

PRACTICING GRATITUDE

Philippians 4:8-9

The Bible invites us over and over again to “give thanks.” It seems so simple, and yet we too often take things for granted or find ourselves focusing on all that is wrong in the world or our lives. Paul writes to the church in Philippi from prison, where it would have been easy to focus on how bad things were or how bleak the future appeared. Instead, he fills his letter with thanksgiving, and tells those who will hear the letter to focus on what is good and right in the world. He encourages the church to practice gratitude.

Monday: Read Philippians 4:4.

What do you think it means to “rejoice in the Lord always” (NIV)?

Tuesday: Read Philippians 4:5-7.

How can the practice of rejoicing and giving thanks help you reframe how you react to the world around you?

Wednesday: Read Philippians 4:8-9.

What in your life is noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, or praiseworthy?

Thursday: Read Philippians 4:10-13.

What is Paul’s secret to being content in life?

Friday: Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.

In what ways do you think rejoicing and giving thanks is God’s will for all of us?

Saturday: Read Colossians 3:12-17

How can being thankful help you to “put on love” (NIV)?

SUMMARY

Today, study after study has shown that practicing gratitude improves mood, focus, sleep, and patience; increases self-esteem; and reduces stress and the risk of disease while increasing immunity. As we start a new year, perhaps we should begin with the practice of gratitude.

Practicing gratitude transforms not just our attitude, but our witness.