



November 27, 2023

Acquiring an Attitude of Gratitude

Way back in 2011, I was privileged to receive a tiny book from a friend entitled, *One Thousand Gifts*. Written by a woman named, Ann Voskamp, the book shares the author's simple discipline of chronicling God's gifts in her life, one by one, day by day, one thousand times over.

Inspired by this little book, I began on August 30, 2011 to join her on this journey. I purchased a small spiral bound journal with butterflies on the covers and endeavored to pay attention to the world around me, and then record these "gifts" which I had previously failed to pay attention to.

1. Pink-tinged morning skies
2. A deer standing tall
3. Pin pricks of light through the jet black sky
4. Soaring gulls
5. Light shimmering over the water
10. The haunting call of sea gulls
11. White tails flashing through the beach grass
12. Milkweed pods full to bursting
13. Kayaking in the cove
33. Stillness
34. One lone sandpiper skittering ahead of me on my beach walk
37. A monarch butterfly flitting past my window and reminding me of my mother

- 50. Sunshine
- 73. The rustle of leaves beneath my feet
- 74. Cacophony of bird chirps
- 89. Candlelight
- 108. Frozen-faced walks to the bus stop
- 129. Feeling totally welcome in another's home
- 149. White birch branches reaching toward a leaden sky

And so, my journal goes, page after page of simple God-given sights, sounds, and feelings. So, what do they all add up to? In my life, they have served as a means of grounding myself. So much of our lives are filled with ugly, mind-numbing, and heart crushing information and sometimes personal experiences, as well. We desperately need a means of counterbalancing all of this, and God graciously gifts us with these opportunities every single day if we but open our eyes, and our ears, and our inner beings to them.

And if you never journaled, I challenge you to take it up. Rereading my own One Thousand Gifts has been my gift to myself today.

~Written by Bonnie Garbrecht

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