

# Thankfulness – Its Therapeutic Value

In this world of corruption there is a real danger for an earnest Christian in their resistance to evil, becoming a victim of the religious occupational disease of cynicism.

The constant need to counter popular trends may easily develop us into the sour habit of fault-finding that can turn us into a sulky critic of other people's ungodly habits.

What makes this cynical spirit particularly dangerous is that the cynic is usually right! Their analyses are accurate, their judgements sound.

For me as a Christian minister who writes articles that are based on God's Word, the Truth [**John 17:17**] I constantly need to be aware of the dangers involved and take steps to avoid it taking hold of my life.

I can prove from scripture that I am right, but I am pathetically wrong if this makes me a critical cynic, lacking patience and love towards other human beings.

How do I cure this dangerous condition?

It would be convenient indeed if the condition could be cured completely by a spiritual experience of fervent prayer. But this is **not** so.

On the physical level this would be like our expecting an infusion of some chemical to take care of our physical condition for the rest of our lives, obviously an impossible thing. No matter how healthy we are, unless we cultivate correct bodily habits we will **not** stay healthy for long.

Any spiritual experience of "*heart and mind cleansing*" that is **not** followed by right spiritual habits will be disappointing in the end.

Continued spiritual health will **only** be the result of right habits of heart and mind.

If these are neglected the inner spiritual life will degenerate, no matter how wonderful our past experiences may have been.

The cure for the sour, fault-finding cynical attitude I recommend we cultivate a habit of thankfulness.

The heart and mind that is constantly overflowing with gratitude will be safe from a cynical attitude towards the world and all who are under the influence of its godless culture.

**James 1:16-17** [King James] "*Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.*"

We should never take any blessing for granted, but accept everything as a gift from our Heavenly Father God.

I suggest we have a pocket or handbag size notebook in which we list one by one all the things we should be grateful for to God and our fellow human beings.

A constant return to these notes during the day, as our minds are free to do so, will fix the habit of thankfulness in our hearts and minds.

I suggest you start this list with our own creation, and tell our Creator God how grateful we are that He ever thought of us and brought us into being out of the empty void of nothingness.

**Psalms 139:13-17** [NIV] *“For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. 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. How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!”*

To meditate on these verses will cause us to explode in thanks to our Creator God.

Thankfulness for each of our senses should be daily, for it is so easy to take things for granted. I thankfully offer to God mobility, as my life now is so limited by acute arthritis that every movement is accompanied with pain.

List and remember to thank God that even when we sin through weakness He remembers us still and sent His only Son, Jesus the Christ, to die for us.

Thank God for His Word, the Christian Bible, and for the blessing of the Holy Spirit to teach us inward understanding of the reason for life and how we should live it.

We should list and thank God for lifting the veil of Satan’s deception from our eyes. [**Revelation 12:9; 2 Corinthians 4:4**]

Thank God that at Christ’s Second Coming all people will eventually have their chance to know Jesus Christ as their Saviour and be given the Holy Spirit to open up God’s Word, the Christian Bible, to them. [**Revelation 20:1-5; Revelation 20:11-13**]

In trying to count our many blessings the difficulty is **not** to find things to count but to find time to enumerate them.

Kindnesses we have received from other human beings must also be listed and thanked God for.

Our parents, even if they are not now alive, to whom we owe our upbringing.

Our teachers for their patient line-by-line instruction when we are young, enabling us to read and write.

The numerous and unknown soldiers who shed their blood to keep our country free.

Such a habit of thankfulness will banish any cynicism from our lives and change our approach and concern for every other human being as well as the Triune God we should be worshipping.