

# **90(ish) Days of No Complaining**

## **WEEK ONE:**

### **What's Your Gratitude Level?**

*"And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."*

—Colossians 3:17

I've often said that gratitude is learning to recognize and express appreciation for the benefits we have received from God and from others.

This means constantly being on the lookout for blessings, making each day a treasure hunt. It means being intentional about thanking God and others for the blessings that come our way.

**To discover your Gratitude Level, see which of these statements is most true for you:**

- I look at the world through grateful eyes and consistently express my gratitude to God and others.
- I know I've been greatly blessed, but I don't often stop to actually express my gratitude to God and others.
- To be honest, I had not thought a lot about gratitude until starting this challenge. I've got a long way to go to develop a lifestyle of gratitude.
- I'm a whiner! I tend to focus on my problems, and I frequently express them to others.

**Your Challenge:** Ask God to show you the many ways He has blessed you. Keep track of what He shows you and express gratitude to Him and others daily for specific praises.

## Scripture Reading: Colossians 3:12–17

### Colossians 3:12-17

**12** You are always and dearly loved by God! So robe yourself *with virtues of God*, since you have been divinely chosen to be holy. Be merciful as you endeavor to understand others, and be compassionate, showing kindness toward all. Be gentle and humble, unoffendable in your patience with others. **13** Tolerate the weaknesses of those in the family of faith, forgiving one another in the same way you have been graciously forgiven by Jesus Christ. If you find fault with someone, release this same gift of forgiveness to them. **14** For love is supreme and must flow through each of these virtues. Love becomes the mark of true maturity.

**15** Let your heart be always guided by the peace of the Anointed One, who called you to peace as part of his one body. And always be thankful.

**16** Let the word of Christ live in you richly, flooding you with all wisdom. *Apply the Scriptures* as you teach and instruct one another with the Psalms, and with festive praises, and with prophetic songs given to you spontaneously by the Spirit, so sing to God with all your hearts!

**17** Let every activity of your lives and every word that comes from your lips be drenched with the beauty of our Lord Jesus, the Anointed One. And bring your constant praise to God the Father *because of what Christ has done for you!*

### Action Step: Confess ingratitude.

Ask the Lord to cultivate in you a more grateful heart over these next days. If you have realized that your Gratitude Level is not what it should be, confess your ungrateful spirit to the Lord. Ask Him to forgive you and to transform you into a truly thankful person.

### Pray for a Grateful Heart

Heavenly Father, I confess my Gratitude Level is not what it should be. Please forgive me for my hardened heart and blinded eyes. In these next months, cultivate in me a grateful heart that eagerly praises You for every blessing. I choose to thank You now for all You will do!

## The Source of Our Joy

*"May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light."*

—Colossians 1:11–12

The central theme of Colossians is Christ. He is exalted and worshiped for His divine nature; for being the Creator and Sustainer of all things; for His preeminence over all creation and over all cosmic rulers and powers; for His redemptive, reconciling work on the cross; for defeating the powers of darkness; for being the Head of the Church which is His Body; for being the fulfillment and substance of Old Testament types and figures; for being the believer's life and hope of glory; and so much more!

As those who have "died" with Christ, "been buried with him in baptism," and "raised with him through faith," our joy and hope do not emanate from any earthly source or from our religious practices, but from *Him*. Within the four chapters of this short epistle, Paul calls us to be sexually pure, compassionate, kind, humble, meek, patient, forgiving, loving, peaceful, obedient, just, wise, gracious, and *thankful!*

For all that Jesus is, He calls us to a life of faithful obedience and heartfelt gratitude.

**Scripture Reading:** Colossians 1:3, 11–12; 2:7; 3:15–17; 4:2

### Colossians 1:3

**3** Every time we pray for you our hearts overflow with thanksgiving to Father God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

### Colossians 1:11-12

**11** And we pray that you would be energized with all his explosive power from the realm of his magnificent glory, filling you with great hope.

**12** *Your hearts can soar with joyful gratitude* when you think of how God made you worthy to receive the glorious inheritance freely given to us by living in the light.

### Colossians 2:7

**7** Your spiritual roots go deeply into his life as you are continually infused with strength, encouraged in every way. For you are established in the faith you have absorbed and enriched by your devotion to him!

### Colossians 3:15-17

**15** Let your heart be always guided by the peace of the Anointed One, who called you to peace as part of his one body. And always be thankful.

**16** Let the word of Christ live in you richly, flooding you with all wisdom. *Apply the Scriptures* as you teach and instruct one another with the Psalms, and with festive praises, and with prophetic songs given to you spontaneously by the Spirit, so sing to God with all your hearts!

