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Gratitude Prayer Exercise **~Attending to God's Presence and Love~**

One of the most important spiritual practices we can engage in is gratitude! Throughout the Biblical narrative, particularly in the Psalms, the people of God regularly offered praise and thanksgiving to God. Why is gratitude and praise so important in our journey of faith? Often the challenges of everyday life can discourage us; fostering doubt and distrust in the goodness and faithfulness of God. We sometimes find it difficult to see how God is actively involved in our lives and attending to us in real and personal ways.

This prayer exercise can assist you in reviewing that last 24 hours of your day, past week, or month. You may also review the past several months, year, or years. The process is as follows:

Begin your time of prayer by meditating on Psalm 100. This Psalm leads us into God's presence with gratitude and praise. Notice how the Psalmist invites us to *"come before God with joyful songs; to come into God's presence with thanksgiving and praise."*

After meditating on Psalm 100, quiet your heart in God's presence and ask the Spirit of Jesus to reveal the particular ways God has been actively involved in your life. In what ways has God demonstrated love, care, comfort, wisdom, truth, goodness, mercy, and grace in your life? How has God revealed that you are a beloved child of God?

- When you are ready, write down ten things that come to mind. Take a short break (perhaps get up and walk around).
- After a break, write 10 more things that come to mind. Take another short break.
- When you are ready, write down 10 more things that come to mind about God's attentive love and faithfulness in your life. Be aware of the emotion that is evoked in you during the exercise.

After you have recorded the ways God has been attentive and loving, review your list. Is there a common theme in what you have recorded?

What may God be revealing to you in your time of gratitude? How does your emotional response provide insight about God's involvement in your life? Is there an invitation for you from God in this time of gratitude? What is that? What is your response?

You are invited to close your time of prayer by offering a prayer of praise and thanksgiving for God's attentive love and faithfulness in your life!