

Thanksgiving Power

Ready:

"But one of them, seeing that he was healed, returned and, with a loud voice, gave glory to God. He fell facedown at His feet, thanking Him. And he was a Samaritan." - Luke 17:15-16

Set

The power of Thanksgiving is in the action.

After every practice and every game, Jessie would approach me before leaving the field and utter one small but powerful sentence: "Thank you, coach!" During the entire two years she played on our high school girl's lacrosse team, she never missed a single day of saying those three powerful words. Jessie understood the value of gratitude, and she wanted to make sure I knew that she did not take a single practice or game for granted. Jessie not only had an attitude of thanksgiving, but she also put it into action.

Be the one.

In Luke 17, out of the ten lepers healed by Jesus, only one man scrambled back to say thanks. I am sure that the other nine had an attitude of thanksgiving but never applied their gratitude. The power of saying thanks is a simple thing, but hard to do. A friend of mine says that unexpressed gratitude can often be interpreted as being unthankful. Sometimes it can even be viewed as arrogance or ignorance!

Every day is Thanksgiving for the Christian.

Thanksgiving should be the theme song for the follower of Christ. We should have thanksgiving flowing from our lips daily. The people we connect with should be soaked with thanks, because we are overflowing with gratitude.

"And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness."

- Colossians 2:6-7 (NLT)

A giant IF–THEN statement.

Thankfulness overflows if we have deep roots in Jesus Christ and if our lives are built on Him. Is it any wonder thankfulness is in short supply? As Christian competitors, if we are *over-full* with God, then we *overflow* with thanksgiving. Otherwise, we are just selfish and stingy like many athletes and coaches. Unfortunately, there isn't a culture of thanksgiving in the world of sports.

I have to admit, I am great at thanking God for the people in my life during prayer time, but I'm not very good at putting that attitude of gratitude into action. I often fail to overflow with words of thanksgiving to others. My attitude is good, but my action is lacking.

When we overflow with thankfulness, it shows in everything: speech, attitude and actions. We are first thankful to God and then thankful for our family, teammates, job, church, friends, coaches, neighbors, and even our boss. We are even thankful for the tough times, because as Romans 5:3 states, *“we also rejoice in our afflictions, because we know afflictions produce endurance.”*

“Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to act.”

- Proverbs 3:27

Pray it, then say it!

Pray it, but make sure you say it! No more withholding blessing and thanksgiving from those that deserve it. What are you waiting for? This Thanksgiving make sure you tell others how grateful you are for them. The power of thanksgiving is in the action.

Go

1. Are you thankful? Would teammates, coaches and friends say you have a heart of thankfulness? Why or why not?
2. List three teammates or coaches you are thankful for and why.
3. What are the things that prevent you from expressing your thanks?
4. Time to act this Thanksgiving; go tell the three people that you are thankful for them.

Workout

- Psalm 100
- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18
- 1 Chronicles 16:34
- Ephesians 5:3-4
- 1 Corinthians 1:4

Overtime “Lord God, I desire to be someone who not only prays for those I am thankful for, but also someone who takes action and tells them. Help me to pray it, and then say it. There is so much I am thankful for: the Cross of Jesus, my family, friends, teammates and coaches. Fill me up, Father, so that I can overflow with thanksgiving. In the name of Jesus I pray, amen.”



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