

A 7 Day Plan to Heal Your Mind – Day 4

*“...in everything by **prayer and supplication with thanksgiving**
let your requests be made known to God.”*

The Apostle Paul

Even secular research has proven that the act of prayer changes a person’s internal reality whether his prayers are answered or not. Praying is good for us. It connects us to a safe and caring being when we’re feeling needy and alone. It allows us to express ourselves – to talk things out that we’ve been holding in. It raises our expectations that things can be better, and it increases our faith. And, it helps put all things in their proper perspective – we realize that God is God and we’re not. We need Him, not just what He can do for us.

But Paul, in prison with every humanly reason to be anxious and depressed, added another critical element to the act of prayer – thanksgiving, gratitude toward God. Paul knew experientially what it cost Harvard Medical School lots of time and money to discover: “Gratitude is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness. Gratitude helps people feel more positive emotions, relish good experiences, improve their health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships.”

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/healthbeat/giving-thanks-can-make-you-happier>

Paul didn’t beg and plead for God to answer his prayers – he had a tremendous confidence that God would hear and come to his aid. Notice his encouragement to the Philippians: “And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:19 ESV) With the confidence that God would “supply every need”, Paul encouraged another church he mentored: “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-17 ESV) It is God’s will that we give thanks in “all circumstances.” Receiving God’s blessings requires thankfulness!

To heal our minds that are so deeply affected by worry and negativity, we must practice the following:

- Pray about everything – your thoughts, your feelings, your doubts, your despair, your needs and wishes and dreams and deepest desires
- Pray to the God of all creation, the God who is sovereign over all that exists, the God who sent His only Son for your salvation, the God who wants deep relationship with you, the God who wants to supply your every need
- Pray with thanksgiving to God for what He has already done for you, for what He is doing right now that you’re not even aware of, and for what He will do in the future

The “disciple whom Jesus loved” (the Apostle John) encourages us to have great confidence that Jesus wants to meet our every need: “And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will that he hears us. And if we

know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.” (1 John 5:14-15)

Pray with thanksgiving and confidence. Now, to totally change your negative thoughts, see Day 5.