

D E V O T I O N A L

Hollywood Prayer Network

THANKFULNESS

Being thankful is one of the most beautiful qualities of a Christian and makes us stand out amongst our non-believing friends as they see us expressing a thankful attitude for all things in our life, for we have so much to be thankful for. This week we focus on being thankful to the Lord every day, so that we end the week overflowing with thankfulness, praise, gratitude and joy.

DAY 1

REJOICE, PRAY, BE THANKFUL ALWAYS

"THE FIRST THING I DO WHEN I START MY DAY IS, I GET DOWN ON MY HANDS AND KNEES AND GIVE THANKS TO GOD. WHENEVER I GO OUTSIDE OF MY HOUSE, THE FIRST THING I DO IS STOP AT THE CHURCH."

-MARK WAHLBERG

1 Thessalonians 5:16 - 5:18

New King James Version

16 Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing, 18 in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

D A Y 1

PRAY: Lord, I know that verse so well, but I ask that You give me deeper insight into it. I don't want to just read it again, but I want to experience it. Please show me how to always rejoice, to pray continually, and to give thanks in ALL circumstances, for I want to be in the center of Your will. And I want to experience You in a more intimate way. Fill me with thanks so that my prayers will also be worship! Thank You Lord.

REFLECT: This is a tougher verse to live out than we sometimes imagine. The Lord says to rejoice ALWAYS—not just sometimes. He tells us to pray CONTINUALLY—not just once or twice a day. And He tells us to give thanks in ALL circumstances—not just when things are going well! And then He says that doing these three things is His will for us. So, this is a command. How are you doing with this command? Don't feel guilty, but reflect on how you can be more joyful, more prayerful and more thankful every day of your life.

ACT: Commit to one week of prayer time with the Lord where you don't ask Him for anything. You just rejoice, praise Him and thank Him for everything in your life - for 7 days. Put off your needs, your requests and your questions until next week and just spend a week thanking Him. It could change your life forever!

DAY 2

OVERFLOWING WITH THANKFULNESS

"I WOULD MAINTAIN THAT THANKS ARE THE
HIGHEST FORM OF THOUGHT, AND THAT
GRATITUDE IS HAPPINESS DOUBLED BY
WONDER."

-G.K. CHESTERTON

Colossians 2:6 - 2:7

New King James Version

6 As you therefore have received Christ
Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, 7 rooted
and built up in Him and established in the
faith, as you have been taught,
abounding in it with thanksgiving.

D A Y 2

PRAY: Lord, I understand by this verse that just as I received You as my Savior, I am to be rooted in You so that You can build me up and strengthen me in my faith. And ultimately I will be overflowing with thankfulness. I want that! Would You do that for me today? I want to do deeper with You so that I fall more in love with You, get stronger in my faith, and am filled to the brim with thankfulness. Thank You and Amen!

REFLECT: Have you thought about the process of growing in your faith? Many times we think about becoming a Christian and then just being a Christian. But God teaches us that we have to continually be growing in our faith. How do you get to the point of being known as a thankful Christian? Maybe you need to be more rooted or strengthened in your faith. Maybe you have to go back and review what you've been taught about living the life of a Christian? Or maybe you just need to choose to be thankful all the time, instead of a complainer, a whiner or a worrier! What do you need to do?

D A Y 2

ACT: Start a THANKFUL LIST. Start writing down every little and big thing that you are thankful for: people, situations, conversations, events, nature, experiences, lessons learned, insights, revelations, joyful thoughts, etc. etc. I was challenged last year to make a list of 1,000 things I'm thankful for and I'm already at 463. It's fun and it has changed my outlook on life.

DAY 3

THANK YOU FOR THE PEOPLE IN MY LIFE

"IN EVERYONE'S LIFE, AT SOME TIME, OUR INNER FIRE GOES OUT. IT IS THEN BURST INTO FLAME BY AN ENCOUNTER WITH ANOTHER HUMAN BEING. WE SHOULD ALL BE THANKFUL FOR THOSE PEOPLE WHO REKINDLE THE INNER SPIRIT."

