

## Spirit of Entitlement

Rachael and I talk frequently about being Thankful and how we live in a world where so many are not. We never want to be like that. It seems like everywhere we look individuals feel like “something is owed” to them and the spirit of volunteerism is almost non-existent unless they get something for their efforts.

We now understand the prompting by the Lord to set aside the week of Thanksgiving to focus on "Giving Thanks" to the Lord our God for He is good. We are asking Him to break off any area in our lives where we have allowed “entitlement” to creep in. We want to be drenched in an attitude of gratitude.

Jesus did not call us to demand our rights. He seemed to teach that we should be willing to surrender our rights for the sake of the gospel. We believe the written Word of God is one of the “weapons of our warfare” (2 Corinthians 10:3–5) that will bring down the vain imaginations or things we may have embraced intentionally or unintentionally. That’s part of why we are devoted this week to Thankfulness with the emphasis on changing our wrongly embraced behaviors. After all, the opposite for being Thankful is feeling entitled.

Stop right now and ask God to identify any entitlement attitude’s in your life. This means anywhere you are ungrateful or pursuing your own agenda without thinking of others. “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves” (Philippians 2:3).

Can I be real? HA HA!!! Like I am anything else! The truth is, “God owes us nothing.” He is the center of all things and we are not. Life is not about us and what we want. It is about Him and what He wants. That’s it! His Kingdom come, His will be done. Entitlement is an attitude that puts a selfish demand on God’s generosity and creates conditions in our relationship with Him that are unhealthy.

*Entitlement is: “the fact of having a right to something” (New Oxford American Dictionary). The spirit of entitlement is so pervasive that the American Psychological Association (APA) now defines an entire generation as the Entitlement Generation: “the group born between 1979 and 1994 who believe they are owed certain rights and benefits without further justification.*

If we believe that we deserve something, or if we "had it coming," how can we be grateful for what we get? Entitlement is running rampant on the earth today. Entitlement leads people to believe they are owed something by others.

We are bombarded daily with advertising and with our government all saying we are “entitled” to things. This spirit of “entitlement” has literally been absorbed into virtually every fabric of

our society. We see this in individual demands or expectations for a certain standard of living even though they cannot afford it. Entitlement outweighs any sense of concern for others.

Entitlement begins in our thoughts. It is a mindset that begins to take root through the lack of thankfulness and selfish desires. There's something within human consciousness that causes people to feel entitled to all that is good—no strings attached. Entitlement is totally inward, completely self focused and reveals just how self-centered a person really is.

In Romans 1:21, Paul seemed to be describing our society, "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, **neither were thankful;** but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened" (NKJ).

These were believers in name only because the thankfulness towards God was missing. OUCH! This means they didn't honor Him or thank Him with results bringing hearts that were darkened.

A spirit (or attitude) of entitlement can only have power in our life when our eyes are on what we "want." If we don't stop the effects of the spirit of entitlement, it will wound and harden our hearts. The false concepts of entitlement that have spread through our society have ruined a lot of people. Breaking the entitlement spirit within us means being thankful for what we have, self-denial and self sacrifice.

We must adjust our focus to being like Jesus. We must focus on what we can do for others instead of what others can do for us. We must measure ourselves by the Word of God rather than measuring the Word of God by our wants or desires. We must cultivate an attitude of gratitude.

Beloved, we were created for the pleasure of our Lord (Revelation 4:11). Make a point to start each day thanking God for all that He has given you. Thank Him for a new day of life. Thank Him for His mercy and grace. Thank Him for your family. Thank Him for His promises in the Word of God.

Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart - (Don Moen)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KMTmZKotTYw>

Gina Cobb  
November 25, 2015