



THANKSGIVING IT'S GOOD FOR YOUR SOUL

Thanksgiving is a time for food, family gatherings and football.

Once everyone is gathered at the table, my husband asks us to share what we're thankful for. I'm sure many of you do likewise, but from now on, don't make thanksgiving a once a year occasion.

I don't mean regularly cook a full turkey dinner but remember to be thankful more often. The Bible tells us to "Give thanks in all circumstances for this is God's will" (1 Thessalonians 5:18)

For a long time I couldn't grasp WHY God would command us to be thankful in everything, even the bad things in our life. As a counselor, I thought that bordered on craziness.

But I have learned that when I discipline my mind and heart to give thanks, even when things seem negative to me, my attitude changes. I am not as unhappy, as critical or as complaining



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We live in a world where people feel grumpy and miserable much of the time. They complain that life, God or other people don't give them the things they feel they deserve. This entitlement thinking breeds more discontent and unhappiness.

The apostle Paul said that he "learned to be content" in plenty and in poverty. He could experience joy in both circumstances. How did he do it?

The gateway is gratitude. *Learn* to be thankful in all things for this IS the will of God. "It is good to give thanks to the Lord" (Psalm 92:2).

Gratitude pleases God. A thankful spirit also blesses others, leading to happier relationships.

What would be different today if instead of complaining or commenting about what wasn't done at home, you would purpose in your heart to look for something at home you can be thankful for. For example, thank your husband for working hard at his job, or thank your wife for making dinner tonight.

There are many things throughout our day that grab our attention. If we tend to be oriented toward noticing the more negative, we may have to work at looking for the good. Recently my pastor shared a little poem that said,

"Two men looked out prison bars.
One saw mud, the other saw stars."

Both were present, but which one would you rather focus your attention on, mud or stars? It's not just God's word that encourages us to be thankful. Recent studies in positive psychology confirm that grateful people are happier people and being thankful for specific things, bring us joy.

Learn to look for the good, even in difficult situations. Practice gratitude every day. If you do, you will find that your spirit is on its way to learning greater joy and contentment with your life leading you to deeper happiness.

I am thankful for all of you. May you have a wonderful Thanksgiving weekend!