

Digging for a Century Plant

We all understand – from personal experience – the power that two little words, *thank you*, can have on human relationships.

And certainly, expressing our gratitude to God is so important. One of the most effective ways of showing our appreciation to God is to pass His blessings to someone else.

A man was on vacation with his son's family at a rented cottage on the New England seashore. On the first day of his vacation, he was out in the yard digging a hole. He was putting out a small plant.

As his son observed this strenuous work, he asked his dad why he was going to such effort to put out a plant when this was not even their cottage. They would not even be returning the next year. The father replied, "Somebody will be here."

"What kind of plant is it?" the son asked.

"A century plant," his father replied.

"A century plant? You mean it won't bloom for a hundred years?" the son inquired.

"Not that long," the father explained. "Maybe 20 or 30 years."

The son was astonished. "Why in the world would you come out on this hot morning on your vacation in a rented cottage to put out a plant that won't even bloom for 20 years?"

The father paused and looked up at his son. "I saw one the other day, and realized that someone 20 or 30 years ago wanted to share it with me. And so he planted it for my enjoyment. Someday, I said to myself, I'm going to plant one so that people will enjoy it after I'm gone. And that's what I'm doing this morning."

How is the best way to say thank you? It is to pass on our blessings to others. It happens in families all the time.

How do we express our gratitude to our parents for the sacrifices they have made on our behalf? We tell them we love them, of course. And we show them our respect. But essentially, the most important step is to be good parents ourselves – to pass on what we have received.

And that includes telling others about the good things God has done for us – how He has changed our lives to bring peace, joy and contentment in our walk with Him.

In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven (Matthew 5:16 ESV).