

Gratitude Gauge: The Advance to Plus-H

Lovingkindness expresses the combination of several divine attributes such as love and grace and associates them with forgiveness and mercy. Longsuffering adds to these the attributes of righteousness and justice. These two bring divine integrity into the picture.

The absolutes of righteous policy and certainty of sure justice are combined with the attributes of love and grace. This combination enables God to delay punishment and postpone judgment. Response to such demonstrations of divine essence is indicated by an attitude of gratitude.

Those who had no gratitude had a zero reading and were in status quo carnality. Such believers were still supplied with another day to live, they were provided with their necessities, and they were given the best leadership possible. But they were unhappy, miserable, and depressed people who were constantly under the goads of divine justice.

Feinberg, Charles L. Israel: At the Center of History & Revelation. Portland: 3d ed. Multnomah Press, 1980; pp. 182-83.

For an Example to Men

God in Israel chose to show all men His graciousness and longsuffering in dealing with sinful man. God, desiring to show His longsuffering even with us of His children today, gave us a diagram of His ways and methods in His transactions with Israel. If I want to see how patient God is with me in my own life, which is marred from time to time with sin and disobedience, I have only to study the pages of God's Word to note how longsuffering He was with Israel.

When sinful man became estranged from the presence of the holy God through his own sin and disobedience, God provided in the Levitical offerings an effective way of approach to Himself. It was because in the mind of God, the Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world, that He graciously accepted the Levitical offerings.

How patient God can be with punishment-deserving sinners is seen in the account of the wilderness wanderings. Sometimes it wears out our patience to read of these often-repeated disobediences, but they never proved God to be anything but of long patience and infinitely kind.

Making the Advance to a Reading of +H

There are three keywords which define the consistent increase of one's Gratitude Gauge readout. The first is "*consistency*." You must take advantage of the advantages made available to you in the Church Age.

All believers have equal privilege and equal opportunity but only the positive are able to convert advantage into advance. The Jews of the second generation advanced without the availability of the filling of the Holy Spirit or the divine process for inculcating infinite truth. We have these two power options and if we consistently utilize them we advance with gratitude.

The second keyword is "*deployment*." If you do not believe God's word as communicated or transfer it into the stream of consciousness then it will not be available for deployment to life and circumstances.

The problem-solving devices are designed to manage the exigencies of life on an infinite level. Utilization of them under pressure facilitates divine solutions into personal behavior patterns. You do your duty and God takes care of the details.

The third keyword is “*increase*.” As spiritual growth transpires, the reading on your Gratitude Gauge increases.

Increased readings on the gauge means a simultaneous increase in one's capacity for blessings, life, love, integrity. From all of these things emerge true happiness.

The reason the first-generation Jews were unhappy is that they first of all had no gratitude and secondly, they were looking for happiness in all the wrong places. What they demonstrated under testing is that they were intent on pursuing their own agenda at the expense of God's agenda.

Gratitude can only develop when the believer places the Word of God as his top priority in life. Priority One was expressed by the Lord in:

Deuteronomy 8:3: Man does not live only on bread but on the basis of every word that proceeds out from the mouth of God.

Our Lord demonstrated in the Incarnation that the Word was His top priority when “**He magnified God's Word above and beyond His own person.**” This provides for us a brief synopsis of the believer's duty before God:

- a. Magnify the Word above your own reputation. Psalm 138:2b
- b. Live your life on the basis of every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. (Deuteronomy 8:3b) [cp. Matthew 4:4]
- c. The result will be that you will express gratitude by giving thanks in the face of every exigency and by concluding that it is God's will. 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Failure to do these three things was the source of Paul's behavior problem in Romans 7. Fulfillment of these three things was the source of our Lord's happiness on the cross and this happiness is the problem-solving device which enabled Him to endure the cross.