

Notes:

Sermon Text

Subject

Spiritual "To Do List"
(things God has shown me today)

The benefits of gratitude

Christians realize that gratitude has spiritual benefits, but now scientists are confirming its physical and emotional benefits, as well.

Professor Robert Emmons found that people who counted their blessings instead of their burdens were healthier and more optimistic, exercised more and made more progress toward achieving goals. Evidence shows that gratitude can even ease chronic health conditions.

Emmons, author of *Thanks! How Practicing Gratitude Can Make You Happier* (Mariner Books), acknowledges that gratitude seems harder to practice during tough times. But, he notes, "In the face of demoralization, gratitude has the power to energize. In the face of brokenness, gratitude has the power to heal. In the face of despair, gratitude has the power to bring hope."

Giving thanks for all things

It's easy to list the blessings in life: good health, family, a satisfying career, a comfortable home. We might even be thankful for things others take for granted such as freedom and clean drinking water, reliable transportation and food enough to eat. Then there are the little things, such as gardens, sunrises, pets and coffee.

But what about life's storms or unanswered prayers? Should we be thankful for these? Loss and hardship remind us of our dependence on God. He uses trials to draw us closer to him, to show us that he is our rock and refuge. In misfortune and grief, we discover God's comfort and strength. Should we not, then, be thankful for the storms, too?

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GIVE
THANKS
UNTO
THE
LORD
FOR HE
IS GOOD.

PSALM 136:1

