



## REFLECTION from [first15.org](http://first15.org)

November 25, 2020

As the world is experiencing incredible loss and disruption, it can be extremely difficult to hold onto a heart of thankfulness and gratitude. Our minds are quick to focus on the things that have been lost, rather than remembering the undeserved abundance that has been given us. We might be more prone to dwell on the loss of one thing, even while possessing a dozen other beautiful things that could inspire a posture of gratitude.

Grief is not inherently wrong. In fact, it is normal, and a healthy part of the process of loss. However, grief that continuously steals our gratitude over time becomes an erosive force in our pursuit of a healthy relationship with God. Although difficult to hold onto, the truth is that even in the midst of loss and suffering, we have much to be thankful for. James 1:17 says, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above...”

It can be difficult to know where to put our trust when everything around us seems to be changing. What was true about our economy two weeks ago is not necessarily true today. What was true about our schedules two weeks ago is not necessarily true today. Yet even in the chaos of our changing world, God’s character has not changed. God’s economy is not at risk. God’s plans are not

thwarted. God is still present, God is still good, and is still providing for us.

Hold onto the truth today that you have a loving and generous God that longs to take care of you. Difficult circumstances are not a reflection of God's love for you. God is inviting you to turn toward God today, and to experience the comfort and stability that come from trusting in a generous God.

Where will you choose to focus your attention today? Will you let these challenging days pull you away from God’s goodness, or will you lean into God and experience God’s love and presence even now?

Seek to grow in gratitude in the presence of your loving God who gives good gifts – even in the midst of a pandemic.



## CLOSING PRAYER

November 25, 2020

O God, with gratitude we remember the people, animals, plants, insects, creatures of the sky and sea, air and water, fire and earth, all whose joyful exertion blesses our lives every day.

With gratitude we remember the care and labor of a thousand generations of elders and ancestors who came before us.  
Amen.

## BLESSING

May you be joyful.  
May your happiness increase.  
May you not be separated from great happiness.  
May your good fortune and the causes for your joy and happiness increase. Amen.



## PRAYER INTERCESSIONS

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1. We offer our gratitude for the safety and well-being we have been given.
2. We offer our gratitude for the blessings of this earth we have been given.
3. We offer our gratitude for the measure of health we have been given.
4. We offer our gratitude for the family and friends we have been given.
5. We offer our gratitude for the community we have been given.
6. We offer our gratitude for the teachings and lessons we have been given.
7. We offer our gratitude for the life we have been given.