PASTOR LAURIE IDAHOSA

Never Forget

Growing a Grateful Heart

NOV 1, 2026

NEVER FORGET: Growing a Grateful Heart

Psalm 103:2 (NLT) *Let all that I am praise the LORD; may I never forget the good things he does for me.*
Psalm 103:2 (ESV) *Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits . . .*

Series: NEVER FORGET: Growing a Grateful Heart (Week 1 of 4)
Gratitude starts with remembering. God told Israel to carry stones out of the Jordan so they would never forget what He had done. When we name God's goodness, set up reminders, and tell the story, our hearts stay thankful in every season.

Introduction - How many of you have ever walked into a room and completely forgotten why you went in there? You stand in the kitchen holding the refrigerator door open, and you have no idea what you came for. Some of us laugh about it. Some of us are a little worried about it! But all of us know what it is like to forget. Here is the truth. Forgetting where we put our keys is a small thing. Forgetting what God has done for us is a big thing. And it happens to all of us. God answers a prayer on Monday, and by Friday we are worrying again as if He had never come through.

Psalm 103:2 (NLT) *Let all that I am praise the LORD; may I never forget the good things he does for me.*
Joshua 4:1-7 (NLT) *When all the people had crossed the Jordan, the LORD said to Joshua, "Now choose twelve men, one from each tribe. Tell them, 'Take twelve stones from the very place where the priests are standing in the middle of the Jordan. Carry them out and pile them up at the place where you will camp tonight.'" So Joshua called together the twelve men he had chosen—one from each of the tribes of Israel. He told them, "Go into the middle of the Jordan, in front of the Ark of the LORD your God. Each of you must pick up one stone and carry it out on your shoulder—twelve stones in all, one for each of the twelve tribes of Israel. We will use these stones to build a memorial. In the future your children will ask you, 'What do these stones mean?' Then you can tell them, 'They remind us that the Jordan River stopped flowing when the Ark of the LORD's Covenant went across.' These stones will stand as a memorial among the people of Israel forever.*

1: Count Your Blessings by Name - Gratitude begins with noticing. You cannot thank God for what you never notice. That is why David preaches to his own soul in Psalm 103. He does not just say, "Thank You for everything." He makes a list.

Psalm 103:1-5 (ESV) *Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.*

Luke 17:15-16 (ESV) *Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan.*

Psalm 40:5 (NLT) *O LORD my God, you have performed many wonders for us. Your plans for us are too numerous to list. You have no equal. If I tried to recite all your wonderful deeds, I would never come to the end of them.*

Do this week: Slow down long enough to read the card. Once a day, at the same moment (when you wake up, at a meal, or at bedtime), say out loud, "Thank You, Lord, for ___", and fill in one specific thing. Not "thank You for everything," but "thank You that my granddaughter called," "thank You that the car started," "thank You that You forgave me when I lost my temper." Specific gratitude trains our eyes to see.

2: Set Up Your Memorial Stones - God did not just tell Israel to remember. He told them how to remember. He gave them something to look at.

Joshua 4:21-24 (NLT) *Then Joshua said to the Israelites, "In the future your children will ask, 'What do these stones mean? ' Then you can tell them, 'This is where the Israelites crossed the Jordan on dry ground.' For the LORD your God dried up the river right before your eyes, and he kept it dry until you were all across, just as he did at the Red Sea when he dried it up until we had all crossed over. He did this so all the nations of the earth might know that the LORD's hand is powerful, and so you might fear the LORD your God forever."*

The Hebrew word for "remember" is zakar. In the Bible, zakar is more than a thought that passes through your mind. It means to call something to mind in a way that changes what you do. When the Bible says "God remembered Noah"

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED © 2026 Dr. Gary V. Whetstone Jesus Experience TM
100 Wilton Boulevard, New Castle, DE 19720 +1 (302) 561-6800 www.JesusExperience.com

(Genesis 8:1, ESV), it does not mean God had forgotten him. It means God acted on his behalf. Biblical remembering always leads to action. The stones helped Israel remember, and remembering moved them to worship.