**17** Let every activity of your lives and every word that comes from your lips be drenched with the beauty of our Lord Jesus, the Anointed One. And bring your constant praise to God the Father *because of what Christ has done for you!*

### Colossians 4:2

**2** Be faithful to pray as intercessors who are fully alert and giving thanks *to God.*

### Action Step: Meditate on Jesus

Read through the following passages from Colossians, meditating on them, praying them back to God, and using them as a basis for giving thanks to Him:

### Colossians 1:12–14

**12** *Your hearts can soar with joyful gratitude* when you think of how God made you worthy to receive the glorious inheritance freely given to us by living in the light. **13** He has rescued us completely from the tyrannical rule of darkness and has translated us into the kingdom realm of his beloved Son. **14** For in the Son all our sins are canceled and we have the release of redemption *through his very blood.*

### Colossians 1:15–22

**15** He is the divine portrait, the true likeness of the invisible God, and the first-born heir of all creation. **16** For through the Son everything was created, both in the heavenly realm and on the earth, all that is seen and all that is unseen. Every seat of power, realm of government, principality, and authority—it was all created through him and for his purpose! **17** He existed before anything was made, and now everything finds completion in him.

**18** He is the Head of his body, which is the church. And since he is the beginning and the firstborn heir in resurrection, he is the most exalted One, holding first place<sup>[h]</sup> in everything. **19** For God is satisfied to have all his fullness dwelling in Christ. **20** And by the blood of his cross, everything in heaven and earth is brought back to himself—*back to its original intent, restored to innocence again!*

**21–22** Even though you were once distant from him, living in the shadows of your evil thoughts and actions, he reconnected you back to himself. *He released his supernatural peace to you* through the sacrifice of his own body as the sin-payment on your behalf so that you would dwell in his presence. And now there is nothing between you and Father God, for he sees you as holy, flawless, and restored, **23** if indeed you continue to advance in faith, assured of a firm foundation to grow upon. Never be

shaken from the hope of the gospel you have believed in. And this is the glorious news I preach all over the world.

### **Colossians 2:9–15**

**9** For he is the complete fullness of deity living in human form. **10** And our own completeness is now found in him. We are completely filled *with God* as Christ's fullness overflows within us. He is the Head of every kingdom and authority in the universe!

**11** Through our union with him we have experienced circumcision of heart. All of the guilt and power of sin has been cut away and is now extinct because of what Christ, the Anointed One, has accomplished for us.

**12** For we've been buried with him into his death. Our "baptism into death" also means we were raised with him when we believed in God's resurrection power, the power that raised him from death's realm. **13** This "realm of death" describes our former state, for we were held in sin's grasp. But now, we've been resurrected out of that "realm of death" never to return, for we are forever alive and forgiven of all our sins!

**14** He canceled out every legal violation we had on our record and the old arrest warrant that stood to indict us. He erased it all—our sins, our stained soul—he deleted it all *and they cannot be retrieved!* Everything we once were in Adam has been placed onto his cross and nailed permanently there as a public display of cancellation.

**15** Then Jesus made a public spectacle of all the powers and principalities of darkness, stripping away from them every weapon and all their spiritual authority and power to accuse us. And by the power of the cross, Jesus led them around as prisoners in a procession of triumph. *He was not their prisoner; they were his!*

### **Colossians 3:1–11**

**1** Christ's resurrection is your resurrection too. This is why we are to yearn for all that is above, for that's where Christ sits enthroned at the place of all power, honor, and authority! **2** Yes, *feast on all the treasures of the heavenly realm* and fill your thoughts with heavenly realities, and not with the distractions of the natural realm.

**3** Your crucifixion with Christ has severed the tie to this life, and now your true life is hidden away in God in Christ. **4** And as Christ himself is seen for who he really is, who you really are will also be revealed, for you are now one with him in his glory!

**5** Live as one who has died to every form of sexual sin and impurity. Live as one who died to diseases, and desires for forbidden things, including the desire for wealth, which is the essence of idol worship. **6** When you live in these vices you ignite the anger of God against these acts of disobedience.

**7–8** That's how you once behaved, characterized by your evil deeds. But now it's time to eliminate them from your lives once and for all—anger, fits of rage, all forms of hatred, cursing, filthy speech, **9** and lying. Lay aside your old Adam-self with its masquerade and disguise.

**10** For you have acquired new creation life which is continually being renewed into the likeness of the One who created you; giving you the full revelation of God. **11** In this new creation life, your nationality makes no difference, or your ethnicity, education, or economic status—*they matter nothing*. For it is Christ that means everything as he lives in every one of us!

### **Pray for a Grateful Heart**

Lord Jesus, You are the source of light and life and all joy—show me who You are and open my eyes to see You rightly. Overwhelm my heart with Your power, goodness, love, and glory, that my heart would default to praising You in every moment. Thank You!