

OPEN BIBLE CHURCH

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SERMON TITLE

Indescribable

SERIES

DATE

11/24/2024

KEY SCRIPTURE

2 Corinthians 9:15

SYNOPSIS

God's indescribable gift inspires gratitude.

HIGHLIGHTS





☞ INDESCRIBABLE

2 Corinthians 9:15

Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

☞ **Thanks = gratitude that is expressed.** It's more than just an attitude of gratitude. It's gratitude that is shown and spoken.

Gift = dorea = denotes "a free gift," stressing its gratuitous character; it is always used in the NT of a spiritual or supernatural gift.

Earlier in this chapter, Paul is talking about a gift that the Corinthians had apparently promised and he would soon be receiving. He says that this gift would result in thanksgiving to God. (v.11) In fact, it would lead to an overflow of many expressions of thanksgiving. (v.12) There it is again – gratitude is something that is expressed. It's not just bottled up inside. In fact, gratitude is contagious. In verse 13, he says that because of their gift, others will praise God.

It is not uncommon to compile wish lists at Christmas, and draw up a list of resolutions for New Years. But there is another list we often overlook - a Thanksgiving Day list of those things for which we are thankful. Let me read a part of the list that several housewives compiled. They wrote that they were especially thankful:

"For automatic dishwashers because they make it possible for us to get out of the kitchen before the family comes back in for their after-dinner snacks.

"For husbands who attack small repair jobs around the house because they usually make them big enough to call in the professionals.

"For children who put away their things & clean up after themselves. They're such a joy you hate to see them go home to their own parents.

"For teenagers because they give parents an opportunity to learn a second language.

Those are fun, but we can always find something to be grateful for. But often times we aren't as grateful as we should be. There are at least three things that keep us from being thankful.

☞ 1) **Conceit hinders gratitude.** This is the attitude that says, "Nobody ever gave me anything, I worked hard for everything I have."

--Henry Ward Beecher... Pride kills thanksgiving, but a humble mind is the soil out of which thanks naturally grows. A proud man is seldom a grateful man, for he never thinks he gets as much as he deserves.

☞ 2) **Complaining hinders gratitude.** Instead of being grateful, this person will always find something to complain about.

"A lady known as an incurable grumbler constantly complained about everything. At last her preacher thought he had found something about which she would be happy, for her farm crop was the finest for miles around. When he met her, he said with a beaming smile, 'You must be very happy Mary. Everyone is saying how healthy your potatoes look this year.' 'True they're pretty good, but what am I going to do when I need bad ones to feed the pigs.'"

☞ 3) **Carelessness hinders gratitude.** Growing accustomed to God's blessings in our lives. The



Israelis grumbled because they had no food, so God miraculously sent manna to cover the ground each day. Then they started to grumble because it was the same thing every day. They had a miracle straight from God every day, but were no longer satisfied.

Don't grumble because you don't have what you want – be thankful you don't get what you deserve.

Because of conceit, carelessness or a critical spirit we will never be truly thankful for all that God has given us. Now, let's talk about that. What has God given us? What is this indescribable gift?

Paul had been talking to the Corinthians about their promised gift. As he talks about their gift, he describes it as generous. He goes on to say that they were enthusiastic about sharing the gift. They weren't giving grudgingly, but were cheerful in their ability to give. Then, he concludes with this phrase about thanking God for his **indescribable** gift.

☞ **When God gives a gift, it is extravagantly generous and he is most definitely enthusiastic and cheerful about giving it.**

*Guzik... What is **His indescribable gift**? Some think it is the gift of salvation; others think it is the gift of Jesus Christ. Why not both? Salvation is given to us in Jesus Christ. Paul wants to leave the discussion of giving by reminding us again that God is the greatest giver. He gives the **gift beyond description**.*

☞ **NLT...too wonderful for words!**

And, we need to always remember, that this indescribable gift is exactly that – a gift. It's not something you can earn. If you work for something, that is called a wage. And, there is a wage for sin. Romans 6:23 tells us the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus ☞ our Lord. **You can't earn it, and you don't deserve it, but God gives the gift anyway.** It's a gift – an indescribable gift.

