

# "Psyche Me Up"

A Monthly Newsletter : Brought to you by: Simpson University Wellness Center

## Thankfulness 365

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*Research is revealing the profoundly positive effects of gratitude on the human psyche. The mental health benefits of genuine and frequent thankfulness are almost incalculable.*

**USA Today reports** that researchers are finding gratitude as one of humanity's most powerful emotions. "When you stop and 'count your blessings', you are sort of hi-jacking your emotional system, and taking it to a good place. The emotion of thankfulness is nearly equivalent to being victorious ... One of the reasons gratitude works so well is that it connects us with others." Heartfelt thanks connects us more intimately with whom we are thanking ... In multiple studies keeping a gratitude journal or regularly "counting blessings" resulted in significantly higher positive mood states and overall health and wellness.



**For more reading on gratitude and the goodness of God, beyond what I have stolen here, check out One Thousand Gifts, by Ann Voskamp.**

Talk to your roommate, a friend, your RA, your SRD, or stop by the Counseling Center!

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### What we receive with gratitude, returns to us joy.

So, as God often does, rather than give us what we ask for, He gives opportunities to practice the thing for which we ask. Personally, I am wanting to learn to live with the ability to **"give thanks in all things."** So, as I sit to write this very newsletter, God has just given me an opportunity to practice it. The phone rings and I am faced with a huge personal disappointment, coupled, moments later, with the news of a tragedy, not my own, but that hits far too close to home. Knowing that my plan was to write this newsletter today, I (after, first, a bit of whining and complaining) asked God to help me see **what to be thankful for in this.** And **how?** Here is what I know so far:

**Losses can infect** every part of our life; we only see **what isn't**, what was taken, what we fear will never be. When I don't trust God, **I can't open my hands** to freely receive whatever He gives. **Whatever** He gives. Sometimes the most **beautiful of gifts** are wrapped in some pretty **unlovely boxes**. Sometimes the holes in our lives actually become the **"seeing-through-to-God-places"** that scatter light to every other dark place of our lives.

Satan's message throughout all of human history is that **God isn't good**. That God withholds from us, that **He doesn't fully love us** or we would/wouldn't ... (fill in the blank). When we **doubt** His goodness, we **mistrust** Him and become **discontent** with what He gives. We want **"more"**, or at least **"other"**, than what He has given. Isn't our fall, beginning with Adam and Eve, right on through till now, **rooted in our dissatisfaction** with what He gives? **We doubt** His Goodness, **forget** who He is, and **fail** to thank Him.

Really, I wonder today, **who am I** to receive, **with thanks**, only the good from His hand and nothing else. Can I really understand the **ways and mysteries** of an infinite God and **reject** what He has for me unless **I** deem it "good"? Can I **accept** that there are things in this life that I simply **don't understand**? Can I trust that **He does**? If I could, I have a suspicion that that just might **change everything** ... And so it did. Circumstances haven't changed, and the tragedy is no less a tragedy, but **what changed was me**. For every negative, complaining thought I **replace with thankfulness**, I am lighter, in moments, yes, **even joyful**. A joy that is **rooted in a hope** that if God is truly good, and **He knows all**, even though I don't, I can trust that **this, too, will be redeemed** for His glory and my good. Even if, in faith, it **remains unseen** in this life.

Can I thank Him, **in all things**, no matter what? Even in the darkest of times? Even in the disappointments and **small inconveniences** that I love to gripe and complain about? *Is that the hissing of a serpent, I hear?*

**So here is my challenge:** Can we exchange **negativity for gratitude**, deep hurt for even **deeper joy**, self-focus for **God-intimacy**? Can we, daily, **give thanks generously** and receive it graciously? Count blessings, **number them**. **Name them**. Look intently, **search for** even the smallest of things to be grateful for. This is our **Experiment in Thankfulness** ... I dare you to join us! **Post on our SU Wellness Center face book page how it's impacting your life.**

*Albert Schweitzer said, "The greatest thing is to give thanks for everything. He who has learned this knows what it means to live ... He has penetrated the whole mystery of life: Giving thanks for everything."*