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Thankful, Period

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Thankful, Period

Thankful. One simple word—*thankful*—emblazoned across the front of a woman’s t-shirt, caught my eye. There was a period at the end of what wasn’t even a sentence. Thankful. So, I guess you could read it this way: “Thankful, period.” I would like that to describe me. I’m thankful. *Period.*

But I have to confess. Sometimes I’m less than thankful. Maybe I am not paying enough attention to my blessings or perhaps I’m taking God’s benefits for granted.

David and I have a dear friend from Africa, one of the most joyful believers I’ve ever known. He once spoke words that jolted me out of my spiritual lethargy. A survivor of Rwanda’s genocide, he had seen more death and destruction than I could possibly imagine.

“Do you have all your arms and legs—your limbs?” he asked us. “Then you are blessed!” “Do you have your eyes, your sense of hearing, your ability to speak? Then praise God and give Him thanks. Rejoice and count your amazing blessings!” he exclaimed. From his perspective, it was incredible simply to be alive. Healthy. Not maimed by war. Reason to rejoice!

Stop for a minute and reflect on the many benefits you enjoy simply because you don’t live in an area ravaged by war. Do you have all your limbs? Can you walk? Are you able to see and hear and talk? Then, as our friend would say, “Rejoice at your great blessings!”

His words challenged me to become more intentional about giving thanks to the Lord for my blessings. And to resist complaining about petty annoyances.

Next time you’re tempted to grumble, pause, and take a look at your hands and feet—and be thankful. Reflect upon the ability to walk and see and hear. Count the ways God has poured His grace upon you.

Bless the Lord O my soul and forget not all His benefits. (Psalm 103:2 ESV)

[by Marilyn Chadwick, founder, SEEDS of Hope, Charlotte, NC]