



Volume 1, No. 11, November, 2013

Evelyn Waite and Kathy Webber are collaborating on this project in an effort to encourage our Christian sisters and possibly to inspire other women to participate in this effort.



Life is what we make it. Always has been. Always will be. Grandma Moses

It's What You Make of It

My niece, Michelle, has multiple sclerosis (MS) and now lives in a nursing home. That may sound depressing to many of us, but Michelle has a remarkably positive attitude. In a recent letter, she said, "We have good food here. I'm lucky. I have good food and good friends and a lot to do. I really am not bored. You would think these places were awful, but this one isn't. I came back here because I knew this place was really not that bad. It's what you make of it."

Michelle is now in her 40's, but she has been struggling with health issues since she was not quite 14. At that time, she got a severe case of infectious mononucleosis. Her MS mostly likely began with the mono, although it wasn't diagnosed until 15 years later. Those 15 years were extremely difficult for her and her family. In addition to the MS, she is also bi-polar.

She was 24 when her son was born, and he brought her great joy. She was too sick to take care of him very much after he was six months old. The ensuing years were a terrible struggle for her. She tried various treatments for the MS, married her son's father then divorced him, and moved into and out of her parents' home several times. A second marriage proved to be disastrous. She lived in two different nursing homes and an assisted living facility, then eventually moved to a group home. That was her residence when she contracted pneumonia, which almost killed her. Partially as a result of the pneumonia, she contracted her third major illness--COPD. After that, she moved to her current nursing home facility.

Dear Heavenly Father –

Thank you for your Love.

Your Love that was with You

From the beginning.

Your Love that was, is,

And always will be –the Word.

Your Love that became flesh

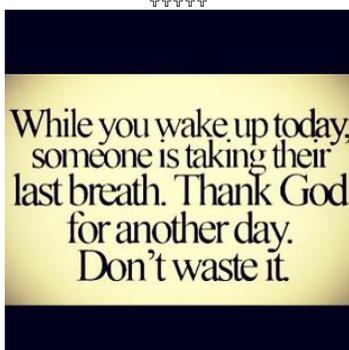
And walked

A life that daily proclaimed You

As Jehovah God—the Great I AM!

Kathy Webber

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Pain is her constant companion. She has trigeminal neuralgia (associated with MS), which is pain caused by the facial nerve; and it mimics a bad toothache. For the past 5-7 years, she has had increasing pain (sometimes associated with numbness) from the MS. The pain is severe enough that she is given morphine to control it. Yet her closing sentence in her remarks above reflects her attitude. *"It's what you make of it."*

Michelle was baptized into Christ on February 24, 2010. Since then, she has come to terms with her lot in life and is, her mom believes, happier and more content than she has been since she was a child.

The apostle Paul had many struggles in life also. He described some of them in 2 Corinthians 11:24-28, "Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure on me of concern for all the churches."

Yet after all that, he stated in Philippians 4:11, "I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am." He elaborated on that in 2 Corinthians 12 where he spoke of having been given a "thorn in the flesh," and how he asked the Lord three times that it be removed. But the Lord replied, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is perfected in weakness." In response, Paul said, "Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong." (2 Corinthians 12:9b-10).

In 1 Timothy 6:6, he further added, "But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment." Michelle has reached that contentment with her lot in life. Others have also learned contentment after much trauma and loss, including Horatio Spafford who wrote a beloved hymn, "It Is Well with My Soul." His entire family planned to sail for Europe, but he was delayed by business. His wife and four daughters sailed ahead of him and were on the *SS Ville du Havre* when it collided with a sailing ship and sank quickly. All four of his daughters died, but his wife survived and sent him a telegram saying, "Saved alone." Shortly afterwards, Horatio traveled to meet his grieving wife. As his ship passed near the place where

his daughters died, he was inspired to write the hymn that means so much to so many people.

Michelle has endured much trouble and suffering in her life and has learned to rise above it all. She truly is an inspiration to those of us who know and love her.

Evelyn Waite—2011
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AUTHOR'S NOTE: I am very thankful for Michelle and her positive attitude when many of us might not be so positive.

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"And be Thankful"

Colossians 3: 12- 17

*Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. **And be thankful.** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. **17** And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*

Being thankful sounds easy but it isn't always, is it? There are times that it is just plain hard to be thankful. Unless we allow God to guide our hearts and minds into "being thankful". Some days it seems to be easy to not see the blessings in our lives. When our children were growing up, my husband would often remind them that they needed to change their attitude (or he would help them have an attitude adjustment.) Maybe that is what we need to do also. Change our attitudes to be thankful. Along with thankfulness we will need love. Verse 14, tells us that we need to put on love, which binds all of the other virtues together in perfect unity.

Pray that God will allow us to see the blessings instead of the negatives. I challenge each of us to make this November one that is month of thankfulness. Let us count those blessings, God supplies us with blessings each day.

My prayer is for a spirit of "thankfulness" for each of us. May God bless and guide you this month.

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Pam Cummings
Panhandle, Texas

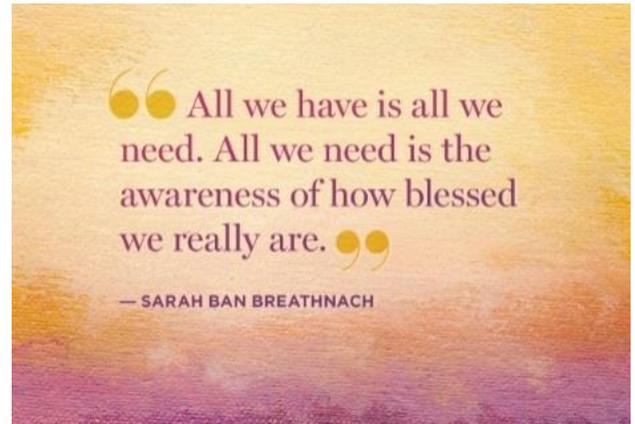
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Thankfulness

thankful on Thanksgiving Day, but let's make it a part of our daily lives.

