

Family Togetherness Week of Prayer
September 3 - 9, 2023

2023 Resource Book

KEYS TO HEALTHY MINDS

Flourishing Families

Adventist Family Ministries

MONDAY

CHOOSE

GRATITUDE

Key Verse

In everything give thanks. 1 Thess 5:18 NKJV

Write the verse on a sheet of white paper. Decorate the page with words or pictures to show what you are thankful for this week.

Exploring Gratitude

Did you know that saying 'Thank you!' is good for you? It helps you to flourish and feel happy! Your brain can't be anxious and thankful at the same time, so gratitude gives your brain a rest from being worried.

Did you know that when you thank someone else, it makes you feel happy, as well as the person you thank? When you appreciate other people, and thank them for helping you, you are much less likely to argue with them.

God doesn't need us to say thank you to Him, but He loves it when we do. Every day He does thousands of wonderful things for each one of us. Most of the time we don't even notice them, and we don't always say thank you for all the good gifts He gives us. But when we do, God knows that it will bless us, and it will help us to think in happy and healthy ways.

The more we pay attention to what God is doing, and the more we thank Him for those things, the more we will experience His incredible love for us and the joy He wants us to experience.

Extravagant Gratitude!

(JOHN 12 / PHILIPPIANS 4)

Mary was excited! Jesus had been so kind to her, and she loved him more than anyone else in the whole world! He had forgiven her for all the mistakes she had made in her life! He loved her more than anyone else had loved her. He had even let her sit at His feet and listen to His teaching, at a time when girls weren't encouraged to learn. He had laughed with her, and cried with her, and even raised her brother Lazarus from the dead!

Mary was full of joy for all the ways that Jesus had loved her and blessed her. She had heard Jesus saying He was going to die soon, and that He was going away. She was sad to hear these things, and she wanted to thank Jesus in a very special way before He died. But she didn't know what to do. Then she had an amazing idea! She found a bottle of very special perfume and poured it all over His head and His feet when He was sitting at a banquet. It was a very unusual

way to say 'thank you', but Jesus knew what Mary was trying to say, and her gratitude made him very happy. Even though she didn't know exactly what was going to happen to Jesus, she wanted to show Him that she appreciated His love, and the sacrifice He was going to make. Paul was in prison. He knew that he would be there the rest of his life, and he also knew that he would die soon. He could have felt very sad and worried and afraid. But he knew that his good, good Father God loved him, and that He was always with him. So, instead of worrying, Paul chose to think about the good gifts from God that made him feel happy. He wrote a letter to his friends in Philippi and told them his 'secrets' of being happy and peaceful when he was in a tough place.

Even though Paul was in a horrible prison, he thanked God every day because He knew that God was always good, and that He was always doing special things to show His love for him. You can read some of Paul's 'secrets' of happiness in Phil 4:4-8. He praised God for all kinds of things. He was kind to others. He gave his worries to God and thanked him. And he chose to think about good and lovely things.

If Jesus came to your house today, how would you thank Him for all that He has done for you? Would you pour perfume on His feet, or would you say 'thank you' to Him in another wonderful way?

Gratitude Prayer

- Choose a person to call out each letter of the alphabet in turn.
- Then work together to call out at least one thing you are thankful for beginning with each letter.
- See how many things you can thank God for in 10 minutes of alphabet gratitude!
- Perhaps you could buy a little address book with alphabet tabs and write your grateful ideas in the different sections.

Experiencing Gratitude Activities

Flourish! - Choose well - think well - live well - grow well!

'Thank you' Cards for God

- Find your best craft materials and make 'thank you' cards for God.
- Even though you can't mail them to Him, He will see them, and He will be happy for what you have made and written because you are His precious children.

Colorful Gratitude

- Make a booklet with colored paper.
- Arrange the pages in the colors of a rainbow, and then add brown, black and white pages.
- Find pictures of the different things you want to thank God for in colorful magazines or draw them yourself.

- Cut out the pictures and stick them onto the pages to make a colorful book of gratitude.
- This could make a lovely gift for someone who is feeling sad or alone.

Gratitude Activities

- When you are feeling tired and grumbly, stop and think of at least 10 things you are thankful for.
- Sit in each room of your home and say thank you to God for at least 10 things you haven't thanked Him for before.
- Whenever you are walking, driving, or traveling by bus or train, continually thank God for one thing after another that you can see around you.
- Suddenly call out 'Gratitude Moment!' and have everyone say 3 things they are grateful for right now.
- Make a gratitude note-board and post 'thank you' messages to each other, answers to prayer, pictures of things you are thankful for, and decorated Bible verses about thankfulness.