

7 Bad Habits to Drop If You Truly Want to Experience Thanksgiving

Here in the South, we're experiencing a gorgeous autumn season, with brisk temperatures and leaves of electric colors: fiery oranges and reds intermingled with fluorescent yellows. On a walk with Annie the other day, I got lost in the beauty of it all. I took pictures of a gorgeous tree and gifted Annie a freshly fallen orange leaf—she giggled at her new treasure and then proceeded to lick it. Oops. Anyhow, as we continued walking, I thanked God for creating such a beautiful season and thought: "Only God could design something that was dying to be so lovely."

I mean, I don't know about you but I don't typically stop and take pictures of trees during the summer or winter months. Maybe spring, but most likely not. It's in the fall that we "ooh" and "ahh" over the vibrant colors of these leaves on their last leg. The dying leaves are far more beautiful than when they were living and I realized the trees shed their leaves to prepare for renewal—they let go to prep for something new.

Our good God, who created us and the beautiful world around us, knows that sometimes (okay, a lot of times) we need some kind of physical representation to see with our own two eyes in order to really understand. Through these beautiful trees in the fall He teaches us this universal concept—if we want to grow, we must release something. Sometimes, we need to lose something to find something better.

In order to be more like Him, we must let go.

We must loosen our grip and release whatever it is we are clinging to so tightly.

I have never particularly loved the phrase “Let go and let God” because well, it sounds so simple (borderline cliché), but it is anything but simple. Letting go is challenging—it is often painful and takes plenty of patience, which is a whole other topic! So I prefer to say, “Release to grow.”

What am I holding onto that is taking my focus off what is most important? What do I need to let go of to prepare for greater things ahead? If I’m being honest there are a lot of things I need to release to live a life full of joy and true purpose:

My assumptions and expectations of how life “should” be:

- Worries and frustrations
- Past failures and successes
- Toxic friendships
- The need for validation from the world
- My timeline
- Control

So in this season of falling leaves and vibrant colors, I pray for the strength to let go. To release the stuff that’s holding me down and keeping me from living a life filled with abundant joy. Here’s to a season of change, renewal and preparation for greater days ahead, because the best is yet to come! {eoa}

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