

An Easy Way to Avoid Holiday Chaos This Year

I absolutely love the holiday season and getting to spend so much quality time with my family, not to mention the amazing food that Kathy cooks up for us! Thanksgiving is such a full time—full of joy, full of people and full of perspective of what's really important in life. With this comes the temptation to get overwhelmed by the fullness—a full schedule, a full house and maybe even a full stomach (if we're being real) In the hustle and bustle, I find that the cure for the sometimes impeding stress is the very reason we get together in the first place—thankfulness.

This Thanksgiving, I want to encourage you to sow peace in the place of chaos, to choose the gift of being present over the temptation to be distracted by your to do's, and to really focus on the why behind the holiday. We all know that we reap what we sow (Gal. 6:7), so what will you be sowing this week?

The Power and Practice of Thanksgiving

Let's take some time pause and meditate on these verses from Philippians 4:4-9 (emphasis added) that we talked about a few weeks ago: "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let everyone come to know your gentleness. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with gratitude, make your requests known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will protect your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Finally, brothers, whatever things are true, whatever things are honest, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue, and if there is any praise,

think on these things. Do those things which you have both learned and received, and heard and seen in me and the God of peace will be with you.

The Power of Thanksgiving

Giving thanks shouldn't just be relegated to one day a year, but rather it should be a lifestyle. After all, its power goes far beyond connecting us around a beautiful table. Thankfulness is the door to happiness and the gate to heaven (remember, we enter His gates with thanksgiving). It's the cure for arrogance, the inoculation for depression and it's a force against the spirit of entitlement. Thankfulness is fruit of humility and the offspring of gratitude towards God. Thankfulness has saved many a marriage, rescued children from the grips of bitterness and delivered countless souls from the political spirit. Thankfulness is a field that must be cultivated, weeded and seeded. So what will you do to get the soil of you heart ready this season?

For those of you who face this holiday with fear, anxiety or restlessness, I want to encourage you to take some time today and decide what you want to sow in its place. Remember that you have the resources of heaven at your disposal and that you get to shift atmospheres with the power you carry. Start with focusing on what you're thankful for and then declare light and love over this week. What are you sowing this week? I'd love to hear that, and what you're thankful for, in the comments! {eoa}

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