

---

---

Reflection

# DO NOT FORGET

By Yaritza Sanchez

“In truth, O judges, while I wish to be adorned with every virtue, yet there I nothing which I can esteem more highly than the being and appearing grateful. For this one virtue is not only the greatest but is also the parent of all the other virtues” — Cicero (54 BC).

Gratitude is often studied as an emotional trait associated with positive thinking and well-being. However, spiritual gratitude is a powerful virtue that needs to be developed (Tudge, Freitas, and O’Brien, 2015). Most importantly, it is not something we are born with or that arises spontaneously in our hearts (Ezek 36:26; Ps 51:10). How can we develop spiritual gratitude as a virtue? We cultivate ways in which we can remember God (Ps 9:1).

Memory involves three key stages: encoding (learning), storage (keeping), and retrieval (accessing information) (Majawar et al., 2021). The connections between nerve cells, known as synapses, and how often we experience things—called synaptic plasticity—strengthen these connections. When we are exposed to information infrequently, these connections weaken.

A recurring theme in Scripture is God commanding His people not to forget Him. The Bible has clear examples of people and nations often forgetting God, leading to sin and rebellion. For example, Israel forgets the Lord their God (Hos 13:4-6). The human heart often needs reminding.



---

Hosea was an 8th-century prophet and a younger contemporary of Amos. He prophesied when Israel was prosperous but faced moral decline under King Jeroboam II and King Uzziah of Judah. Hosea spoke with compassion, warning Israel about the dangers of ignoring God and turning to idols. The main issue God had with Israel during this time was the conflicting religious ideologies between the Canaanite worship of Baal and the Hebrew worship of Yahweh (Hill and Walton, 1991). The Canaanites worship included using human sacrifice and ritual prostitution (Ps 106:34-41; Deut 23:17). Although Israel made a promise to Yahweh to worship Him alone (Exod 20:1-6; Deut 4:15-31), they doubted Yahweh's ability to provide rain for life in Palestine, Israel and mixed Yahwism with Baalism (Hill and Walton, 1991). The approach failed and led to their captivity.

One way we remind hearts to remember that God can be trusted is through praise and worship, individually and within a faith community (Heb 10:23-25). It is a key way to express gratitude. Singing songs of worship, reading Scripture, and participating in church services are all ways Christians show their gratitude to God. Within the cultural context, the term “proximal processes” was coined by Urie Bronfenbrenner’s bioecological theory. It highlights everyday activities and iterations—cultural practices. Repeated engagement in exercising spiritual gratitude, initially in a simple way but in conjunction with someone more versed, develops gratitude; it’s likened to a composer having started practicing scales with a more competent teacher (Tudge, Freitas, and O’Brien, 2015). These practices help believers focus on God’s goodness, hope, and faithfulness while being thankful.



---

Worshiping God involves thanking Him and serving our neighbors (Beauchesne (1990:81). Worshiping together corporately, Salies explains (1979:175), is not just a religious duty but also a “Christians way of remembering and expressing their life unto God”(Rom 12:1-2). When we sing songs of praise and worship, we experience God’s presence, which transforms us communally as God’s people on the narrow path striving to please Him (Heb 13:15-16). This gratitude promotes holistic health by addressing our spiritual, emotional, and cultural well-being.

As you embark on this journey of gratitude, take time to spend alone with God. Discover what pleases Him and cultivate His ways. As you share your faith with others, you will gain a deeper understanding of all the good things you have in Christ (Phm 6).

Morning Affirmation: Because of all You have done for me, I present my body to You as a living sacrifice for this day. I want to be transformed by the renewing of my mind, affirming that Your will for me is good, acceptable, and perfect.



---

## References

- Boa, Ken. "Morning Affirmations." Reflections. Accessed March 25, 2025. <https://reflections.org/morning-affirmations/>
- Hill, Andrew E., and John H. Walton. *A Survey of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1991.
- "Inside the. Science of Memory," Hopkins Medicine, accessed March 22, 2025, <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/inside-the-science-of-memory#:~:text=Memory: It's All About Connections, molecular level?>" Hukanir says.
- Manala, Matsobane J. "Gratitude as a Christian lifestyle: An Afro-reformed theological perspective." *Hervorme Theologies Studies* 74, no. 4 (October 2018): a5117
- Mujawar, Swaleha, Jaideep Patil, Bhushan Chaudhari, and Daniel Saldanha. "Memory: Neurobiological mechanisms and assessment." *Industry Psychiatry Journal* 30, no. 1 (October 2021): 311-314.
- Tudge, Jonathan R.H., Lia B.L. Freitas, and Lia T. O'Brien. "The Virtue of Gratitude: A Developmental and Cultural Approach." *Human Development* 58, no. 4/5 (2015): 281-300