**Thanksgivin’ Week 2: Thanks but No Thanks**

Last week we talked about how being thankful changes our perspective see things how God does. We will look at our daily blessings as gifts we’ve been given not things we are entitled to or deserve. We will look at people who love us and want to serve them rather than just take from them. We will look at challenging things that happen to us as ways to be made more like Jesus and grow in our character. We looked at David who’s life prayer could be “I give thanks to you, O Lord” the dude just loved to give thanks to God!

If we are all being honest, I bet we all at one point in our lives don’t feel thankful for the things we have in life. Let’s have an honesty hour here, I’ll join in with you guys!

How many of you have been at home and Mom made a super delicious meal but you were more worried about finishing a video game than coming down to enjoy the dinner your Mom prepared?! How many of you have pouted or whined because you had to go your brother/sisters sportinig event?! How many of you have received birthday presents from all of your family but had no desire to write thank you cards?

Do you guys see what I’m trying to get us to see? We often in the moment don’t react in thankfulness to so many different circumstances. We could be here for hours talking about so many different scenarios!!

**Leader Note: Share a story from childhood when you reacted to a situation ungratefully, that embarrassed you after the fact.**

Paul says this in Romans 7:15-20, “**15**I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.**16**And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. **17**As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. **18**For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+7%3A15-20&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28110a)] For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.**19**For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. **20**Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it”

That’s a lot of I do’s and I do not do’s, so let me summarize this passage to the best of my ability. Paul knows he shouldn’t do certain things, but he still struggles to do what he knows is wrong. He says he has the desire to do what is good, but he cannot carry it out or complete it. He can’t do it! And you can feel the frustration and tension in his words. Why is that?! Who can relate to what Paul said?! How many of you have been in a situation where you know what the right thing to do is but you ended up doing the opposite?

Maybe one of these situations hits home with you: I know I should go help Mom put away the dishes, but I choose to sit and watch TV. I know I should be more kind and considerate to my sister but I instead I lose my temper and let anger win. I know I should comfort the kid who is crying at school, but I’m too afraid of what my friends will think of me. I know I should get up and spend time with God in His Word, but I’d rather sleep in or watch cartoons. I know I should ask someone for help because I feel lonely and afraid, but I’ll just act like I’m ok. I know I shouldn’t tell lies to my parents to save myself from getting in trouble, but I’m scared to tell the truth even though I know God knows every thought I’ve ever had.

LIKE UGHHH its so frustrating. We all can relate to at least one of those situations, if not all of them. We feel and are aware of the gap between how we want to live and honor God, and the way we actually live sinful and messy.

I think this relates to a syndrome I like to call, “Thanks but No Thanks.” I suffer from it and maybe you do too. Here is how “Thanks But No Thanks” syndrome sounds and looks. Sit back and check this out!

**Leaders Notes: Time for a skit. Bring a leader who likes the stage up to play this out.**

**Mom/Dad: Hey, it’s time for dinner!**

**Son/Daughter: Ok I’m coming, I’ll be right down!**

*Thanks But No Thanks (internal dialogue): “Going down stairs is the last thing I want to do right now, I’d rather just play video games and sit on Instagram.”*

**Mom/Dad: We made Chicken Fried rice tonight, it’s a new recipe we have been really excited to try. I hope you guys really like it!**

**Son/Daughter: Wow, thanks that’s awesome!**

*Thanks but No Thanks (internal dialogue): “Why would they try a new recipe. Stick with what works, this never goes well. Plus that looks a little like dog food…”*

**Mom/Dad: Well now that we’ve prayed. How was your day today?**

**Son/ Daughter: It was pretty good, I didn’t have much homework which is awesome.**

*Thanks but No Thanks (internal dialogue): “Why do Mom and Dad always ask me a million questions? I’d rather just eat in peace and get back to what I was doing.”*

Did the thoughts that were running through (**INSERT NAME)** head match up with what was coming out of his/her mouth? No, they were exactly the opposite. I often think sometimes this is where we all get stuck at times. We say thanks because we know we should, but in our hearts we aren’t truly grateful. This may not seem like a big deal, but I think it is worth our attention.

Jesus says in Matthew 15:8 “This people honors me with their lips but their heart is far from me.” Jesus is speaking to a group of people called the Pharisees, who on the outside looked like they had it all together but on the inside they didn’t have the right motives. He said that their hearts that are corrupt and evil.

Now these circumstances in Scripture are a little different than the skit we just saw, but I believe there is a connection we can see. In both scenarios, the hearts of the people involved are in the wrong place. We can say thanks but not feel thankful, that’s how I came up with “Thanks but No Thanks”. You’re thankful on the outside with your lips but not in your heart.

This is a tough way to live, but if we were all to be honest a place each of has been. What do we do if we aren’t thankful in our hearts? How do the words of our mouths flow from true thankful hearts? I don’t believe we can make our hearts thankful in our own power. We need help from God. We need the power of His Spirit to help us. We read earlier about how Paul struggled with doing the right thing, but thankfully one chapter later in Romans 8 he says this.

In Romans 8:5-6 is says this “For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.”

**Our THP today: God helps us to be thankful from the heart.**

Paul tells us that the Holy Spirit who is given to everyone who believes in Jesus as Lord and Savior, is what gives us life and peace. The Holy Spirit is what we rely on to jump start our hearts when they aren’t grateful. God has given us His Spirit and the Spirit’s power is stored up in God’s word. When we meditate and store up God’s word in our heart it changes us from the inside out.

I want you guys to be storing up God’s Word in your heart. James 1:17 says, “Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.” Or in Colossians 3:20 “Children obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.” When those moments happen your just aren’t quite feeling thankful or grateful for the daily blessings or even for Mom and Dad you guys can remember what God said and then ask Him to help you to be grateful from the heart. It’s not an instant process where you say it once and it automatically happens. Over a month’s time or even better a year’s time you will notice a difference in what you are grateful for. Who knows you might even look forward to talking to Mom and Dad at the dinner table about what’s going on in your life!