

Grattitude: A 30 Day Challenge To Bend & Reshape Our Attitudes

Hey youth ministry leader! We are thankful for you!

As a youth pastor you understand the importance of *spiritual disciplines* for student ministry. The best faithful practices form around developing better **habits** in the daily lives of our students.

Youth Ministry is good for forming spiritual habits! Quiet times, personal devotions at camp are a great example of how important these things are in developing spiritual rhythms for our students.

One of the hardest works of youth ministry is making the time to help students form healthy spiritual habits. That's why we've developed a series of activities throughout the year to help you help your students discover four habits that can help them grow spiritually.

How The #Grattitude Challenge Works

Every day for the next 30 days your students will be challenged to note, notice, and untrue gratitude in their everyday lives.

- **Notice:** We need to put a *pause* on our busy lives to stop and see what God is doing. Ask God to show you where God is, listen for what God is saying through Scripture, and through good friends.
- **Note:** An attitude of gratitude is a *cultivating practice*, which means the more we do it the deeper its roots will take hold. An important part of this practice is writing down what God shows to us.
- **Nurture:** Every day participants are challenged to *message someone* else with a word of gratitude toward them. We are grateful for our parents, mentors, siblings, teachers, and friends and it is important to voice that in person, via text, and online. This is how gratitude flows outward!

"I am grateful for you because...."

What You Need To Do

To make this challenge happen, here's what you will need to do:

- **Set The Date:** This is a 30 day challenge so it ties in nice to a month long challenge. Promote it to your students through all of your important communication channels.
- **Plan Your Texts:** The starter messages are all on the next pages, but you'll need to take care of communicating why this is a good and important challenge. Think through how you will get the info out to the students that you are beginning this challenge: social media posts, email blasts to parents/guardians, taking some dedicated time during the program this next week to get them signed up.
- **Prep The Text:** Be sure to read all of the starter messages we put together and edit anything doesn't seem to fit with your students.
- **Involve The Parents:** Maybe they would want to sign up for this with their students? They definitely would love to know it is going on. Make sure you email/message them with the details of what is happening.
- **Inform Your Leaders:** There isn't any work for your adult volunteer leaders to prep or do, but being in the know and encouraging students in the practice of gratitude and sharing about it during their weekly small group times is exactly the kind of engaging activity and accountability that we want from our leaders!
- **Schedule The Messages:** This is the work. Take an afternoon and schedule out all of the messages at once (make sure to include yourself on the text list). Getting setup on your platform and copying and editing all the messages should take less than a couple hours

What The Students Need To Do:

For this challenge your students need to:

- **Sign Up To Get The Messages:** Let students know the days this challenge will officially be taking place. As much as possible, push your students to participate during that window. Then give them instructions on how to sign up and participate. It may be a keyword or phrase included with your texting plan, or you may gather cell phones to opt them in individually. Give enough program time to this to help students get setup for success!
- **Build the Habit:** Each day of this challenge your students will be given something to Notice, Note, and Nurture towards a better attitude of Gratitude. You can help reinforce this by asking them for feedback along the way and sharing reports on social media or from the stage over the course of the 30 day challenge.
- **Keep It Going:** After the activity is over, it will be up to your students if they'd like to take any next steps. Do they want to keep their daily readings going? Do they want to start reading through a devotional or online Bible reading plan? Be prepared with some recommendations for students who may want to keep this activity going.

Best Practices For Success

Schedule All At Once

Use a text message app or program to help you schedule the messages out. It is worth a little investment to connect with your students in a daily way.

Early AM Consistency

Another reason to take an afternoon and schedule all the texts is to build the anticipation of a perfectly timed early morning text. Catch them before the day gets away!

Don't Expect Immediate Response

Every time we have done things like this there was an initial "aww that's cool," which feels good. But what feels better is 3 weeks in when one of your students shows you their digital journal of notes. That's the win we are looking to make!

Social Media Engagement

Boost The Engagement

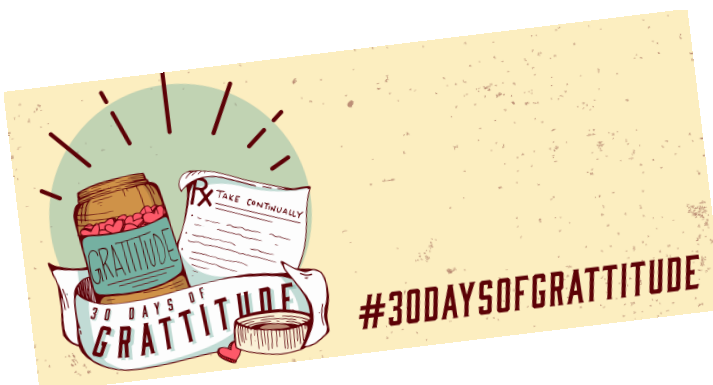
Since all the text messages are already pre-programmed to go out every morning you can focus on creating posts that highlight and feature what is going on outside of the text-sphere. Use the included, properly sized images to post across multiple channels.

Feature Your Students

Every few days your students are encourage to message back at you. Use this opportunity to feature their stories on your social media stories and posts to invite others in. You may even want to ask a student on Sunday or Midweek to share how the challenge is going for them.

Social Media Check-In

Use your social media outlets to communicate the start of the challenge but also as reminders along the way. "Thicken" your emphasis by communicating this across multiple platforms and pushing them back to the work of #Gratitude!





Introduction Messaging Via Social Media/Email:

"**Gratitude** is an overlooked Christian practice. The words of scripture are peppered with words of thanksgiving and testimony for the great works that God has done. Over the next **30 days** you are challenged to participate to **Notice, Note, and Nurture** gratitude."