1 Samuel 7:12 (NLT) *Samuel then took a large stone and placed it between the towns of Mizpah and Jeshanah. He named it Ebenezer (which means "the stone of help"), for he said, "Up to this point the LORD has helped us!"*

Psalm 77:11 (NLT) *But then I recall all you have done, O LORD; I remember your wonderful deeds of long ago.*

Do this week: Pick one memorial stone. Choose one object that reminds you of a time God helped you (a photo, a card, a key, a bracelet, or even a small rock) and put it where you will see it every day: on the refrigerator, by the bed, or on the dashboard. Each time you see it this week, say, "Up to this point the LORD has helped me."

3: Watch Out for Forgetting in the Good Times - Here is something that may surprise you. The Bible warns us that the most dangerous time to forget God is not always the hard time. It is often the full time.

Deuteronomy 8:10-11 (NLT) *When you have eaten your fill, be sure to praise the LORD your God for the good land he has given you. But that is the time to be careful! Beware that in your plenty you do not forget the LORD your God and disobey his commands, regulations, and decrees that I am giving you today.*

Deuteronomy 8:17-18 (ESV) *Beware lest you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.' You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day.*

Luke 17:17-18 (NLT) *Jesus asked, "Didn't I heal ten men? Where are the other nine? Has no one returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?"*

Romans 1:21 (ESV) *For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.*

Do this week: Catch the good moment. This week, the moment something good happens (a bill is lower than you feared, a test comes back clear, a friend calls, the bus is on time), stop right there and say, "Thank You, Lord." Do not wait until later. Thank Him in the moment, before you have time to forget.

4: Tell Someone What He Has Done - The stones in Joshua 4 were not only for the people who crossed the river. They were for the children who would ask, "What do these stones mean?" Remembering was meant to be spoken out loud and passed on.

Mark 5:19 (NLT) *But Jesus said, "No, go home to your family, and tell them everything the Lord has done for you and how merciful he has been."*

Psalm 107:2 (ESV) *Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he has redeemed from trouble . . .*

Psalm 9:1 (NLT) *I will praise you, LORD, with all my heart; I will tell of all the marvelous things you have done.*

Psalm 145:4 (ESV) *One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts.*

Do this week: Tell one person one thing God has done for you. It can be a child, a grandchild, a coworker, a neighbor, or a friend on the phone. One or two sentences is enough: "Can I tell you something God did for me?" Young adults, ask one older saint this week, "Tell me about a time God came through for you."

<u>This Week, Try This</u>

- **Every day:** Say one "Thank You, Lord, for ___" out loud and name one specific thing God did. Pick a set moment: when you wake up, at a meal, or at bedtime.
- **Once this week:** Put one memorial stone where you will see it, and say, "Up to this point the LORD has helped me."
- **In the moment:** When something good happens, say "Thank You, Lord" right then.
- **If you like:** Tell one person one thing God has done for you.

Malachi 3:16 (ESV) *Then those who feared the LORD spoke with one another. The LORD paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared the LORD and esteemed his name.*

God keeps a book of remembrance. And notice how it got written: the people spoke, and the LORD heard. God does the writing. Our part is simply to say it. So this month, every one of us is going to practice one simple habit. Today you will receive a small card called "Thank You, Lord." There is nothing to fill out and nothing to study. Once a day, at a set moment, you say out loud, "Thank You, Lord, for ___". It takes about a minute. Each week there will be one small extra

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED © 2026 Dr. Gary V. Whetstone Jesus Experience TM
100 Wilton Boulevard, New Castle, DE 19720 +1 (302) 561-6800 www.JesusExperience.com

step that goes with that Sunday's message. And on November 29, Ebenezer Sunday, anyone who wants to can share one short thank-you.

Here is this week's step. It is called **One Thing He Has Done.** Israel picked up twelve stones so they would never forget. So every day this week, pick up one "stone" with your mouth. Once a day, out loud, thank God for one specific thing He has done: a time He healed, protected, provided, forgave, opened a door, or closed one. Not "thank You for everything," but one thing with a name on it. You can do it while the coffee is brewing, at the dinner table, or with the lights off at bedtime. If you like to write, jot it down, but you do not have to. Grandparents, say your thank-you where your grandchildren can hear it. You will be amazed at what it does in your home. This month, let's be a church that remembers. Let's count our blessings by name, set up our stones, watch out for forgetting in the good times, and tell the next generation what God has done. And let's never forget where He brought us from.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED © 2026 Dr. Gary V. Whetstone Jesus Experience TM
100 Wilton Boulevard, New Castle, DE 19720 +1 (302) 561-6800 www.JesusExperience.com