

## ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE!

**-Everyone take a moment and think about the past five to ten years. What are you most grateful for during that period? (...)**

**-Now, let's think about the last year, what are you most grateful for during that period of time? (...)**

**-What about the past week? (...)**

**-What about today? (...)**

**-We are going to take a moment here and do a fun little exercise together. I want everyone to think of something that they are thankful for that begins with each of the following letters. Let's begin:**

**T**— (i.e. Trinity, time, trees, tenderness, technology, touch, teachers, trust, talent)  
**H**— (Happiness, hearts, heaven, humor, hugs, health, hospitals, hope, help, hands)  
**A**— (Almighty God, Angels, abilities, apples, acceptance, adoration, affection, arms)  
**N**— (Neatness, neck, noise and noiselessness, nativity, nighttime, nachos and cheese)  
**K**— (Kindness, kids, kittens, knees, kitchens, knowledge, kites, kebobs, kinship)  
**F**— (Family, friends, fellowship, food, fun, flowers, feet, fingers, freedom, forgiveness)  
**U**— (Understanding, unity, umbrellas, universe, ukuleles, utensils, unchanging God)  
**L**— (Lord, love, life, legs, lights, laughter, liberty, longevity, loyalty, leisure, liberty)  
**N**— (Nurse, newborn, nurture, nature, neighbor, nice, novels, noon, nests, nap, nutrition)  
**E**— (Eternal life, energy, encouragement, education, electricity, enjoyment, eyes)  
**S**— (Salvation, Savior, smiles, skin, sweets, surprises, sports, shoes, stars)  
**S**— (Supporters, sunshine, supper, strength, souls, sisters, sight, senses, seasons)

**-Does anyone know what we spelled out? (Thankfulness)**

**-After going through this exercise, does the atmosphere seem a little more encouraging and upbeat? (...)**

**-Why do you think so? (That is because the spirit of thankfulness can penetrate the deepest and darkest recesses of our hearts. Remembering the things that God has given us, no matter how great or small, can help remind us of how much He loves and cares for us. Thankfulness can also remind us of His faithfulness and provision in the past when we may be struggling in a dark place in the present.)**

**-Thankfulness reminds us of God's goodness. In His Word, there is a verse that talks about this. Let's read it together, it's #1 on our Verse Sheet: (I Chronicles 16:34 "O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever.")**

**-What does the first part of this verse tell us to do? (Give thanks to the Lord.)**

**-For what reason, according to the second sentence? (For He is good.)**

**-Why is He good, according to the last part of this verse? (His mercy endureth forever.)**

**-Does anyone know what mercy is?** (Compassionate treatment, especially for those under one's power. A disposition to be kind.)

**-What is the greatest gift of mercy that God bestowed on us?** (Jesus, His Son)

**-And how long does that gift of love and mercy last?** (Forever!)

**-Now, some of you may be thinking, I know all of this but I am really struggling right now with what I am going through and I am having a hard time seeing God's mercy and looking for things to be thankful for.**

**-But, it isn't always what we see in front of us that should dictate whether we should be thankful or not, but when we look behind us and see God's faithfulness and mercy to us in the past, that should remind us to be thankful for what He has done, and give us the hope of what He will do for us in the present and future.**

**-Everyday God shines His mercy on us in some way or another, and if we focus on that instead of our situation, then our days would be more enjoyable to live. Our countenance would be healthier.**

**-There is a scripture verse that talks about this. It is written in Psalm 42 by an unknown author. This author found himself exiled from Israel, living in another land and away from the worship festivals and fellowship of God's people. Enemies were taunting him in his low estate by saying, "Where is your God?" (Ps. 42:3,10). They were plunging his soul into deep depression, but he didn't stay there as we will see in our next verse. He grabbed himself by the shoulders, looked at his situation, confronted his soul, and sought God with renewed intensity. He looked to the One Who was His Hope and Deliverer.**

**-Let's read it together, verse #2 on our Verse Sheet:** (Psalm 42:11 "Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; For I shall *yet praise Him, The help of my countenance* and my God.")

**-According to this verse, Who is our *hope* in times of trouble?** (God)

**-And while we are hoping, what should we also be doing?** (Praising God)

**-And when we praise Him, what does He help us with?** (Our countenance or literally the contents of our body and the appearance of our face/facial expressions.)

