

Gratitude

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I am truly grateful for the opportunity to begin this blog as the Director of Compassionate Christian Counseling. Eleven years ago there were a series of prayerful conversations with my Lord Jesus and these conversations expressed my heart desire to reach folks who were hurting and wounded. This desire also included a commitment to offer sound clinical counseling for help with the despairing and the despondent. The combination of those two passions in my life seemed to be the perfect solution. My training certainly could facilitate diagnosis, treatment plan, and give goals for healing. My personality would accommodate an experience for those hurting to know safety, trust, and true compassion. However, there remained those cases that even proper diagnosis, sound therapeutic goals, and sincere compassion/empathy did not bring relief to the abyss of pain that the person was feeling. Their lifeless eyes could barely maintain eye contact and they desperately needed the presence of the Lord Jesus to infuse the spark and hope for the future. Now my gratefulness extends to (?) contractors who all profess the Lord Jesus as their personal savior and possess exemplary clinical skills with licensure in the State of Michigan. There have been hundreds of clients that have been offered that healing hand of compassion in just this past year.

Can I share with you some thoughts on gratefulness that could be used for your own life and also in the pursuit of more joy and happiness? These thoughts come from one of my favorite books which are entitled, "The 4:8 Principle" by Tommy Newberry.

The NATURE OF GRATITUDE

* Gratitude is a feeling. It is a sense of joy and appreciation in response to receiving a gift, whether that is a concrete object or an abstract gesture.

* Gratitude is a capacity. It is the learned skill of uncovering and creating meaning and value in everyday situations and relationships.

* Gratitude is a choice. It is a conscious and deliberate decision to focus on life's blessings rather than life's shortcomings. Life will always have shortcomings, and it will always have virtues. When you focus on your blessings, your life feels abundant. When you focus on what's missing, life feels incomplete. As you know by now, where you point the spotlight is purely a matter of choice.

* Gratitude can be exceptional. This is expressing thanks for even the smallest things. I Thessalonians 5:18, "Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

Here are 12 ways to express your gratitude:

1. At night, count your blessings silently as you drift off to sleep.
2. Count your blessings as you lie in bed in the morning after the alarm clock goes off.
3. Before grace at mealtime, discuss specific things you are grateful for as a family.

4. Leave mini notes around the house to let your family know you notice their efforts.
5. Leave quick thank you notes around the office to ensure that coworkers know you notice their efforts.
6. Ask God for a greater sense of awe and appreciation.
7. Ask the important people in your life what makes them feel appreciated.
8. Give yourself a special treat to express appreciation that you are unique and irreplaceable.
9. Praise God for the aspects of your life that are working well right now.
10. Carve out a little time each week to review the positive things that happened in the previous week.
11. Maintain a log of goals accomplished and prayers answered.
12. Write a formal letter of thanks to a significant positive influence in your life today.

I am also asking that #12 be also a specific challenge today and to help cement this challenge in your mind, I would like to direct you to the following website Soulpancake.com and please view, "The Science of Happiness". Be prepared that you might have a tear and also be ready to tangibly express your heart of gratitude to someone you love.....

Thank you Jesus for the person that is reading this blog and their commitment to gratitude as well. I pray that you will allow them to know that they are precious to you and worthy beyond measure in your eyes. May you be a real comfort and active presence in their life today and always. May their eyes always seek you and know that is where their comfort will lie and true joy for all of their deepest longings. Hold them tight Lord Jesus.