

August 14 & 15, 2010



3 D O O R S CONFESSION

John Fuller, Senior Pastor

Introduction

God loves us generously. We have the opportunity to respond with a thankful and grateful heart. When we open the door of gratitude, we are freed from negativity, bitterness, and selfishness. Noah Webster's 1828 dictionary defines gratitude:

“Gratitude is an emotion of the heart, excited by a favor or benefit received; a sentiment of kindness or good will towards a benefactor; thankfulness. Gratitude is a virtue of the highest excellence, as it implies a feeling and generous heart, and a proper sense of duty.”

Discussion

What would you add or change to the above definition of gratitude? Which phrase do you resonate with most?

Read [Colossians 2:6-7](#). Do you know someone who seems to overflow with thankfulness? What is powerful and encouraging about a life overflowing with gratitude?

If you are to be known for your gratitude, what changes must take place in your current attitude and disposition?

Gratitude starts when we recognize our deepest need is met through Jesus Christ. Our sins are forgiven, we are made alive, and we have a new life with God. Have someone read [Ephesians 2:1-20](#) out loud. As the passage is read, allow the familiar words to soak in. Read as though this is the first time you've heard the message. Discuss what it means to be made alive with Christ. How has Christ made you alive?

Think about it

[1 Thessalonians 5:18](#) says “give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.” Although Webster's definition says that gratitude is an emotion of the heart, it is also a choice. Sometimes we don't feel grateful, but it is God's will for us to be grateful. What circumstances make you feel least grateful? How can you begin to cultivate a grateful disposition in the midst of these circumstances?

Do something

Lack of rest can kill a grateful spirit. Spend half a day alone with God this week and journal about your experience. (Not sure on how to start? Check out the *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook* from the church library).

Confess and repent from an ungrateful spirit.

Participate in *168 Hours of Gratitude*. For 1 week:

- Don't ask for anything. Instead, thank God when you pray.
- Show your gratefulness by writing encouraging notes, letters, or meeting face to face.
- Write down 10 things you are thankful for every day.