

Deuteronomy: Living as God's Covenant People
Gratitude
Deuteronomy 8 - 9

From the earliest moments of our lives, when we first begin the art of communication, we are taught (or at least should be taught) the names or nicknames of the people who love us, words that convey respect, and the concept of gratitude. It is one thing to develop a vocabulary and use of language that conveys love, respect, and gratitude. But words are just words, symbols that are supposed to point to something more meaningful and significant, something much more difficult to teach, the idea that love, respect, and gratitude are also matters of the heart.

1. Gratitude humbles us when God chastens us.

2. Gratitude motivates us when God blesses us.

3. Gratitude corrects us when God reminds us.

Grateful hearts remind us to put our trust in God, to place our confidence in the finished work of Christ and His cross. Grateful hearts remind us to live in the ongoing presence and power of the Spirit, knowing that anything that we accomplish of eternal significance, God accomplishes through us. Gratitude keeps the priority of the gospel of Jesus Christ in front of us, relying on Him in times of trial and times of prosperity, in times of blessing and in times of poverty, in times of humility and in times of joy. Gratitude trusts in the sovereignty and providence of God to bring us safely into the place He is preparing for those who believe in Christ Jesus our King.

Reflection

How do our responses to the tests of life reveal what is in our hearts? How easy is it for you to compartmentalize what you say with your mouth and what you believe in your heart? What do you think your life would be like right now if God had never tested you? How has God cared for you? How would you like Him to care for you? What is the purpose for God's discipline and how have you responded in the past to God's discipline on your life? What danger is there in forgetting the Giver and focusing only on the gifts? Are there gifts that you have taken for granted or felt entitled to?