



HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

We, unlike so many in our world, are inexplicably blessed:

With hot showers and warm drinks on cold days ... cool showers and cold drinks on hot days ... warm clothes and cozy blankets in winter ... pillows for our heads, shoes for our feet ... lights at the flip of a switch ... clean water from any faucet ... medicine when we're sick, ice cream when we're depressed, chocolate for any ailment, and peanut butter just because .. In big things and small things, we have **only what God gives us** and much to be thankful for!



Where would you be without Christ? What are you forgetting to thank God for?

Thank-ful:

Acknowledgment of a kindness and/or mercies received;
Impressed with a kindness received;
Appreciative; Grateful for benefits received.

"Psyche Me Up"

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Antidote to Depression

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"Without exception ... all try to reach the same goal, that is, joy." - St. Augustine

While there is certainly such a thing as true "clinical depression", and the severe reality of that condition is not to be minimized; there is, also, a level of depression that most of us suffer from at one time or another throughout our lives. Sometimes it is brought on by difficult circumstances, but other times it may be more a reflection of the **condition of our mind, heart or spirit** that is not always explainable by circumstance.

Predominantly, depression is described as **sadness, boredom, gloomy, numb or hollow**. But, depression can also be defined as a **hole, vacuum, crater, or even a pit**. These are words that have deep **spiritual implications** and those that I most want to address here.

Is it possible that **thankfulness**; genuine, **deeply known and felt thankfulness**, is enough to fill even the biggest **crater-sized holes** in my life?

"We only enter the **full life** if our faith gives thanks ... Thanksgiving is our **acceptance** of whatever He gives. Thanksgiving is the manifestation of our **"yes"** to His grace ...giving thanks in everything is what prepares the way for **salvation's whole restoration** ... I would never experience the **fullness** of my salvation until I expressed the **fullness of my thanks** everyday." - Ann Voskamp

"One act of thanksgiving, **when things go wrong with us**, is worth a thousand thanks when things are agreeable to our inclinations." - St. John of Avila

Thank-less-ness falsely inflates self ... gratitude empties me of me, so that I may be truly filled:

1. What am I most thankful for or appreciate in my life right now?
2. What am I most thankful for about my childhood/family/community?
3. When is the last time I thanked God for a trial? What surprising "good" came from it?
4. How does culture's emphasis on "more," "bigger," "better" make it hard to be happy with less?
5. How does my expression of gratitude impact my experience of contentment/joy?
6. How can thankfulness help me manage my expectations about how my life should be?
9. What are some ways I am, or could be, intentional about seeking/naming things to be grateful for?
10. How does a confident assurance of heaven affect how I perceive my life right now?

Commit to **seek, name, count** our innumerable blessings. Our thankfulness invites the presence of God into even our darkest hours. **Joy is found in seeing God in this moment, in this very place**. As long as **thanks can be offered, joy is always possible**, even in the sad, gloomy pit of the now. Give Him **this moment** and **let Him** live up to His name ... **I AM**.

The Richest experience of **joy** and the deepest understanding of **grace**, can be found by sitting regularly and lingering long at the table of **THANKSGIVING**.

*Simpson Community: may it not be said of us ... "For although they knew God, they **neither glorified Him as God nor gave thanks to Him**, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened."* Rom. 1:21