



Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart

With the turn of the calendar to August, the reality of the summer drawing quickly to an end is settling in for many of us. This includes the principals, teachers, and staff at Abiding Savior Academy (ASA) as well. Close behind is the inevitable return of fall and the next school year. Does this realization fill your heart with a sense of dread, excitement, or relief? Maybe a combination of all three? While these feelings may shift and vary, often our perspective is determined by the focus of our heart.

With the start of the school year close at hand, ASA is preparing to welcome all our new and returning students and their families. We are excited to focus on developing grateful hearts in ourselves as well as encouraging and sharing this virtue with others. The Bible speaks often of gratitude and thankfulness, mentioning these concepts 157 times throughout the Old and New Testaments. According to the Bible, at the heart of gratitude is a response to the overwhelming grace of God toward each one of us. Interestingly, even science affirms the benefits of gratitude with many studies pointing to the connection between a grateful heart and improved mood, relationships, life satisfaction, and even lower stress levels.

During the upcoming year, we are excited to explore the many qualities and benefits of gratitude as individuals and as a school community. From the theoretical to the practical, we look forward to developing and practicing this essential characteristic together. With God's help and through instruction from His Word, we are confident that cultivating grateful hearts will benefit our spiritual health and maturity. Colossians 3:17 reminds us *"Whatever you do, whether in speech or action, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus and give thanks to God the Father through Him."*

We are grateful that you have decided to be a part of our ASA family. As we continue to grow, we celebrate the many blessings and the people that contribute to this special community. However, we must be careful to avoid the mistake of being too busy enjoying the gifts that we fail to focus on the Giver! The year ahead is certain to provide countless opportunities to remember God's grace toward us and to respond with the commitment to "Give thanks in every situation because this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

Giving thanks with a grateful heart,

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads 'Brad M. Bierle'.

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