

# The Simple Habit That Could Make You More Thankful

When people make a list of things that they are thankful for, there are normal things that hit the list. If I sit down and just start writing a list, I will write: My relationship with God, my family, the Bible, my donor and so forth. But I have a journal method that has me coming up with five things I am thankful for at the end of the day. When you do something like that, you start adding things that are a little more surprising. I also learn that the “little” things are important as well. Here are 10 things I am thankful for today.

**Multi-color pens:** Right out of the gate, you need to remember that I am a nerd, so you will probably have cooler things on your list. But I love these pens. They especially come in handy when I am reading the Bible. If I underline something in green I know that I think of it as a blessing and something in red as something God is trying to say to me that day.

**Audio learning:** Since I was a kid, I would listen to the Bible on audio. Nowadays when I am taking a ministry trip in the car, there is a buffet of learning options. Along with listening to my Bible, I can learn all sorts of things on audio books and podcasts. On one trip to Iowa, I got through most of a Bible college class.

**Goals that are difficult:** Some days I may not be as thankful for this as on other days. But God keeps stretching my faith with this ministry. If He never gave me assignments that stretched me I might never grow. I also would not accomplish all that He would have for me in this life, and I want to impact as many as possible.

**That my father became an immigrant to the USA:** Forty-seven years ago, my father got on a plane and came to the United

States to go to Bible college. It was there that he met my mother. He left all of his family back in Sri Lanka to get more education to serve God. I am grateful he left his comfort zone, or I would not be here today.

**Both my parents looking past cultural and racist bias of the world:** Again, I would not be here today if my white northern Minnesotan mother had not married a person from a totally different culture and background than her own. Not only am I here today because of that, but it has shaped the way that I look at the world.

**Verse numbers in the Bible:** I know that some people don't like the numbers because it impacts the flow of the reading, but most days I love it. It helps me find things I'm looking for when need be. It also helps me with my nerdy memorization that I have talked about elsewhere.

**Hotel and Airline Miles:** I have already been able to see more of the world than most people will see in their lifetime. Part of the reason for that is my hobby of hotel and airline miles. Thank you, Delta Skymiles! (Note: If anyone from Delta is reading this, feel free to send me some extra points for this promotion.)

**Social media friendships:** Although there is often a dark, sad side to social media, I am grateful for connections that I am able to keep up with of people around the world. I still remember when I lived overseas as a missionary kid and it took two weeks to get a letter from home. While I'm at it, I am thankful for a nerd pastors group I'm part of that brings a little fun to the day.

**The failures I had as a pastor:** I was a senior pastor for about nine years before starting this ministry back in 2005. I was pastor of three churches. Two of them closed, and the other one didn't go so well. But I am grateful for that for two reasons. First, it makes me able to relate to the

challenge ministry leaders face in a very real way. The other reason I am glad those didn't go well is that I wouldn't be in this ministry today if they had.

**You:** I mean it is kind of pointless to be writing if no one is reading. And if you are reading this, it means you at least skimmed the article to get down to this point, and for that, I am grateful. God drops all sorts of little gifts in our lives as we go through the day. Let me encourage you to try to find them. And as you open them, let your heart be filled with thankfulness for all—and I mean all—He has given. {eo}

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