

# Ingratitude

Never before in the long human history have so many people had access to so many physical blessings.

This is especially prevalent in the Western World, but never has there been such widespread ingratitude.

**One key factor for this ingratitude is the widespread belief of human rights, not balanced with human responsibilities.**

**2 Timothy 3:1-2** [NIV] *“But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy,”*

One of the prophesied attitudes of this age was ingratitude.

**James 1:17** [NIV] *“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.”*

This fact does **not** come into the minds of the vast majority of human beings today, because secular teachers and leaders have all swallowed the lie of evolution that does **not** need a Creator God.

Let us consider a few aspects of our existence that we should be thankful for.

## For our existence itself

What gives us an awareness of our existence?

Science tries to explain this but fails to come up with a logical explanation.

We have to go to the written words inspired by the Creator God to find the answer, the Christian Bible.

**Job 32:8** [NIV] *“But it is **the spirit in a man**, the breath of the Almighty, that gives him understanding.”*

The Hebrew word that is translated “*understanding*” is “*bîyn*” meaning an ability to separate things mentally, to discern, perceive and to think.

This is a gift from the Creator God and the speaker, Elimu, realised that such a gift brought with it true wisdom. [v9]

**Job 35:10-11** [NIV] *“But no-one says, ‘Where is God my Maker, who gives songs in the night, who teaches more to us than to the beasts of the earth and makes us wiser than the birds of the air?’”*

It is this human spirit that sets us apart from animals.

**Genesis 2:7** [NIV] *“the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and **breathed into his nostrils the breath of life**, and the man became a living being.”*

This is the record of this “*breath of God*” being given to the first human being.

**1 Corinthians 2:11** [NIV] *“For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man’s spirit within him? In the same way no-one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.”*

This human spirit gives us the ability to think, plan and create new things out of what we find in the physical creation all around us.

Every human being receives this human spirit from God at conception.

**Psalms 51:5** [NIV] *“Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.”*

For this to be true, King David had to have received his human spirit at conception.

**Luke 1:29-35** [NIV] *“Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favour with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; his kingdom will never end.” “How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?” The angel answered, “**The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.**”*

The conception of Jesus Christ the Son of Man was the entering of the Holy Spirit into an ovum in the physical body of Mary.

This had to happen at conception for Jesus the Son of God, now also the Son of Man, a human being to live a sinless life.

Our existence as a human being, **not** just another physical animal, is the result of a wonderful gift from the Creator God, for which we should be always grateful.

Neither our parents or we ourselves made this possible, only the Creator God.

**Psalms 139:14-16** [NIV] *“I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. **When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.**”*

Our life was even planned before our conception, by our Creator God, including the length of time we were to exist as a human being.

**Psalms 139:17** [NIV] *“How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!”*

The psalmist having been inspired by the Holy Spirit to write this truth, shows how grateful he is to his Creator.

Shouldn't we also be grateful?

## **For eyesight, physical and spiritual**

Physical eyesight is so often taken for granted. It is only when we lose it or it deteriorates that we realise how wonderful a gift it is from our Creator.

Meditate on how limited life can be for a blind person, not being able to appreciate the wonderful physical world around us with its colours and shapes.

Then thank the Creator God constantly for physical sight.

**Spiritual insight is even more wonderful.**

**1 Corinthians 2:9-12** [NIV] *“However, as it is written: “No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him” but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man’s spirit within him? In the same way no-one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us.”*

Unlike Jesus Christ the Son of God, made the Son of Man, we do **not** receive the Holy Spirit at our conception.

This gift from God **only** comes to those who love Him as this scripture tells us.

**Acts 2:37-38** [NIV] *“When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” Peter replied, “**Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**”*

Also as a result of our true repentance and baptism with all it is symbolism. [Read **Romans 6:1-4**]

**Acts 5:32** [NIV] *“We are witnesses of these things, and so is **the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.**”*

Only those who obey God’s laws of love receive this gift of the Holy Spirit.

**John 16:13** [NIV] *“But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, **he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.**”*

Only through the work of the Holy Spirit can we know the truth, part of which is the very reason for our existence.

What value can be put on such knowledge?

[Download our article ‘Life? Why Do Human Beings Exist?’ listed under ‘Life’ ]

**1 Corinthians 2:4-14** [NIV] *“My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power, so that your faith might not rest on men’s wisdom, but on God’s power. We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. No, we speak of God’s secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. However, as it is written: “No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him” but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. **The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man’s spirit within him? In the same way no-one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.**”*

Meditate on this passage of scripture, read it slowly over and over again, pausing to thank the Creator God for making available to us such wonderful insight.

## **Be thankful for our trials in life**

At first sight this may be illogical thinking.

**James 1:2-4** [NIV] *“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, **not lacking anything.**”*

**It is only through trials that we can develop those things that we can take with us through death, our character which is spiritual.**

**2 Peter 1:2-4** [NIV] *“Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. **His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.** Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, **so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.**”*

The key words in this passage of scripture are *“so that through them you may participate in the divine nature.”*

Only when we use the trials we experience in life as the Creator God intended we should, will we take on the very nature of the Creator God and then be fit to receive the gift of eternal life and a place in His created family.