-ALBERT SCHWEITZER

2 Thessalonians 1:3

New King James Version

We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other

DAY 3

PRAY: Dear Father, I thank You so much for my family members, friends, co-workers, neighbors and all the people I come in contact with. I thank You that You have put such amazing people in my life and I want to always thank You for them. And I thank You that the love we all have for one another is growing. I never want to compare myself to others with jealousy in my heart, or wish them harm, so keep me thankful so that I never take one of my relationships for granted. I know that as I thank You for my loved ones, You are increasing our love for one another.

REFLECT: How many people do you have to whom you can turn for support, encouragement, advice, wisdom or laughter? Some times we go to different people for different needs, so have you reflected on your community of loved ones? As your faith grows, does your circle of loved ones grow as well? And is your circle growing deeper as it grows wider? And can you say that your love for one another is increasing? That should be happening as you practice THANKFULNESS as a priority in your life.

DAY 3

ACT: Why don't you encourage a friend or family member today to grow in their faith, to use their gifts to bring beauty into the world and to pursue Him with all of their body, mind and soul? And tell them that you are thanking the Lord that He created them to make a difference in this world.

DAY 4

BE THANKFUL AND WORSHIP

"LET US THANK GOD HEARTILY AS OFTEN AS WE PRAY THAT WE HAVE HIS SPIRIT IN US TO TEACH US TO PRAY. THANKSGIVING WILL DRAW OUR HEARTS OUT TO GOD AND KEEP US ENGAGED WITH HIM; IT WILL TAKE OUR ATTENTION FROM OURSELVES AND GIVE THE SPIRIT ROOM IN OUR HEARTS."

-ANDREW MURRAY

Hebrews 12:28

New King James Version

Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

DAY 4

PRAY: Jesus, I thank You that I have nothing to worry about in my life because I am receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken. Help me to remember that so I can be thankful every day of my life—regardless of my circumstances. I want to worship You with reverence and awe, despite how I feel or what I'm going through. I want to be filled up to overflowing with thankfulness as I walk down the bumpy road of life. Thank You for helping me to be that kind of person. I pray in Jesus name, Amen.

REFLECT: What does it mean to you when you read that God promises us we will receive a kingdom that cannot be shaken? Do you wonder if that will be in heaven or can we have that unshaken kingdom right here on earth? Either way it's an amazing and precious promise for which you can be thankful! Let those words sink deep into your heart and soul, so that you can worship God, with reverence and awe. How can you get to that place in your relationship with Him? What will it take to be thankful and worshipful instead of shaken?

DAY 4

ACT: Since we don't know exactly what receiving a kingdom that can't be shaken is really like, take a risk and do an act of thankfulness that is more heavenly than earthbound. Make a list of Hollywood entertainment professionals whom you like, and whose careers you follow, or better yet, those you don't like and perhaps condemn in your mind, and then start thanking the Lord for those people every day. As you continue to thank Him for them and not envy, idolize or hate them, you will start getting a kingdom perspective on them. Notice how your heart changes as you do this for a month. Then keep adding to your list and your thanks!

DAY 5

SING TO THE LORD WITH PRAISE

"THE THANKFUL HEART SEES THE BEST PART
OF EVERY SITUATION. IT SEES PROBLEMS AND
WEAKNESSES AS OPPORTUNITIES, STRUGGLES
AS REFINING TOOLS, AND SINNERS AS
SAINTS IN PROGRESS."

-FRANCIS FRANGIPANE

New King James Version

Psalms 147:7

Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving;
Sing praises on the harp to our God

Psalms 95:2

Let us come before His presence with
thanksgiving;
Let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms.

DAY 5

PRAY: Heavenly Father, I thank You SO MUCH for the gift of music. I thank You that You find pleasure in us singing songs of praise and thanksgiving. Help me to praise You more through music, knowing that it pleases You. And, thank You Lord, for the Christian musical artists that You created as prophets to the world. I pray that these artists are growing in their faith in Jesus Christ, and that their love for Him, for one another, and for those around them, is increasing. Thank You that I have access to worship songs, hymns, Christian music, and all types of music to nurture my soul. Thank You for the people who are using the musical gifts You've given them to offer beautiful music to people like me. Thank You God! Selah!

