

HAPPY THANKSGIVING

**FORTIFIED
MARRIAGES**

We wish you and your family a happy and blessed Thanksgiving. We have been privileged this year to see God working in the lives of people, marriages restored and strengthened and relationships positively affected. We pray that your relationships will be healthy and flourishing and that as you celebrate this day of thanksgiving; that it will be a day of blessing for you and your family!



A Heart of Thankfulness

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 says; "Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." It is easy to praise the Lord when our needs and wants are met and we have plenty, but are we still thankful when we experience the trials and tribulations of life? It is God's will that we give thanks in all circumstances, whether things are going well or not. Paul wrote in Philippians 4:11, that he had "learned the secret of being content in any and every situation." Certainly, we all want the blessings and good things of God, but are we still focused on Him when there are problems? It is a matter of the heart and it will reflect in our relationships. Our attitude of thankfulness will be a testimony to others and even a challenge to those we are in relationship with. Exhibit a heart of thankfulness this Thanksgiving Day and every day!

Living at Peace with Others

Healthy, growing relationships are a great blessing, but they require work! Commitment to the relationship, humility, and mutual respect are essential in the marriage relationship, as well as any important relationship. The Apostle Paul wrote that "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." Good marriages and good relationships don't just happen, they are the result of work; maintaining healthy boundaries and seeking and giving forgiveness. As we celebrate thanksgiving, our prayer is that your relationships are healthy and growing and if they aren't, I would ask, what can *you* do to help the situation?



Thankfulness and relationships seem to go hand in hand - both are reflective of our attitude and of our relationship with God. God IS relationship; Father, Son, Holy Spirit, three persons, one God. There is relationship, community, unity of purpose in the very nature of God. Are we reflecting the image of God to those around us? Especially, those closest to us? Our spouses, children, parents, close friends, brothers and sisters in the Lord? We are not promised a tomorrow and it would be a shame to lose a loved one when our relationship is not right.

This was brought home just a few weeks ago with the loss of a co-worker in marriage ministry; Leo Godzich of the National Association of Marriage Enhancement. His untimely death due to a auto accident while ministering to marriages in Uganda left us all shocked. But the incredible testimony of his wife and three teenage daughters showed that while Leo's death may have been untimely, he was ready to be with his God at any time. This man lived what he taught and the memorial service revealed that he definitely worked at his relationships with his wife and daughters. It is a challenge to us all - being thankful that we have our loved ones and ensuring that if there isn't a tomorrow that our relationships are in right standing.

Fortified Marriages ministry seeks to equip couples, churches and those ministering to marriages to build strong marriages, able to withstand the storms that *will* come. Visit our website for resources and more information about our ministry.

www.fortifiedmarriages.com