

The grace of gratitude – for richer or poorer

Paul Mallard: Seminar 2

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

This seminar is the second in a series of three. You can watch the seminars on your own or with your church, small group, youth group or friends. The questions/reflections provided may help you discuss and work through how to apply what you've learnt to your own life.

WATCH THE VIDEO:

[Seminar 2:
tinyurl.com/5evm84wr](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5evm84wr)

FURTHER READING

To explore the theme of gratitude further, read one of the books mentioned in the seminar - 'Tortured for Christ' by Richard Wurmbbrand, 'Radical Gratitude' by Peter Maiden, 'The Grace of Gratitude' and 'Invest your future' by Paul Mallard.

SEMINAR OUTLINE

Challenging financial circumstances and economic prosperity can suffocate our gratitude and make us resentful. How do we avoid both dangers? Paul tells us that he had 'learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want' (Philippians 4:12). What was his secret. How can we share it?

QUESTIONS

1. In what ways can prosperity suffocate gratitude?
 2. 1 Timothy 6:17 says, 'Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.' How can we make sure we enjoy God's gifts but not put our hope in them?
 3. How does poverty, or even just having less than those around us, have the potential to damage our spiritual life (if we let it)?
 4. Why are godly relationships fundamental to our contentment?
 5. How can we discipline our mind to develop gratitude?
 6. In what way is generosity a defence against the pitfalls of poverty and prosperity?
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REFLECTION/PRAYER

- Instead of worrying about your troubles, follow Hezekiah's example and lay them out before the Lord (2 Kings 19:14). Speak to God about your concerns then leave them with him. Make a deliberate choice to trust God rather than worry.
- 'Here now is the man who did not make God his stronghold but trusted in his great wealth' (Psalm 52:7). What strongholds do you have? In whom or what do you find your security? Pray that more and more God would be your stronghold. Pray with King David: 'I love you, Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold' (Psalm 18:1-2).
- Rejoice because you have received the greatest gift of all – God himself. Circumstances may change but you will always have God and that makes you rich beyond all measure: 'For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich' (2 Corinthians 8:9).