**God will never allow anyone to be part of His created family who does not reflect His nature.**

**1 John 4:7-8** [NIV] *“Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. **Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.**”*

This nature of God is based on love.

The Greek word translated here as *“love”* is *“agapé.”* A sacrificial love where the selfish desires are sacrificed in order to reflect this love of God for others to see and experience.

**This development of Godlike character is an ongoing process in our lives.**

**2 Peter 1:5-7** [NIV] *“For this very reason, **make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.**”*

Note that the end goal of this growth, by adding one virtue to another, is love. The Greek word used is the love attributed to the Creator God, *“agapé.”*

**2 Peter 1:8-9** [NIV] *“For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. **But if anyone does not have them, he is short-sighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins.**”*

We should be thankful that this growth, which comes from an acceptance that only trials can promote such growth, will produce these Godlike characteristics in our lives.

**2 Peter 1:10-11** [NIV] *“Therefore, my brothers, **be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure.** For if you do these things, you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”*

This spiritual growth through trials, is the **only** way we can make our welcome by God into His created family sure.

Is this not a powerful reason for being thankful to God for trials in our lives?

## **Be thankful for what God has done for us through Jesus Christ**

I have left this until last because it is the most important thing we should be constantly thankful for.

**John 3:16-17** [NIV] *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”*

This is the starting point of any hope we have of receiving life after physical death.

**Romans 3:23** [NIV] *“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,”*

Every human being has sinned against their Creator God by breaking His law of love.

As a result we fail to be acceptable to become a glorious part of the created family of God.

**Romans 6:23** [NIV] *“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

All our life can earn in God’s eyes is eternal death.

### **How do we escape from this fateful position?**

**1 John 1:8-10** [NIV] *“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.”*

### **Accept that we are in the eyes of the Creator God, sinners who only deserve eternal oblivion.**

Then cry out to the Creator God for mercy and forgiveness, and we receive this cleansing power of the sacrificial blood of Jesus Christ.

What then?

**Romans 6:1-4** [NIV] *“What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning, so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.”*

Be baptised by total immersion in water, symbolic of being placed in the grave after physical death.

Jesus Christ the Son of Man, rose from the grave in a resurrection to a new life as our High Priest at the throne of God.

**Hebrews 4:14-16** [NIV] *“Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are, yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.”*

Jesus Christ as the Son of Man, as well as the Son of God, is the perfect High Priest, able to relate to humans as well as the Creator God.

### **We also after baptism are to live a new life.**

**Romans 6:5-10** [NIV] *“If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that **our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin,** because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but **the life he lives, he lives to God.**”*

A new life seeking to fulfil the will of our Creator God.

That is to take on His nature and become acceptable as His created children.

### **How is this new life empowered?**

**1 Peter 1:1-2** [NIV] *“Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To God’s elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, **through the sanctifying work of the Spirit,** for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.”*

This applies to all Christians.

It is the work of the Holy Spirit to “sanctify” us.

What does this mean?

The Greek word translated “sanctification” is “*hagiasmōs*” meaning to purify and make Holy.

**Galatians 5:22-23** [NIV] *“But **the fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”*

We have listed here the end result [fruit] of the work of the Holy Spirit in us.

These are the very characteristics of our Creator God.

How does this implantation of these gifts of the Holy Spirit take place?

**Galatians 5:24** [NIV] *“Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.”*

This refers directly to what is expanded in **Romans 6:1-4**.

**Galatians 5:25** [NIV] *“Since we **live by the Spirit,** let us keep in step with the Spirit.”*

Two things we have to do.

#### **a) Live by the Holy Spirit**

**John 16:13** [NIV] *“But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, **he will guide you into all truth.** He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.”*

Allow the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth.

**John 14:26** [NIV] *“But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and **will remind you of everything I have said to you.**”*

Allow the Holy Spirit to teach us through the study of the Word of God, the Christian Bible.

**Hebrews 4:12-13** [NIV] *“For the **word of God** is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it **judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart**. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.”*

This Word of God will expose our real nature, and thus know what needs to be changed.

**2 Peter 1:20-21** [NIV] *“Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation. For **prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.**”*

It was the Holy Spirit that inspired the scriptures, which are our guide to Christian living.

#### **b) Keep in step with the Holy Spirit**

**Romans 8:14** [NIV] *“because those who are **led by the Spirit of God** are sons of God.”*

Only those who are led by the Holy Spirit are potential created children of God.

On a physical level children take on the nature of their parents when they spend time with them.

On a spiritual level we take on the nature of the Creator God as we spend time with the Holy Spirit.

Studying the scriptures that the Holy Spirit inspired men who were set aside to write the very Words of God, as recorded in the Christian Bible.

**Luke 11:10-13** [NIV] *“For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. “Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, **how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!**”*

Ask God to send to us the Holy Spirit and then allow Him to change our lives by submitting to His direction.

**Romans 12:1-2** [NIV] *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, **in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship.** Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind.** Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

Prompted by thankfulness we allow our minds to be re-educated.

**Colossians 2:6-7** [NIV] *“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and **overflowing with thankfulness.**”*

“Overflowing with thankfulness” should become our lifestyle.