REFLECT: What part does music play in your life as a Christian? Do you find joy in listening to music? If you play an instrument or sing, does it make you feel joy, or does it lead you closer to the Lord? Do you find that you be me more thankful when you have music in your life? Isn't it amazing that the Lord touches our hearts through music, to add thanksgiving to our lives. If you love music, remember to thank the Lord for it and think of it as a form of worship.

DAY 5

ACT: Choose a song that touches your heart and listen to it or sing it now. Can you thank the Lord for that song, as you sing or listen? Can you embrace the music as God speaking to your soul through the sounds? Practice using music as a spiritual language to draw you closer to the Lord, for He tells us to "sing to the Lord with grateful praise!"

DAY 6

HIS LOVE ENDURES FOREVER!

"CAREFUL FOR NOTHING, PRAYERFUL FOR
EVERYTHING, THANKFUL FOR ANYTHING."

-D.L.MOODY

"DO NOT SAY, 'BUT IT IS HYPOCRITICAL TO
THANK GOD WITH MY TONGUE WHEN I
DON'T FEEL THANKFUL IN MY HEART.
THANKSGIVING WITH THE MOUTH STIRS UP
THANKFULNESS IN THE HEART."

-JOHN PIPER

1 Chronicles 16:34

New King James Version

Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is
good! For His mercy endures forever.

DAY 6

PRAY: Dear Jesus, can You help me to truly believe that You are good and that Your love endures forever?! I thank You right now for my life and for Your love for me. Continue to remind me of Your unending goodness and unconditional love for me. Fill me up Lord, and I thank You for everything You're doing in me and through me, every day. Amen and Amen.

REFLECT: How often do you stop and just thank the Lord for something? How often do you think about how GOOD He is? And have you fully grasped that He loves you forever, regardless of who you are, what you do, or what you think or say? What would it take for you to remember to thank Him EVERY DAY for His amazing love for you?

ACT: Right now: Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good. Give thanks to the Lord for His love endures forever. Give thanks to the Lord because He is listening to you this very moment. Give thanks to the Lord for____. Spend time thanking the Lord!

DAY 7

GIVE THANKS AND PRAISE HIS NAME

"WHEN I STARTED COUNTING MY BLESSINGS,
MY WHOLE LIFE TURNED AROUND."

-WILLIE NELSON

"OF ALL THE CHARACTERISTICS NEEDED FOR
BOTH A HAPPY AND MORALLY DECENT LIFE,
NONE SURPASSES GRATITUDE. GRATEFUL
PEOPLE ARE HAPPIER, AND GRATEFUL PEOPLE
ARE MORE MORALLY DECENT."

-DENNIS PRAGER

Psalms 100:4

New King James Version

Enter into His gates with thanksgiving,
And into His courts with praise.
Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.

DAY 7

PRAY: Thank You Lord that as I enter Your gates by coming to You now in prayer, and walk into Your courts with praise, that You are pleased. I want to keep thanking You and praising Your name always, so I can get closer to You, please You, and be a more thankful, joyful person to others in my life. Let my thanks and praise be contagious to the people around me, and let me focus on You with thanks for giving me life with You.

REFLECT: "Enter His gates" could mean many things, but one meaning may be entering into each of your prayer times, entering into the holy place where you have quiet times, prayer, worship, or meditation. As you enter His gates, do you do it with thanksgiving and praise? What do you need to do to start each prayer time with thanks and praise? What an amazing goal that would be to reach.

D A Y 7

ACT: Congratulations! You have spent a whole week thanking God, praising Him and being thankful toward others as well. If it hasn't changed your life yet, then keep doing it. Skip a week of devotions and do this one again next week in order to alter your heart and soul to be more thankful. What a beautiful world it would be if we all entered His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise. Don't ever give up working at being a person who is known for being thankful, appreciative, grateful and full of praise!