

Thanksgiving:

The expression of gratitude,
especially to God .



The Psalmist wrote that we are to enter God's gates with *thanksgiving* and His courts with praise (Ps 100:4). Thanksgiving, that expression of gratitude, is the attitude God seeks in His people and an attitude we *should* have in our marriages. Paul wrote in 1Thessalonians 5:16 that it is God's *will* that we should give thanks in *all* circumstances. We all have challenges in our lives and in our marriages—when we are not thankful, we deny the goodness of God. When we look at our husband or wife as the problem and focus on their shortcomings, we become negative and the relationship begins to fall apart. An attitude of thanksgiving is important to our walk with the Lord and for the health of our marriages.

Are we thankful for the problems we experience or the sin of our spouse? Usually not when we experience those things, but as I mature in the Lord, I see that those problems and the wrong things my spouse does are opportunities for me to grow in my walk with the Lord. I may not see it at the time, but even the problems I experience are good for me. It does not help to allow my peace to be ripped off and to grumble and complain about my situation. Being thankful helps me to focus on the Lord even through the trials I experience.

Our culture today is one of entitlement—we think we *deserve* to be happy and fulfilled and free of problems. This leads to a lack of thanksgiving—we believe we *deserve* to be treated with honor and respect and when our spouse messes up on occasion, we're hurt and angry. When we understand that we only deserve death and eternal separation from God, we can begin to develop a true attitude of thanksgiving.

Are you thankful for your spouse, as imperfect as he or she is? Or do you focus on the things they do or don't do and allow division and disconnection into your marriage? Develop an attitude of thanksgiving—a gratitude to the Lord your God, *in spite of your circumstances*. Express thanksgiving to your spouse; even it requires some work to find something to be thankful for—being thankful *is* God's will for you.

Helpful Resources: *Fortified Marriages Resource page:* www.fortifiedmarriages.com

Articles to check out:

Thanksgiving in Marriage - marriageemissions.com

The Importance of Thankfulness in Marriage by David Penley - simplyoneinmarriage.com