



The
Power
-of-
Thank
You

Discover the Joy of Gratitude

JOYCE MEYER

#1 *New York Times* Bestselling Author

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NEW YORK • NASHVILLE

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FaithWords
Hachette Book Group
1290 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10104
faithwords.com
twitter.com/faithwords

First published in hardcover and ebook in January 2022
First Trade Paperback Edition: July 2023

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The Library of Congress has cataloged the hardcover as follows:
Names: Meyer, Joyce, 1943- author.

Title: The power of thank you : discover the joy of gratitude / Joyce Meyer.

Description: First edition. | New York : FaithWords, [2022] |

Identifiers: LCCN 2021033002 | ISBN 9781546016120 (hardcover) |

ISBN 9781546001065 (large type) | ISBN 9781546016137 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Gratitude—Religious aspects—Christianity. | Joy—Religious aspects—Christianity.

Classification: LCC BV4647.G8 M494 2022 | DDC 179.9—dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2021033002>

ISBNs: 978-1-5460-1614-4 (trade paperback), 978-1-5460-1613-7 (ebook)

Printed in the United States of America

LSC-C

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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INTRODUCTION

I am excited about writing on the subject of thankfulness because I think having a grateful heart has more power than we can imagine. Being thankful is obviously important because God's Word is filled with instructions and reminders to give thanks and be thankful. The words *thanks* and *thanksgiving* appear in approximately one hundred verses in the Bible, and we are told to give thanks seventy-three times. I believe that anything the Holy Spirit repeats that often must be important to my life and yours.

We are to have thankful hearts and express our thankfulness to God and to the people in our lives who help us, encourage us, and do things for us. Psalm 100:4 states that we should “be thankful and say so” (AMPC). I like this scripture because it reminds me that people can't read my mind. They need me to communicate my gratitude in order to know that I appreciate them and am thankful for them.

As we read the Old Testament, we find that possibly the Israelites' biggest problem may have been that they initially gave thanks for God's goodness to them but quickly forgot Him and went back to complaining and disobedience. Over and over God forgave them when they repented,

and then they repeated the same process of being thankful, forgetting God, and going back into bondage. When God did mighty works for the Israelites, Psalm 106:12–13 says, “They believed his promises and sang his praise. But they soon forgot what he had done and did not wait for his plan to unfold.”

God brought thousands of people out of bondage in Egypt, and they headed toward the Promised Land. One reason only two men out of that large group—Joshua and Caleb—actually entered the Promised Land was that so many of the others complained instead of being thankful. Some of those born in the wilderness did enter into the Promised Land with Joshua and Caleb, but the rest were destroyed, partially due to a lack of gratitude, which led to disobedience to God. This shows the power of thank you.

The apostle Paul teaches us that God’s will for us is to be thankful at all times in everything (1 Thessalonians 5:18). I admit that this is a tall order, but God never asks us to do anything we cannot do with His help.

My goal in this book is to birth in you a fresh revelation of the power of being thankful and urge you to make a new and firm commitment to being more thankful than you have ever been. I truly believe that the words *thank you* contain power that will change your life. I have concentrated on being thankful for a long time, and I can testify that thankfulness releases joy in our lives, has a powerful effect on our prayers, and keeps us focused on the positive aspects of our lives.

Our gratitude belongs first to God, because without

Him we would have nothing. God is good. Goodness is part of His character and essence, and He is good all the time. He desires our good and wants us to be good to others. Where goodness flows forth, thankfulness should also flow forth. When we stop seeing the good in our lives and start complaining, we cause many problems for ourselves. I like to say, “Why be grumpy when we can be grateful?”

I look forward to hearing about how this book helps you become a more thankful person. I am thankful that you are reading it and thankful that God has allowed me to write it. I begin it leaning entirely on Him for the words He wants to speak to you through it.

CHAPTER 1

Thankfulness Is God's Will

Thank [God] in everything [no matter what the circumstances may be, be thankful and give thanks], for this is the will of God for you [who are] in Christ Jesus [the Revealer and Mediator of that will].

1 Thessalonians 5:18 AMPC

Because God does so much for us, we should be thankful in every circumstance, even if everything is not pleasant for us at the moment. No matter what kind of difficulty we may face, our blessings always outweigh our troubles. We create problems for ourselves when we forget our blessings or begin to take them for granted because we have had them for so long. When this happens, we begin to focus only on life's difficulties.

No matter what kind of difficulty we may face, our blessings always outweigh our troubles.

God doesn't need us to thank Him, so I imagine His instructions to do so are repeated frequently because expressing our gratitude is good for us. It keeps us focused on our blessings instead of our problems, which adds joy and contentment to our lives. Studies have shown that thankful people tend to be healthier than those who complain frequently.

The story in Luke 17:11–19 (ESV) gives us an idea of how few people take time to give thanks:

On the way to Jerusalem he was passing along between Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance and lifted up their voices, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." When he saw them he said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the

priests.” And as they went they were cleansed. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus’ feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus answered, “Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?” And he said to him, “Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well.”

As you can see, Jesus cleanses ten lepers of the horrible disease of leprosy, but only one returns to say thank you. I can’t help but wonder what happened to the other nine lepers Jesus healed. The Bible doesn’t tell us, but it is definitely food for thought.

Thankfulness Is a Sign of Spiritual Maturity

Giving thanks in all things at all times shows spiritual maturity, and it is something we grow into little by little. We are not born as thankful people, but we can cultivate a culture of gratitude in our lives. In the early stages of our relationship with God through Christ, we may not be aware of all the amazing ways He helps and blesses us on a regular basis; we may be more inclined to notice what

Giving thanks in all things at all times shows spiritual maturity.

we don’t like about our lives and want God to fix. But as we grow in our knowledge of God and in His blessings, we realize

that the list of things we have to be thankful for is endless, even in the midst of our problems. As I often say, our worst day with Jesus is better than our best day ever was without Him. Take a few moments right now and think of all the things God provides, such as:

- peace
- answered prayer
- grace
- forgiveness of sin
- hope
- right relationship with Him through Christ
- provision
- mercy
- help
- wisdom
- strength
- and many other blessings

Even if all your problems vanished right now, if you had none of these blessings I have listed as gifts from God, I am sure you would rather keep your problem with the blessings of God than get rid of the problem and lose the blessings too.

As I have studied the apostle Paul's writings, I have learned that he never prayed for people's problems to go away. This is also a sign of spiritual maturity. He prayed they would bear whatever they had to endure with good attitudes. In his epistles to the churches, he frequently

reminded people to be thankful. In his letter to the Colossians alone, instructions to be thankful are plentiful:

We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all God's people.

Colossians 1:3–4

Giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Colossians 1:12–14

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

Colossians 2:6–7

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with