

PREPARING OUR HEARTS

20 **Lent** 26

WEEK FOUR:  
GRATITUDE

*“Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.” Colossians 2:6–7*

Gratitude is one of the most powerful tools in the arsenal of the human heart and mind. This is by God’s design.

Scripture does more than simply suggest gratitude; the Word of God commands us to be grateful.

Ephesians 5:20 tells us to give thanks “always and for everything.” Philippians 4:6 instructs us to bring our requests to God “with thanksgiving.”

Psalm 107:1 reminds us of God's character, declaring, "Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good."

Over and over, through the command to be thankful, God reveals His heart. Gratitude aligns our thoughts and emotions with the reality of God's goodness.

We live in a world full of distraction and hurry. North Jersey is no stranger to busyness. Ask someone how they're doing and you'll often hear the same answer: "Busy." As the saying goes, if the enemy can't make you bad, he'll make you busy.

A culture of complaint produces bitterness, anger, and malice. It marks our lives and spills over into the lives of others.

Imagine holding a full glass. When you're bumped into, whatever is inside of it will spill out.

Paul reminds us that believers should be “abounding” in thanksgiving and overflowing with gratitude in such a way that when life bumps into us, gratitude and goodness will spill out.

In Christ, we can trade ingratitude for thanksgiving, bitterness for joy, and anger for peace. Through repentance and faith, our sins are forgiven, and the Holy Spirit dwells within us.

Is there lingering ingratitude in your heart over what God has chosen not to give you? Bring it to the cross. Ask God to help you see all that you have freely received through the gospel.

This week, take a few minutes each day to write down the blessings you’ve already been given so that, when you’re bumped this Lent season, you overflow with gratitude.