Maybe it’s just me, but has anyone else noticed that somewhere along the way, we have exchanged the **discipline** of giving thanks in ALL things, with the **emotion** of giving thanks when we get GOOD things? When hard times come, thankfulness may be the **furthest thing** from my mind … but what if it was the **first thing** that came to mind? Can you imagine that?! What if a **discipline of thankfulness** could change everything? What if the **very act of choosing** thankfulness when it would make more sense to choose anger or bitterness, or fear, or any other justifiable emotion, is itself **THE GOOD thing**?

I love this story from Mark Buchanan’s book, The Holy Wild: “I was in **Uganda**, Africa, in a little township called Wairaka. Every Sunday, about one hundred Christians from the neighboring area would **gather to worship**. They met at the edge of a cornfield, **under a lean-to** with a rusty tin roof that cracked like gunfire when it rained. They sat—when they did sit—on **rough wood benches**. The floor was dirt … One Sunday evening, I was too sour to join in. The music sounded squawky. I was miffed at someone on our missions team. I found the food bland. I was **feeling deprived and misunderstood**. I was miserable, and I **wanted to wallow** in it.

The pastor asked if anyone had anything to share. Many people wanted to, but a tall, willowy woman in the back row **danced and shouted loudest**, so he called her forward. She came twirling her long limbs, trilling out praise.

“**Oh brothers and sisters**, I love Jesus so much,” she said.

“**Tell us, sister!** Tell us!” the Ugandans shouted back.

“Oh, I love him so much, I don’t know where to begin. He is so good to me. Where do I begin to tell you how good He is to me?”

“Begin there, sister! Begin right there!”

“Oh,” she said, “**He is so good**. I praise Him all the time for how good He is. For three months, I prayed to Him for shoes. And look!” And with that the woman cocked up her leg so that we could see one foot. One very ordinary shoe covered it. “**He gave me shoes**.”

The Ugandans went wild. They clapped, they cheered, they whistled, they yelled. But not me. **I was devastated**. I sat there **broken and grieving**. In an instant, God snapped me out of my self-pity and plunged me into **repentance**. In all my life I had **not once prayed for shoes**. It never even crossed my mind. And in all my life, I had **not even thanked God for the many, many shoes I had**.” Guilty as charged. Me neither.

I can’t help but think that, really, those who **have less** may have found the **secret** to enjoying the **richness of more**. They are **thankful for the smallest of things**. Like shoes. Like food. Like water. We who have so **MUCH** have lost our thankfulness in all things. The clamoring for, and expectation of, “more”, has achieved for us LESS.

What if **Instantaneous Gratitude** could replace our need of instant gratification?

“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

Happy Thanksgiving!