

## Priorities of Faith

### DAY 8 — PRACTICING AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

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“Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe.” (Heb. 12:28, NASB95)

#### **An Affirmative Mindset**

There is a mindset that matters significantly to God. In the Bible, we are repeatedly encouraged to practice this particular behavior because it is pleasing to God and a blessing to us. This attitude is gratitude. The book of Hebrews says, “Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe” (Heb. 12:28, NASB). Gratitude pleases God and positively impacts our own lives because it helps us focus on what is positive. Like a muscle, it strengthens when you exercise it purposefully by acknowledging your blessings.

God invites His children to be people of gratitude. In 1 Thess. 5:18 (NASB), the apostle Paul writes, “In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.” Giving thanks means remembering that someone has done something good for us and expressing that gratitude in thoughtful words. Developing an attitude of gratitude opens our eyes to beautiful details in nature and in other people. Gratitude allows us to be thankful for simple blessings without demanding perfection. This is important because, on this side of eternity, life will never run entirely smoothly. But life doesn’t have to be perfect to be enjoyed! Beauty meets and greets us in many ways. The fragrant smell of a flower, the grandeur of the starry sky on a clear night, the affectionate twinkle in a friend’s eyes—each reminds us of the beauty God has prepared for those who love Him.

#### **A Shift of Our Attention**

By practicing gratitude, we shift our attention from the imaginary things we don’t have to the real blessings we do enjoy. Gratitude grows out of an awareness of God’s generosity and involves a curiosity to explore the specific ways He reveals His love to us. Such gratitude widens the horizon of life and increases our capacity to experience pleasure and satisfaction.

Recent studies show that gratitude not only improves the well-being of the giver and the recipient but may also be good for those who witness it. Watching an act of gratitude between two people can cause observers to feel more warmth and affinity toward them both, according to a recent *New York Times* article.\* Why not practice what God has called us to do: developing an attitude of gratitude that will change our encounters with the people around us for the better and make the world a bit more pleasant. Thank God for the gift of gratitude.

Let’s pray together.

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\*Christina Caron, “Gratitude Really is Good for You,” *New York Times*, June 8, 2023.