

GRATITUDE CHALLENGE
From
The Grumbler's Guide to Giving Thanks – Pgs 159-162

The goal of this Thirty-Day Challenge is to cultivate the rhythm of giving thanks. We don't change through good intentions unless they're met by moving in a new direction. That takes time and consistency. Drew Dyck explains: "Forming a new habit (especially a good habit) is a tremendous draw on your willpower reserves. Initially the new behavior may be physically or mentally challenging. It will cut against the grain of your natural inclinations. It takes effort. Lots of it."¹ Unlike vowing off sugar forever, or your New Year's resolution to work out every day for an hour, growing in gratitude is a realistic resolution. But let grace motivate you, not guilt. If you forget or fail one day, start fresh the next day. Find a friend or two to take this challenge with you to provide mutual encouragement and accountability. We'll learn about the Bible's emphasis of giving thanks through reading each day and practice it by recording what we can thank God for and telling Him thanks. Our objective is to be thankful for God's gifts and grow in loving and knowing Him as the Giver.

While this Challenge is flexible as to how and when you use it, consider using it during a season like Lent, Advent, or in the month of November. Or ask your Bible study, small group, friends, or family to do it with you for one month. The Challenge consists of three elements.

1. Read and meditate on the Bible verses about giving thanks. See below for a thirty-day list.
2. As you read God's Word about gratitude, include a prayer of thanksgiving. Thank God for what you've learned about who He is, what He's done, or the gifts He's given.
3. During the day, look for things God is doing for which you can give thanks. Keep a journal, a scrap paper on your desk, or use a notes app on your phone, but find a way to record things you're thankful for. Set a goal of writing down five things each day.

This doesn't always have to be spiritual. One day you might thank God for the forgiveness given through Christ, and the next day you might thank God for good football. Not all gifts are equally valuable but all gifts can be a source of thanksgiving.

Join others taking the Gratitude Challenge by using social media to show something you're thankful to God for. Use the hashtag #gratitudechallenge when you post it.

THIRTY-DAY READING PLAN

Below are thirty passages on various aspects of thanksgiving. As you read them, notice how God is thanked, what He's thanked for, and the results of giving thanks. Let it lead you into seeing God at work in your own life and thanking Him for it. Reflect on what they teach you about thanksgiving or reasons to give thanks. Then give thanks to Him in prayer.

1. Matthew 7:9-11; James 1:17; 1 Corinthians 4:17; Romans 11:36
2. Daniel 2:17-23; 6:10; Romans 8:28-29
3. Psalm 100

4. Luke 17:11–19
5. 1 Chronicles 29:10–22; Leviticus 7:11–15
6. Romans 1:18–23; 12:1–2
7. Psalm 103
8. John 6:11, 23; 11:41; Acts 27:33–38; 1 Timothy 4:3–4
9. Philippians 4:4–9; 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18; 1 Peter 5:6–9
10. Exodus 14:10–14; 15:22–16:8; Philippians 2:14
11. 1 Chronicles 16:1–36
12. Psalm 9
13. Psalm 28
14. Psalm 136
15. Romans 6
16. Psalm 33
17. Matthew 26:26–29; Hebrews 8:6–13
18. Psalm 30
19. 1 Timothy 1:12–17; Ephesians 2:1–10; 2 Corinthians 4:15
20. Psalm 95
21. Psalm 118
22. 1 Samuel 8
23. Deuteronomy 8
24. Ephesians 1:3–14
25. 1 Corinthians 15:12–28, 35–58
26. Psalm 105
27. Psalm 104
28. Psalm 138
29. Psalm 145
30. Revelation 4:1–11; 7:9–17

Crowe, Dustin. *The Grumbler's Guide to Giving Thanks* (pp. 159-162). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.