**-Have you ever been with a person that complains about everything? (...)**

**-What is their countenance or outer appearance like? (...)**

**-Are they pleasant to be with? (...)**

**-Are they showing a thankful heart for what God has done in the past or only complaining about what they think He should be doing right now? (...)**

**-Are they showing faith and hope in what He can do? (...)**

**-We need to try and remember that whatever we, or someone we know is facing, we must turn our hope to God and trust Him, while praising Him and thanking Him during the storms. As we do this, He will lift our countenance and be our Help and Hope during this time.**

**-I want us to read our next verse together which shows us why we can have faith and hope in God even in the midst of the struggles. Let's read it together from our Verse Sheet, #3: (NKJV Ephesians 3:20-21 "Now to Him *Who is able to do***

*exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think*, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen!)

**-According to this verse, what is He able to do?** (Exceedingly abundantly more than we could even ask for or think of!)

**-Are you willing to believe this?** (...)

**-Are you willing to take a step of faith and believe He is already working in your best interest to do exceedingly more than you are asking?** (...)

**-If He says it in His Word, we must believe it.**

**-But, don't stop there, what does that second part say?** (According to the power that works in us.)

**-What is that power that works in us?** (His Holy Spirit)

**-Who gave us that Spirit?** (God, when we came to put our faith in Him)

**-2 Corinthians 1:21-23 says: "Now it is God Who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set His seal of ownership on us, and put His Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come." (NIV)**

**-Just knowing the presence and power of the Holy Spirit is in us should make us thankful!**

**-There was a pastor (Tim Blevins) that once said: "Thankfulness floods your spirit with the presence of God. It is more than a happy thought, it is based on knowing Jesus Christ set us free and He is our Rock. He is the only One we truly can depend on, the One Who stands firm for us and with us and gives us strength."**

**-What do you think when he said that "He is the only One we truly can depend on?"** (...)

**-Can you remember a time He has stood firm for you and with you in a tough situation when no one else could?** (...)

**-Can you remember feeling His presence as you walked through that situation?**(...)

**-He based this on Psalm 18:2 which is #4 on our Verse Sheet. Let's read it together:** (Psalm 18:2 "The LORD is my Rock, my Fortress and my Deliverer; my God is my Rock, in whom I take refuge, my Shield and the Horn of my Salvation, my Stronghold.")

**-According to this verse, who is God?** (Our Rock, our Fortress, our Deliverer, our Refuge, our Shield, our Salvation, our Stronghold!)

**-Do you want to live like this is true in your own life?** (...)

**-If we truly believed this, would our own countenance be down or would there be a sense of hope and peace?** (...)

**-What if we woke up in the morning and the first thing we say is "Thank-you Lord, for being my Rock! That no matter what happens, Thank-you for being my Fortress and Deliverer. Thank-you that I can take refuge in You and You will be my stronghold today!" Do you think our countenance and attitude will change?** (...)

**-Did you know that Satan competes for our thoughts the second we wake up but if we start the day thanking God for everything He has done then he can't compete with that?**

**-Let's read our final verse together that encourages us in this:** (Psalm 95:2 "Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms.")

**-According to this verse, what should we be doing when we enter His presence, hopefully the moment we wake up?** (Thank Him!)

**-What is the second thing it tells us we should do?** (Make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms.)

**-Does anyone know what the word "psalms" means?** (Songs of praise, a sacred song or hymn or a song that just praises God!) (Webster's 1828 dictionary)

**-What are some songs of praise you can offer up to Him first thing in the morning?**  
(...)

**-Thankfulness is an attitude not based on our circumstances but because of who God is in the midst of our circumstances!**

**-A thankful attitude can have an incredible impact on our lives.**

**-Life is 10 percent what happens to us and 90 percent how we respond.**

**-A thankful attitude empowers us with the presence of God, reminding us of Who He is and what He is capable of doing for us, through us and in us! Give Him your thankful heart today and everyday!**

## ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE VERSE SHEET

- 1. I Chronicles 16:34 “O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever.”**
- 2. Psalm 42:11 “Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; For I shall *yet praise Him, The help of my countenance* and my God.”**
- 3. Ephesians 3:20-21 “Now to Him *Who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think*, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen!”**
- 4. Psalm 18:2 “The LORD is my Rock, my Fortress and my Deliverer; my God is my Rock, in whom I take refuge, my Shield and the horn of my Salvation, my Stronghold.”**
- 5. Psalm 95:2 “Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms.”**