

ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

Day Four: Gratitude Strengthens Relationships

Scripture: *“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.”* — 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Devotional Thought:

Gratitude is not just a vertical response to God—it’s a horizontal practice toward others. When you take time to thank the people God has placed in your life, you’re not only encouraging them, but you’re also strengthening the bond between you.

Too often, we notice what people *don’t do* for us rather than what they *do*. Complaints come naturally; gratitude takes intention. But when gratitude becomes our default, relationships thrive. It’s amazing how a simple “thank you” can disarm tension, soften hearts, and open doors for healing.

Expressing gratitude isn’t just about good manners—it’s about reflecting the heart of Christ. Jesus noticed people. He acknowledged acts of faith. He spoke words that lifted others up. If we want to follow Him, gratitude toward others is not optional—it’s essential.

Life Illustration:

Think about relationships like houseplants. If you never water them, they’ll wither, no matter how beautiful they started out. Gratitude is like water—it nourishes relationships, helping them grow. A spouse who feels appreciated will love more deeply. A child who hears “I’m proud of you” will grow in confidence. A friend who knows they’re valued will stay close through life’s storms.

I once heard a story of a teacher who asked her students to write down something kind about each of their classmates. The teacher collected the notes, made lists for each student, and handed them out. Years later, one of those students passed away, and at the funeral, his parents pulled out that very list. He had kept it in his wallet all his life. Gratitude expressed can leave a lifelong imprint.

It's not enough to feel gratitude—we must express it. Gratitude unspoken can never strengthen someone else. Sometimes we assume people know we appreciate them, but unspoken gratitude is like a wrapped gift never given.

Scripture calls us to *“encourage one another and build each other up.”* Gratitude is one of the simplest yet most powerful ways to do that. Whether through words, notes, actions, or prayers, gratitude sows encouragement into the soil of our relationships—and the harvest is joy, unity, and love.

Reflection Questions:

- Who in your life has been a blessing that you haven't thanked recently?
- What specific words of gratitude could you offer them today?
- How might consistently expressing thanks change the atmosphere in your home, workplace, or friendships?

Prayer:

God, thank You for the people You've placed in my life—family, friends, coworkers, and even those who challenge me. Forgive me for the times I've taken them for granted. Help me to see them through Your eyes and to express gratitude often. Use my words to encourage and strengthen others so that my relationships reflect the love of Christ. In Jesus Name We Pray, Amen.