



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

A Whole New You Series, Lesson 27

Lesson Title: True Gratitude to God

Take Home Point: Trade in your pet peeves for grati-toads!

Warm-Up:

What would happen if everything for which you are not grateful simply disappeared? What might be missing in your life? The story is told of a boy who woke one day to find himself on an island far from home. In this unusual place, when a person was not grateful for something, that something disappeared. The boy tended to be a complainer, so one by one things around him vanished as he expressed his ungratefulness. The food provided by the one island resident wasn't good enough, so it was gone. The lone palm tree that gave shade was too small. So it too disappeared. The rock on which he sat was too hard. Poof! It evaporated beneath him. Worst of all, the boy complained that the only other person there wasn't really much of a friend, and he disappeared, too! The boy was alone, without a friend or even the small things that could have made life more livable and enjoyable.

Read: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, Romans 8:28

Observation (What happened?):

Why are we to be continually joyful and prayerful and thankful?

According to Romans 8:28, what is God doing for us in circumstances?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

Do you think God is the direct cause for everything that happens to us? Why or why not?

What is joy? How is it different from happiness? How do we get it?

Insight:

A co-worker of mine has a poster over his desk. Written by pastor, author, and radio speaker Chuck Swindoll, the words are a great expression of an eternal truth: "The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness, or skill. It will make or break a company...a church...a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past...we cannot change the fact that other people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one thing we have, and that is our attitude...I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it. And so it is with you...we are in charge of our attitudes."

Application (What does it mean to me?):

What is your attitude in whatever circumstances you find yourself?

How do you publicly express your gratitude to God?