



### ***Sharing God's Abundance in Love!***

*CtK exists to connect all people to the life-giving message of Jesus, as we experience God, find freedom, discover purpose, and make a difference in our world.*

### **Day 7—Saturday, January 13, 2018 Prayer Focus—Missions (International) Abundant Gratitude**

***See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.***

***Thessalonians 5:15-18 (ESV)***

I remember it like it was yesterday. I woke up in tears from the personal loss and devastation of divorce. For you, it might be something different, but just as hard. I was on a blow-up mattress in an unfamiliar room and wondered how I would ever survive this downward spiral of pain and grief. As I laid there asking God to comfort me, I was reminded of my grandmother, and mother, telling me that no matter how bad things get, you can always count your blessings. The women in my family have always had grateful hearts and that has been a powerful legacy for me. I decided right then that I could stop focusing on my dashed dreams and start being grateful for the things I did have. I started with being grateful for a roof over my head and bedding on which to sleep. I also thanked God that he was with me and promised to fulfill his work in me and to work all things out according to his purpose (Romans 8:28). I knew that non-believers and even my own children were watching me. I knew that I could either give in to despair, or, I could walk in faith in a Mighty and Merciful God. And so I began a journey of gratitude and expectant joy that continues to this day.

Is it perfect? No, I still struggle with worry and complaining, but God is faithful and meets me more than halfway through each challenge. We serve an amazing God that wants to lift us up out of the pit and set our feet on the Rock (Psalm 40:2). Now, whether things are going my way, or, whether I am facing challenges, I know that counting my blessings and turning my heart toward gratitude will bring me in line with God's blessings, peace and unspeakable joy. He really does work ALL things together for our good!

Missionaries often comment that the poorest people they serve often have the most grateful hearts. We can learn so much about thankfulness from these examples and use it to increase our own gratitude.

**Father, we thank you for your faithfulness to us. Thank you that we can use practical methods like being thankful as a tool to allow you to turn our lives around. Help us be so aware and grateful for our own blessings that we are motivated to partner with you to share those blessings. We especially lift up international missions. We pray for those serving on the mission field and ask for your favor, protection and blessing on them and their work. Allow us to walk in gratitude with you so that we may experience the peaceful joy that comes with it. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

Jane Ann Simon

