

Make Thankfulness a Habit

The season for gratitude is upon us. In reality, gratitude has no season. We are to be grateful for everything... for every day, every hour, every minute, and every second. For all things, big or small, good or bad, we are to say “amen”. When I think on gratitude, I am always reminded of the words of the theologian and philosopher, Meister Eckhart: “If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is thank you, it will be enough.”

There will always be people who have more than you have. There will always be people who have less than you. The key is to be thankful for what you have and where you are in life. When we start to compare ourselves to others, we start to feel inadequate.

Just because someone is blessed with material possessions doesn't mean that person is happy. All the money in the world isn't worth anything if you're in poor health, alone, unhappy, and have no one with whom to share. My mother exemplified gratitude in its humblest and simplest form, and taught me the true spirit of gratitude.

When my oldest brother passed away he left my mother a modest sum of money. We asked her what she was going to spend it on. Her reply: “I want for nothing. I have everything that I want or need. My children are all grown, I have a decent house to live in, and I am in good health for an eighty-seven-year-old. As long as I have family, friends, and faith, I am grateful.” My mother's words reminded me to take a moment each day (not just during the giving season) to be grateful for good health, a sound body and mind, for family and friends, and for my daily bread – to not bemoan what I don't have, but to be grateful for the things I do have.

Make thankfulness a daily habit. Not only are you to thank God, but, make it a habit to thank people. Thank them for little things, even when they don't expect it. And, for whatever comes your way, just say, “Amen”; and look for and embrace the lesson.

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