Each sample message here can be adapted to encourage your students to pause, write, and message others.

Day 1:

Gratitude is a daily work. For the next 30 days you are challenged to: notice goodness, note it in an app or journal, & nurture it by txting someone you love.

Day 2:

Gratitude starts with a thank you. Who is someone you can thank today? Send a txt that starts with "I am grateful for you..."

Day 3:

Love. It's a word we use a lot but we don't always make it specific. Send a txt to someone who you love, "I love you because..."

Day 4:

God's created world is beautiful. You are a part of that beauty. Pause and notice that beauty today. Txt a friend who has made your life more beautiful.

Day 5:

Joy shows up in surprising places. Who has made you laugh? Send a txt them & tell them, "You bring joy to my life because..."

Day 6:

Gratitude is a daily habit. Don't give up! Send a txt & encourage a friend to stick with you. "Please pray for me to continue in this challenge."

Day 7:

Gratitude is a form of worship. Write a prayer of thanks to God in your app or journal. Txt & share it with a friend.
Psalm 9:1

Day 8:

Gratitude is a kind of growth. Who is someone who has taught you more about God. Send a txt & thank them. "

Day 9:

Who was someone who helped me in a difficult season? Txt them & let them know how they specifically helped you.

Day 10:

Who was a coach/mentor who challenged you (in a good way)?

Txt them & thank them, "Thanks for asking me tough questions"

Day 11:

Gratitude is a daily habit. Check your journal & underline something you have already noted and thank God again.

Day 12:

Teachers need love too. Who is a teacher who has helped you? Take time today to tell them in person.

Day 13:

Gratitude needs community. Txt a Friend to join you in this challenge. Share something you have noted.

Day 14:

Gratitude sometimes means taking a courageous step. Who is someone you can reconnect with today? Send them a txt & ask them to talk soon.

Day 15:

Help out! Who is someone needs your help today? Send a txt & ask an elderly family member in your life how you can help.

Day 16:

Give thanks to the Lord who is good! What is a good thing in your life right now that you can note in your journal.

Day 17:

Grace is God's work that we didn't deserve. Who is someone who has been kind to you. Send a txt & say "Thank you for being kind." 2 Cor. 4:15

Day 18:

Gratitude is a daily habit. Check your journal & underline something you have already noted and thank God again.

Day 19:

God is the the Creator! Take an extra moment today to get outside and note something beautiful God has made. Share it with someone!

Day 20:

Siblings! A lot of us have them, what is something nice you can txt & say specifically to them "Hey bub/sis I'm thankful for you..."

Day 21:

Friend+Family=Framily! Note a friend who has been there for you more than any other. Send a Txt & thank them.

Day 22:

Habits start forming after 3 weeks of doing something. Are you feeling it? Share it with your youth leader!

Day 23:

Small group leaders make the world go round! Who has led you really well? Send a txt & thank them for how they lead!

Day 24:

Senior pastors & leaders do a lot more than we ever see! How have they taught you? Write a note & send it to them.

Day 25:

Gratitude is a daily habit. Check your journal & underline something you have already noted and thank God again.

Day 26:

God puts people in our paths for a reason. Pause long enough today to notice who it might be. What is God asking you to message to them?

Day 27:

Gratitude isn't always perfect words, write a poem of praise to God today, share it as a prayer.

Day 29:

Almost there! Note in your journal today something to be grateful for today that you didn't notice 28 days ago! Share it with your youth pastor. "Thank you God for surprising joy!"

Day 30:

Awesome! Today is the last day of the txt messages but the challenge to practice gratitude daily continues!

30 More Ways To Practice Gratitude (For The List People)

1. Keep a gratitude (digital) journal and add to it everyday.
2. Tell someone face to face you love them and how much you appreciate them.
3. Notice the beauty in God's creation each day. Add it to your journal.
4. Nurture the friendships you have, good friends don't come along every day.
5. Watch inspiring videos that will remind you of the good in the world.
6. Avoid negative media and movies with destructive content.
7. Call your parent/guardian more often. They love your voice and voicemails!
8. Cook a meal for someone you love.
9. Volunteer and work with the younger kids at church
10. Volunteer in a community organization to serve outside of your normal routine.
11. Don't gossip or speak badly about anyone. It's just not helpful at all!
12. Remember to compliment your friends when they look good.
13. Write a card to a friend you haven't seen in a while and tell them something nice.
14. When you think a negative thought, try to see the positive side in the situation.
15. Try to take note when friends do a good job and tell them in front of others.
16. Pay it back! If someone does something nice for you, do something nice for them.
17. Spend extended prayer time with your gratitude journal.
18. Verbally thank your bus drivers, crossing guards, servers, baristas, principals, and teachers.
19. Say thank you for the little things your family does for you, things you might take for granted.
20. Post quotes and images that remind you to be grateful around your youth room or house.
21. Surprise an elderly neighbor, say thank you, and ask them about their life.
22. Call your grandparents and tell them you love them.
23. Send love to your enemies or people you dislike.
24. Be thankful for when someone teaches you something new.
25. Help your friends, bring joy to their life even if it feels silly.
26. Make a gratitude collage, cut out pictures of all the things that you are grateful for.
27. Make gratitude a part of meals, share what you are thankful for during meal times.
28. Practice gratitude at the same time every day to make it a habit.
29. Share the benefits of gratitude with family and friends (share your journal/app writings).
30. Share gratitude on social each day by posting from your journal.

If we all practice gratitude more regularly, the world will be a better place.