



## The Practice of Gratitude

*"Value the least gifts no less than the greatest, and simple graces as especial favors. If you remember the dignity of the Giver, no gift will seem small or mean, for nothing can be valueless that is given by the most high God." - Thomas à Kempis 14th Century Priest, Monk, and Theologian.*

### 1. Gratitude is **CULTIVATED**.

**1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NRSV)** *Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*

**Psalms 107:1 (NLT)** *Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever.*

**Hebrews 13:16 (MSG)** *Make sure you don't take things for granted and go slack in working for the common good; share what you have with others. God takes particular pleasure in acts of worship—a different kind of "sacrifice"—that take place in kitchen and workplace and on the streets.*

### 2. Gratitude changes our perspective from **WHAT WE LACK** to **WHAT WE HAVE**.

**Matthew 14:17-20 (NIV)** *"We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish," they answered. 18 "Bring them here to me," he said. 19 And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. 20 They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.*

### 3. Gratitude is the catalyst for **COMPASSION** and **JUSTICE**.

**Deuteronomy 24: 19-22 (NIV)** *When you are harvesting in your field and you overlook a sheaf, do not go back to get it. Leave it for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow, so that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. 20 When you beat the olives from your trees, do not go over the branches a second time. Leave what remains for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow. 21 When you*

*harvest the grapes in your vineyard, do not go over the vines again. Leave what remains for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow. 22 Remember that you were slaves in Egypt. That is why I command you to do this.*

**2 Corinthians 9:10-12 (NIV)** *Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. 11 You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. 12 This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.*

**Matthew 10:42 (MSG)** *This is a large work I've called you into, but don't be overwhelmed by it. It's best to start small. Give a cool cup of water to someone who is thirsty, for instance. The smallest act of giving or receiving makes you a true apprentice. You won't lose out on a thing.*

#### Additional Notes...

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#### scriptures that relate

Monday: Psalm 100                      Wednesday: Psalm 136                      Friday: Luke 17:11-18  
Tuesday: Mark 8:1-10                      Thursday: Lamentations 3:1-30                      Saturday: Philippians 4:12-13

#### small groups—talk it over

1. What was the last thing you were really grateful for? How do you feel about it now?
2. How has grace been given to you? Who needs some grace from you?
3. When you feel at the bottom of the food chain and dead last in terms of priority, how do you move toward gratitude?
4. How has someone who lives out of gratefulness affected your own vision of what matters in life? How has someone who lives out of bitterness affected it?
5. When you look at your life now, what are you grateful for? How can that be used to help others around you?

#### pastor brian's prayer requests

**Monday:** Pray for our Nazarene Church missionaries in over 150 countries all over the world.

**Tuesday:** Pray for Pastor Lesley and our Children's Dept. that kids would make a decision for Christ.

**Wednesday:** Pray for those that are hurting mentally or physically and need a touch from God.

**Thursday:** Pray for Pastor Jamie as he leads our teenagers toward light and not darkness.

**Friday:** Pray for Pastor Nate and Nikki as church music is vital in our worship experience.

**Saturday:** Pray for our weekend service that God would move us closer to Him.