

More Time for More What?

By Tim Cosby



In my experience as a coach, one of the most difficult questions I ask is, "What do you want?" Many of us struggle with the answer to that question. But there is something powerful and liberating about "speaking out" what it is that we want in a given situation. One of the answers I hear most often is, "I want more time." More time for more what? Usually it's more time to do the things they really want to do. Because we think that the more time we have to do the things we love to do, the more fulfilled our lives will be. But is that true?

Diane and I have been reading a book called, "*One Thousand Gifts: A Dare to Live Fully Right Where You Are*," by Ann Voskamp. What I've gleaned from the book so far is that joy is what we all seek, and the way to experience joy "right where we are" is through the practice of giving thanks well.

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

More time for more what? Ann Voskamp answers, "joy." But how do we get more joy? The Greek word (*eucharistia*) which is translated as *thanksgiving*, comes from three words: '*charis*,' (grace), and '*chara*' (joy), and '*eu*' (well). What Voskamp suggests is that the life of joy comes through the grace of giving God thanks, well. In all things. That's the hard part. Giving thanks is the catalyst to joy. The height of my joy is directly related to the depth of my thankfulness. Whenever gratitude thrives in my life, joy thrives.

So what keeps me from joy? Could it be a refusal to give thanks and blindness to God's gift? Gratitude is the catalyst that opens my eyes to the experience of joy. Sounds simple, doesn't it?

Joy is a result of recognizing God's grace and giving thanks well. It's available here and now to whomever gives thanks. In whatever space they dwell; whether in sorrow, doubt, hardship, pressure, happiness, confusion, loss or plenty. It starts when we see whatever we're holding as a gift of God's grace. Our response to that insight can be the voluntary and generous giving of thanks. The outcome of this simple act is joy.

The point is that God has created us for joy. It's what we all seek in life. We want more joy. And we can have as much as we want. He even gives us a part to play in this mysterious process. It's wrapped up in that beautiful word thanksgiving. Try giving thanks for as many things as you see in your day. Try giving thanks in all things.

Can you and I really approach life from a posture of thanksgiving? I think the question is, "What do we really want?" I don't want more time. I want more joy!