The last few weeks, I've briefly mentioned that the gift of salvation is something that we should never forget. Even though we long for demonstrations of God's power through healings and miracles, his gift of salvation surpasses all else. It is **indescribable!**

*Guzik goes on here... When Paul writes **His indescribable gift**, the ancient Greek word he uses for **indescribable** (anekdiegetos) is not found in any ancient writing before this time. Apparently, Paul made up the word to describe the indescribable.*

*God's **indescribable gift** should fill us with gratitude. If we really understand and appreciate the **indescribable gift** God gives us, our lives will be saturated with gratitude.*

☞ **Think about God's generosity toward us... he gave his only begotten Son so that we might be saved.** He gives us the gift of eternal life because of Jesus. If you start to get a grasp on just how extravagant that gift is, you will be grateful.

This Thursday is Thanksgiving Day. One day in which we set aside time to give thanks to God. Let's be sure we actually express our gratitude. Say the words – to God and to people in your life. And, not just on Thanksgiving Day – the word of God tells us that this should be a continual, daily,



attitude.

☞ **Ephesians 5:19-20**

"Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, **ALWAYS giving thanks** to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

☞ **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**

"Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks **in all circumstances**, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

How can we have this attitude continually, especially "in all circumstances?" Well, first, never forget his indescribable gift of Jesus and salvation! Then, to be thankful in all circumstances, we need a proper perspective of our circumstances and of our God.

Isaiah 55:8-9

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. **9** "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are **my ways higher than your ways** and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Psalms 25:10

All the ways of the Lord are loving and faithful for those who keep the demands of his covenant.

Psalms 103:11-13

For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so **great is his love for those who fear him**; **12** as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. **13** As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him;

☞ **If we really understand that God is far above our ways of thinking and that he really does have our best interests in mind, we can always be thankful.** And, salvation is the supreme gift which inspires gratitude.

Rudyard Kipling was a great writer and poet. He also made a great deal of money at his trade. One time a newspaper reporter came up to him and said, "Mr. Kipling, I just read that somebody calculated that the money you make from your writings amounts to over a hundred dollars a word; Mr. Kipling raised his eyebrows and said, "Really, I certainly wasn't aware of that." The reporter cynically reached down into his pocket and pulled out a one hundred-dollar bill and gave it to Kipling and said, "Here's a hundred-dollar bill, Mr. Kipling. Now, you give me one of your hundred-dollar words." Mr. Kipling looked at that hundred-dollar bill for a moment, took it and folded it up and put it in his pocket and said, "Thanks."

The word thanks is certainly a hundred-dollar word. In fact, it is more like a million-dollar word. It's one word that is too seldom heard, too rarely spoken and too often forgotten. If we would all adopt an attitude of thanksgiving into our lives, our lives would be changed. We would savor each day.



If any nation ought to be thankful to God and grateful for his goodness, it ought to be America. If any people in America ought to be thankful to God and grateful for his goodness, it ought to be ☞ Christians. **Make an effort today to recognize the blessings you've come to take for granted.** Focus on what you have rather than on what you don't have, and see if it doesn't improve your attitude. Here are a few suggestions:

Be thankful that you don't already have everything you want. If you did, what would there be to look forward to?

Be thankful when you don't know something, this gives you the opportunity to learn. Be thankful for the difficult times. During those times you grow.

Be thankful for your limitations, because they give you opportunities for improvement.

Be thankful for each new challenge, because it will build strength and character.

Be thankful for your mistakes. They will teach you valuable lessons.

It's easy to be thankful for the good things. But, a life of true fulfillment can come to those who are also thankful for the setbacks. As hard as it may be, find a way to be thankful for your troubles, and they can become your blessings.

Now, before you go today, express some gratitude to those around you. You can talk about God's goodness, and you can also tell someone that you are grateful for them.