to pull my hair out.

Then, I realized, instead of getting irritated or upset, now, keep in mind I was studying the attitude of gratitude. So I said, "Okay, well, this a good opportunity." And so instead of getting irritated and upset, I took the opportunity to realize what a blessing it was to have a little girl. To have a little girl, to see her happy, to see her healthy, to see her having fun, to see her safe, I realized that these were moments that were precious. These were -- you know when your child is two, three, four years, those are precious moments that you can never get back. Those are

times that you want to hold on to forever. So when I begin to change my perspective, instead of getting irritated over the little mess that was for a moment, I changed my perspective and there was attitude of gratitude that begin to rise. And I was thankful that I had a little girl, a beautiful little girl and I picked her up in my arms and I told her how much I loved her and I told her how smart she was. And I told her that how she helped everybody. I told her how she always cleans up all of her mess and you should've seen the little smile. She, her smile went from ear to ear.

And so I took her situation that was about to be irritating, I could've fussed and hurt her feelings that she was left crying and all upset. Now I took her situation and I diffused it with thanksgiving, with gratitude, with an attitude of gratitude. I begin to look at the blessing and so often you have to settle down and start again -- so been out of shape over things, turn them, begin to have a different perspective and to find what is it to be thankful. The Bible says, "Be thankful for all things." Be thankful for all things, big things. Be thankful for medium size things. Be thankful for little things. Be thankful for all things and I this you know, I understand that some things may not want in our lives, but I believe the heart of that verse is saying, "Be thankful" as we find that in 1Thessalonians 5:18. It says, "Be thankful in everything." In other words, no matter how bad the adversity and this is broader point. There is always something to thank God for no matter what kind of adversity you have in your life. There is always something to thank God for no matter what kind of adversity you have in your life. There's always something to thank God for. It could always be worse, tell your name and say you can always be worse. It call always be worse and so there's always something to thank God for.

I like something that William Ward said. He says, "There are three enemies to personal peace. Regret over yesterday's mistakes. Anxiety over tomorrow's problems and ingratitude for today's blessings." So those are three enemies to your personal peace. Regret over yesterday's mistakes. Anxiety over tomorrow's problems and ingratitude for today's blessing. There's something about having an attitude of gratitude that just really, enlightens your spirit, it makes you happy. You know when you are grateful, you just have a good spirit about you. There's something about thanksgiving and I really believe Ephesians 5 teaches us about it. But there is something about thanksgiving that makes you happy. There's something about it that fills it with the presence of God. That fills it with the Spirit of God. I mean it just makes you feel good and I really can't explain all of it but there's something about thanksgiving that makes your heart sing. There something about thanksgiving that can make your heart sing. It relaxes you, it removes tension and fear and it just fills it with God's spirit and with His presence. It gives you joy and peace. And it will literally make you sing. It will literally make you sing.

Now I begin a trail on that in the scriptures and that's exactly what I found. Notice what we read in Colossians 3:15 and in Verse 16, notice what it says. It says, "Be ye

thankful.” And then the next verse says, “Singing with grace, sing your heart to the Lord.” So there’s something about thanksgiving that it will make you sing. It will put a song in your heart. It makes you happy. It makes you lighter, it makes you relaxed and it just makes you be filled with God’s spirit and you feel with his presence. There’s something about thanksgiving.

You know psychologist tell us that sincere gratitude or thanksgiving is the healthiest of all human emotions. There are studies that have said that gratitude produces more positive emotional energy than any other attitude in life. Gratitude produces more positive emotional energy than any other attitude in life. Another psychologist, Robert Emmons, after 20 years of studying what makes people happy, he concluded this. He said when people consciously practice grateful living, their happiness will go up and their ability to withstand negative events will improve.

So in other words, you get happier and you become more resistant to adverse circumstances negatively affecting you. You won't be able to -- what's that and you're happier when you are thankful, when you have this attitude of gratitude. Thanks just don't bother you as much. You're happy when you have this attitude of gratitude.

I told you a while ago that a man had been given six months to live by his doctor. They told me he had six months to live. Well, later on they reverse their prognosis of him and they told them that they have made an error and he was not dying. Now, that man said when that diagnosis was reversed and he found out he wasn't dying, he said his whole approach to life changed. He said he was so happy and not only was he happy, he said nothing bothered him. See, when you have faced death there is nothing else that can bother you. He'd already face the ultimate thing.

So, when he found out he wasn't dying, nothing else bothered him. Everything else was a piece of cake. He was happy and he was able to handle any adverse circumstances, because this man had already stared death in the face. Those were gratitude. He was so grateful to be alive. He was so thankful to be alive. It made him happy and it made him to withstand any adverse circumstances.

And so, there's a lot of truth to that that attitude of gratitude makes you happier and also makes you stronger, makes you happier and things just --they bounce off of you. They bounce off you, because they're bouncing off that attitude of gratitude. Tell your name and I am a thankful person. I am a thankful person. I am a thankful person. Say I have an attitude of gratitude. I have an attitude of gratitude. One translation here in Colossians 3:15, it says, “Practice being thankful.” You may not have the attitude all of a sudden immediately, but it says practice it. Practice it. Learn to be grateful. Practice it. You want to take a journal and write down everything. Everyday, I have a journal on my cell phone. It's a gratitude journal and I write down everyday things I'm thankful for.

God thank you for allowing to enjoy the weather today and thank you that I was able to have my mobility to be able to exercise and able to drink clean water and able to hug my kids, just little things but it's an attitude of gratitude. Start a journal. Just write them down each day and you'll be surprised. How it will change your life. It'll make your life so much more positive. And so, it impact you with such an impact. I don't have time to teach at this. I have to teach this later, but there's a little trick that you can do to express gratitude to others. I don't have time -- I want to teach this so bad. I want to teach and it's so good. It's so good. See me at the service. I may share it with you.

I want you to go to BrothersofTheWord.com. You can listen to this message in as entirety. You can also email it to a friend absolutely free of charge. I want you to have an attitude of gratitude.

Thank you for joining us so much today at Brothers of the Word because brother, you need the Word.