

Formative Practice Guide: Give Thanks

Read Psalm 100:4

The practice of giving thanks can serve as a reflection on who God is, what God has created, and the people God has put in your life. Making this a habit will strengthen your communion with God and produce a life of gratitude.

Spiritual Exercises

Plan time in your upcoming schedule to include the following exercises in your routine.

Commit to recording what you're thankful for on a regular basis (maybe daily). You can create a list, write a short journal entry, take a photo, record a one-second video, or find another creative way to remember what you are thankful for in your life. Schedule consistent times to look back over the records you are keeping and talk to God about these things.

Gratitude is an internal awareness of all that you have to be thankful for. But gratitude should not remain internal. Give thanks to God by finding at least two other people who you are thankful for, and tell them how God has blessed you through them. You can even do it by writing them a letter, or using another creative method. If they're comfortable with it, spend some time praying and thanking God together.

Guided Reflection

Reflect on these concepts throughout your day. Feel free to also set aside some distraction-free time for more intentional reflection.

Have there been days when it was difficult to give thanks? Have there been days where it was easier to give thanks? What does it look like to be thankful in the midst of difficult circumstances? Does this practice feel genuine or forced? Why? Do you notice any themes in the types things you are thankful for?

Share these things with members of your community group, close friends, family, and, most importantly, with God, who is with you.

Connecting the Practices

We also give thanks through the practices of praying, worshipping, and rejoicing. In doing so, we train ourselves to recognize and appreciate God's provision over things we desire. May a thankful heart saturate your communion with God.