Lorna Smith – Lubbock, TX
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I'm Thankful for Things I Don't Have!

I woke up the morning after getting braces and thought:

- I didn't sleep well; I woke up at 4 a.m.
- My head hurts; is that the reason I woke up early?
- My mouth hurts; I expected that. In fact, I expected it to be worse than it is.
- My arthritis is acting up; that happens nearly every morning, and it usually subsides after I'm up and around.
- The cloning amendment passed in Missouri-- will God punish us for this?

Then I thought... you know, I really have it pretty good.

- I don't have cancer. There are at least nine people on my daily prayer list who do.
- I don't have diabetes. There are at least four people on my daily prayer list who do.
- I'm not in prison, but there are many who are or who have sons, daughters, husbands, etc., who are.
- My marriage is still strong after 35 years. I'm very happy about that!
- My children are faithful. What more can I ask for?
- I have wonderful Christian friends who are always there for me. What would I do without them?!

Sick and outcast from their communities, the men were companions in sorrow. They had no source of income and had to depend on the kindness of strangers for their meager rations of food. Why had this happened to them? This was not how they imagined their life when they were young and had children. They imagined growing older with dignity and the respect of their household. And now, here they were, looked down upon by those who had once purchased their goods and ate at their tables!

Each day passed as gloomily as the one before...there was no hope left for them as they just waited for the disease to drain the life from their bodies.

Until the day they heard about a "miracle" cure – a chance to be healed! Can you imagine the running, shoving, and pushing to get to the head of the line for just a chance to hope again? Everyone was talking about it, and this was their chance to check it out. Rules dictated they had to keep their distance, but they called out from a safe distance as loudly as they could, so they would be heard.

When Jesus saw those lepers, He told them to go show themselves to the priest. The priest was the one who would decide if they were well enough to return to their lives with their families. They turned and hurriedly went toward the village. And as they went, they were cleansed!

Can you imagine how happy they must have been! Their very lives were being returned to them, and they would no longer have to live as outcasts. One of them, when he saw that he was free of the leprosy, turned around and came back to Jesus, praising God loudly. Then he threw himself at the feet of Jesus and thanked Him. But Jesus had a question for him. Weren't there ten of you who were healed? Where are the other nine? Luke 17:11-19

Was I one of the other nine? When I received the blessings of Jesus (and that happens on a daily basis), did I just go on my way, happy to be so blessed? Did I remember to humble myself at the feet of Jesus and thank Him? Did I praise God loudly for my blessings?

November has a day designated to think about our blessings and to express our gratitude to our Lord for all He has done for us. Let's not be guilty of only being

- My God has provided abundantly for my physical needs and even more so for my spiritual needs. He loves me when I am unlovable. He paid the cost for my salvation. He is holding my place in heaven for all eternity!

You know, I really have it pretty good! I'm thankful for so many things I don't have!

Evelyn Waite
November 9, 2006
© 2006

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Obviously, this was written before my own cancer diagnosis; but it still holds true – I'm thankful for a lot of things I don't have!~erw

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TRUSTING GOD MORE THAN OURSELVES

I want to write about different things in the Bible and some quotations from "Inspiring Thoughts for Mothers." Dads could also use some of these thoughts, the kind of thoughts that we may forget about.

"There is no pit so deep that God is not deeper still."

"Trust in the dark that brings triumph at dawn."

"The joy of the Lord is your strength," Nehemiah 8:10

Mothers needs to laugh often. A mother's laughter can be contagious, and her children need to hear her laugh. As a Christian, laughter should not be missing. There should be bright, happy rejoicing in all God's gifts. Be thankful and glad in everything.

Count up miracles rather than trials. Look at the bright side, even in sickness, bereavement and death. What a very fountain of goodness and love is Christ as we count our blessings. See what God has done. Trust God to lead us in the right path, and quit worrying about things. Worrying too much isn't good for a person.

Another thing we can do is pray! Let God help instead of trying to do it all on our own. God will find the answers we need. God knows all of our needs.

Love is very important. Love is one thing there is never too much of! I am so glad I am a part of the church family, a part of God's family, and obeying Him. When we read the Bible, God's word keeps us strong so we don't go astray. Then we can be strong in our faith. If we don't have faith, then we don't have much to go on! But the more we read the Bible, the better we can understand what God wants us to do.

Shirley Isbell – Rolla, MO
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The world lost a gentle soul on October 25, 2013. I had only known Lois about a year and a half, and I found her to be so kind, so gentle. She had suffered a back injury sometime

before I met her. Surgery to correct the problem was not successful, and she lived in constant pain. Most recently, she had gall bladder surgery. We visited her on Thursday morning and found that she would be going home that afternoon. Little did we know that in just a little over 24 hours, she would leave this world.

Her death brought me great sadness—not for her but for me. I rejoiced that she was no longer in pain, but I cried for no more visits with her, no more sweet Facebook messages from her. Our loss is heaven's gain, but I rejoice that I will see her again someday—in that great beyond. Farewell, Lois.

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I am grateful for what I am and have. My thanksgiving is perpetual.. O how I laugh when I think of my vague indefinite riches. No run on my bank can drain it for my wealth is not possession but enjoyment.

Henry David Thoreau

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Wanted: Are you a writer? Have you written down thoughts that you would be willing to share with Christian sisters? Please submit them to Evelyn Waite for consideration for future publication. You may submit them via email to: evelynwa@fidmail.com or you may submit typewritten copies to Evelyn personally. Sunrise is growing. Thank you for your support!

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