

Do you practice the attitude of Gratitude?

Gratitude has helped me in so many ways on this journey we call life. I guess I'm that glass half-full kind of person, not a glass half-empty.

Gratitude not only helps us realize the good in our lives and our world, but also helps us acknowledge that those good gifts come from outside of ourselves. I am so very thankful for all that our good God has gifted us with.

How can we nourish an attitude of Gratitude in our lives?

1. Gratitude is a choice. The Bible encourages us to "*Give thanks in everything*" (1 Thessalonians 5:18). Get that? Everything ... from the moment I open up my eyes in the morning: for the car ahead of me that cuts me off on I-70, for the customer who is difficult and demanding, for that person who is stepping on my last nerve, for the beauty of the sunrise, for the trill of a songbird, for a beautiful Colorado sunset, for the hug of little arms around my neck, for an unexpected letter from a friend, for a loved one's encouraging words, and for precious time spent reading the words of my God and praising Him! I choose to respond with Gratitude. When I choose to focus on the positive, the negative melts away. One of my favorite inspirational poems is called "Don't You Quit!" Part of it goes like this:

*Success is failure turned inside out-
The silver tint in the clouds of doubt,
And you never can tell how close you are,
It might be near when it seems afar;
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit -
It's when things seem worst that you must not quit.*

Give thanks in everything!

So when I feel ungrateful, disillusioned and frustrated, I pray for strength to turn that around and focus on God's goodness in my life. Don't quit, but instead choose Gratitude! "*I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.*"

Philippians 4:13

2. Gratitude evokes a response. It's hard to be quiet when you're happy about something--just watch a two-year-old! As God's children, we need to let Him know when we are happy and thank Him for His blessings in our life! "Count your blessings, name them one by one; Count your blessings, see what God has done!"

"Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Ephesians 5:19-20

My father-in-law was one of the most grateful and joyful men I have ever known. His Gratitude for what God meant to him spilled over to all around him. He was a joy to be around. There was a bounce in his step and a song on his lips! When we are truly grateful, others know it! Thank God for the people He has placed in your life, the beauty around you, your friends and loved ones, the home He has given you, the groceries in your fridge, the vehicle you drive and the very breath you breathe! Our ladies group has just embarked on something called "The Joy Dare" where we articulate three things we are thankful for every day, simple everyday things that bring us joy. Name the things you are grateful for! Tell God "Thank You!" Keep a Gratitude Journal, join our Joy Dare Group, focus on what you are grateful for! "*I will give thanks to you, Lord, with all my heart, I will tell all of your wonderful deeds.*" Psalm 9:1

3. Gratitude is reciprocal. Reciprocity is basically the exchanging of value with others for mutual benefit. When I express Gratitude to others, it evokes a similar response and a cycle develops. Corporate worship promotes that cycle of thanksgiving and praise as we join in worshipping God together. How wonderful it must be for God to hear the gratitude of His children! Gratitude is affection we give to God in response to His gracious gift to us. Our gratitude is directed towards the Giver. *“The one who offers gratitude/thanksgiving as his sacrifice, glorifies me.”* Psalm 50:23 God loves blessing our sacrifice of praise as we worship Him!

So, focus on your attitude of Gratitude. Choose Gratitude daily, express your Gratitude to God by thanking Him for those everyday normal things that bring you joy, let your gratitude spill out to those around you as you express your thanks to and for them, join together in corporate worship as you express your Gratitude and thanksgiving to God for what He is doing in your life. *“Come, glorify the Lord with me, let us exalt His name together!”* Psalm 34:3

Choose Gratitude!

- 1) Take a moment now to focus your attitude on Gratitude.
- 2) Thank God now for the everyday normal things that bring you joy.
- 3) Is there a person you are feeling grateful to? Consider sending that person a text or writing that person a note right now to let them know.