

A Gratitude Reflection Guide

From My Writing Desk

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BEGIN HERE

Beyond the **Throw Pillow**

A gentle, honest guide to practicing gratitude when life is beautiful, complicated, heartbreaking - or all three.

THE SCRIPTURE

“In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”

1 THESSALONIANS 5:18 (KJV)

A note before you begin

Gratitude is not a demand to call every painful thing good. The invitation is to bring your whole life to God - including the parts you wish were different. There is room here for joy, grief, questions, laughter, and tears.

Use these pages slowly. Write what is true, not what you think you are supposed to say. You do not need a perfect attitude or a picture-perfect Thanksgiving table to begin.

There is grace for the honest answer.

REFLECTION ONE

What is really on the table?

A beautifully set table can hold both celebration and an empty chair. Before listing blessings, take a moment to name what this season actually feels like.

1 What am I genuinely grateful for right now?

2 What feels heavy, missing, or unresolved?

3 Can I allow gratitude and grief to be present together?

REFLECTION TWO

In everything. Not for everything.

Paul's invitation is not to pretend pain is a gift. It is to discover that we can turn toward God even in circumstances we would never have chosen.

1 What have I been pressuring myself to feel thankful for?

2 Where have I experienced a small act of kindness, an unexpected moment of strength, or a little comfort during a difficult time?

Perhaps someone checked on you, offered a helping hand, or you found the strength to do something you didn't think you could.

3 What would an honest prayer sound like today?

CARRY IT WITH YOU

A gratitude that can hold both

You do not have to resolve every sorrow before you can recognize a blessing. Sometimes the faithful step is simply to notice that God has not abandoned you in the middle of the story.

THREE SMALL THINGS I CAN GIVE THANKS FOR TODAY

01 _____

02 _____

03 _____

A PRAYER FOR THE COMPLICATED SEASONS

Lord, You know what I am carrying - the joy I can name and the pain I cannot explain. Teach me to be thankful without pretending. Help me see Your kindness in ordinary moments, and give me courage to trust You with what is still unfinished. Amen.

ONE SMALL PRACTICE

This week, pause once each day and write down one true thing: a gift, a kindness, a memory, or a moment of grace. No pressure to make it profound.

If this guide met you where you are, share the companion essay, Throw Pillow Thanksgiving, with someone who might need the reminder.