

Positively Speaking

By Mark Wilson

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The Thanksgiving Attitude

Thanksgiving is not a holiday -- it's an attitude! If it's just a holiday for us -- then we let ourselves off the hook too easily. "I'll celebrate Thanksgiving one day a year, and be grumpy the other 364!" Actually, Thanksgiving Day is simply a reminder of how we ought to live every moment -- a special day to celebrate what we are called to be all year long! Thanksgiving is "Thanks-living!"

Did you know that thankfulness and mental health go together? Counting your blessings can bring healing and strength into your life. Everything goes downhill when you are swamped with negativism and self pity.

How does a person develop a more thankful heart?

1. Go hunting for small blessings. Your life is packed with millions of small treasures! Sometimes, we are so hung up on petty annoyances, that we forget the abundance of joy.
2. Focus on what you have rather than what you wish you had. Perhaps you don't have everything you'd like -- Is this really the end of the world? Think about this: you are more wealthy than the majority of the world's population. Or consider this: You have a thousand times more stuff than the Pilgrims who landed on Plymouth Rock. Contentment is not found by obtaining more "things." It is a matter of the heart.
3. Quit waiting for someone to serve you, and commit yourself to serving others. Make it your goal to encourage and inspire others. Think "Here to Serve" when you walk into a room. Jesus said that the "greatest" person is the one who serves. Investing in servanthood was good enough for Jesus, so it should be good enough for the rest of us.
4. Become a generous giver. Generous people are always the most happy individuals around -- they have discovered that giving brings tremendous fulfillment. Someone once said, "Give until it hurts." But I don't think it works that way. Instead, we ought to say, "Give until it feels great!" Killing the stingy miser within you is the only thing that hurts -- once you get past that, giving is a joyful adventure!
5. Go on a complaint fast. Intentionally refrain from complaining and criticizing. If a gripe comes to your mind, grab it, handcuff it, stick it in jail, and replace it with a praise.
6. Smile. Your day automatically goes better when you face it with a smile.

Hayward Wesleyan Church

10655 State Rd. 77 · Hayward, WI 54843

Phone: 715-634-4613 · Fax: 715-634-7823 · Website: www.haywardwesleyan.org

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It makes you feel better, and look better too! All of your friends will thank you for smiling. Who wants to look at a grouch?

7. Pray and read the Bible regularly. If your problems are big enough to stew over, they're big enough to bring to God in prayer. Good things happen when people pray. The Bible is filled with faith inspiring, love motivating, and hope producing passages. A daily dose of God's love letter will give you strength for every situation.

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