

August 15, 2016  
By Ed Thompson

## SIX WORDS FOR GREATER THANKFULNESS

A virtue we see too rarely in the business and professional world is thankfulness. We are reminded of it once a year in many countries when we observe Thanksgiving Day, but being thankful should not be limited to an annual holiday. The common act of awakening each morning, feeling healthy and able to work should inspire in us a spirit of thankfulness. Most days we encounter problems and adversity to varying degrees, but we can still find many reasons for feeling thankful.

Some time ago I heard a message from Dr. David Jeremiah in which he listed six words he suggested could equip people to live more thankfully. Not long afterward, in a men's group we discussed these six words. To stimulate our thinking, I asked simple questions that resulted in some profound encounters with one another. Perhaps you will find these thoughts helpful as well:

**Word #1 – Relationships.** I asked the men, "Tell the rest of us about a special relationship you have (or have had) that makes you deeply thankful." In response, we heard some moving stories about marriages, friendships, and acts of love that have emerged out of God-given relationships.

**Word #2 – Remembering:** Another man asked, "What defining moments do you remember in your life that make you thankful? Tell us about one of them."

**Word #3 – Reflecting:** This word has the effect of taking remembering to a deeper level. One man confessed, "I can't help but reflect on all the times I chose work over my wife and family. Today, I thank God that despite that, they love me and stuck with me."

**Word #4 – Rejoicing:** The same man who talked about reflecting began rejoicing about how God had preserved his marriage and family throughout his life. There are some who would say crying is "unmanly," but his tears stirred the rest of us to also rejoice in God's goodness in our own lives. We encountered special gratitude simply by being exposed to one another's stories, and applying their insights to our own lifetime experiences.

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**Word #5 – <>:** Another man had a very different story. His wife and children had left him due his lack of provision and support for their needs. This man declared that with God's help, he was going to try to win them back. The rest of us responded to him with support and prayer, hoping for an outcome of restoration for him and his family.

**Word #6** – The final term we discussed was actually a phrase: **Reaching Out**. After hearing a story about visiting homeless people in a wooded area, the men determined to reflect on where they might begin to reach out to the poor and hurting as God leads them. We agreed that serving others gratifies our hearts as much as (or more than) the lives we serve. As Jesus said, *"It is more blessed to give than to receive"* (Acts 20:35), in part because as we give from our resources – whether it involves our material possessions, our abilities, or our time – we experience the thankfulness of being able to help others.

Can these six words help you in experiencing more thankfulness daily in your life? Have you learned the blessing of the admonition, *"give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus"* (1 Thessalonians 5:18)?

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## Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. Is thankfulness an attitude or emotion you experience often, or do you find it necessary to have a designated holiday or special occasion to remind you to be thankful? Explain your answer.
2. What can you think of at this moment – without much effort – that makes you feel thankfulness, or for which you know you should be thankful?
3. Which of the six words prompts you the most to a renewed sense of thankfulness for aspects of your life, whether in your career, your family, or some other aspect of your personal life?

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4. As stated from the outset of this “Monday Manna,” thankfulness is not a topic we often hear discussed in the workplace. Why do you think that is? What, if anything, do you think should be done to change that? What could you do to introduce more thankfulness into your own working environment?

*NOTE: If you have a Bible and would like to read more about this subject, consider the following passages:*

**Psalm 50:14, 147:7; 2 Corinthians 4:15, 9:11; Ephesians 5:20; Colossians 2:7, 3:16-17**

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