



BIBLEWAY MINISTRIES

MAKING A DIFFERENCE—THE BIBLE WAY



Who Are You Thankful For?

“I thank my God in all my remembrance of you always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.” (Philippians 1:3-5) I’m reminded of those times when I’ve been blown out of the water by someone who said these powerful words: “I’m thankful for you!”

Who are you thankful for? Paul had an appreciation for the Philippians. They were a source of encouragement for him. His thoughts about

Another individual took the time to share the gospel with us. A senior in our congregation simply smiles and shares the kind words, “I am praying for you!” A spiritual leader studies week in and week out so that we can be fed and encouraged in the Word of our Lord.

Just as these people have been a blessing to us, our showing appreciation to them can stimulate an attitude of gratitude in their hearts!



them sparked a spirit of gratitude. They had not only contributed to his ministry, but they were also brothers and sisters who had a partnership with him. Paul was thankful!

Sometimes, it is hard to be thankful in America because we take so many things for granted. As a result, it is easy to be unappreciative of others. In many instances, we are who we are because of others’ contributions in our life:

One person faithfully empties our office trash each day after work so that our trash cans are empty and ready for use the next day. An individual at the coffee shop cheerfully smiles each morning as our coffee is provided just like we want it.

Maybe we take our spouse’s or children’s acts of kindness for granted and forget to simply say, “Thanks, I appreciate you!” Reflecting thankfulness can be as simple as dropping them a note without announcement to share a few words of appreciation.

When we develop an attitude of gratitude, it can help us develop a heart of thankfulness toward our God, and it can become contagious! Why not try it over the next week? Someone will be glad you did . . . and that someone might even be YOU!

- Dr. L.W. Edwards

Fearless at 30,000 Feet

Last month I went on my first solo business trip to Washington, D.C. Once we were cleared for takeoff, the airplane's massive turbine engines propelled it forward until the laws of physics took over. I can still remember the eerie feeling of floating a split second after the plane became airborne. From my window seat, I watched as the city of Chicago slowly faded from view. The higher the plane climbed, the smaller the world below appeared. At our cruising altitude of 30,000 feet, the breathtaking view brought unique perspective.

The View at Ground Level

There are plenty of things to make us fearful on this planet we call home. In Chicago, the major city near my hometown, many residents fear for their safety because of recent spikes in violence. Some fear the impact of new crime legislation on the police force.

On a national scale, people are afraid because of heightened political tensions and politically motivated acts of violence. With rising inflation and a bear market, many Americans fear losing their financial security.

Internationally, the world fears the potential for nuclear war with Russia. Taiwan is bracing itself for a military conflict with China. Israel fears for its safety as Iran partners with Russia in Ukraine and Syria.

My 30,000-foot view did nothing to change the scary conditions of the world below me. It could not make the problems disappear. But it did make them seem smaller so that I feared them less. A perspective shift is key to living a fearless life.

The Fear That Takes Us Higher

I am not suggesting we take a plane trip every time we wrestle with fear. God has given us an even better way to gain the perspective we need for every circumstance. It's called the fear of the Lord.

Fighting fear with fear sounds counterproductive. Not when we exchange our fears for the fear of God.

The Bible explains the fear of God is where true wisdom begins. (Proverbs 1:7) It is not an emotion, an "aha" moment when we suddenly overcome our fears through the power of positive thinking. It's simply understanding who God is and having a sense of awe and reverence that leads us to trust in Him.

To better understand the fear of God, I invite you to pull up a seat and join me on my plane trip to Washington, D.C. If you've flown before, you know that air travel takes a lot of faith. It doesn't matter what anyone tells you about flying the friendly skies — the moment you step inside that airplane, you are surrendering control of your life. You have to trust that the plane's manufacturer has developed a quality product without defects. You trust that the flight instruments have been properly calibrated. You trust that the maintenance crew has filled the plane with enough of the right fuel grade and ensured the engines were in good working condition. You trust the laws of physics will keep you airborne once the plane takes off. You trust the landing gear will function as it has been designed. Finally, you trust the pilot to take you safely to your destination.

With so many variables at play, the smallest error can ruin everything. Our lack of control over these important details can make our flight a fingernail-biting, nerve-racking experience.

Unless we know the pilot.

Have You Met This Pilot?

Knowledge produces confidence. When we know the pilot, it's a lot easier to trust their experience and ability to keep us safe on our journey. Even then, our trust isn't foolproof. It can still be shaken by things beyond the pilot's control, like weather conditions or equipment failures. Our confidence will only last as long as the pilot's ability to maintain control.

The fear of God is like knowing a good airline pilot with absolute control of every detail of the flight. When He is piloting our lives, there is no possibility of failure. The more we know Him, the more we can trust Him with our lives, our family, our finances, our health, our dreams and our future. Our knowledge of God produces confidence in Him, which overcomes our fears. We can completely trust His ability to keep us safe, no matter what happens on our journey.

One prophet wrote these thoughts after his own 30,000-foot experience with God:

Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand and marked off the heavens with a span, enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance?

Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket, and are accounted as the dust on the scales; behold, he takes up the coastlands like fine dust. . . . All the nations are as nothing before him, they are accounted by him as less than nothing and emptiness.

Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. (Isaiah 40:12, 15, 17, 28-29)

Who wouldn't want to know a God like that? Who wouldn't want to entrust their life to such a God?

You can. The question is, will you?

If you know the Pilot, but still live under fear's paralyzing influence, it's time for a perspective change. Make a list of your top 3 fears on a piece of paper, in your phone or on your computer. Then pray this prayer: *Lord, I'm tired of living in fear. I want to get a new perspective so this no longer controls me. Help me to get to know You better and to trust You with every detail of my life. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

- Cam Edwards

