

A Thanksgiving Engine  
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Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ephesians 5:19b-20

Perhaps you have experienced the same thing. The COVID malaise has left me tentative. For example, an opportunity would arise to do something good in the future. I would normally jump at something like that, but now I hesitate. “What if COVID surges again?” “What if my effort is for naught?” “What if nobody does it with me?” I have caught myself saying “no” to things that I really want to do. What’s wrong with me? If you can relate to my struggle, then the question is for all. What’s wrong with us?

Let me suggest a solution. We can’t stop COVID, but we can tap into the God-given engine that motivates and moves us toward good things. What is that engine? Gratitude.

We are made in the image of God. Think of it like a reflection. Since God loves us, we should reflect that love back to God. This is gratitude. In fact, it’s a lot more than gratitude. It’s praise, prayer, and worship. As Luther put it, “We should fear, love and trust in God above all things.”

We keep receiving from God and sending our praises back to him. The more grateful we are, the more blessings of God that we recognize. The more blessings we see, the more we have to be thankful for. It revs up like an engine! It’s our thanksgiving engine.

Why does a car have an engine? The point of an engine is to make the car move. In the same way, our thanksgiving engine is there to get us moving. Whatever God has given us is to be used selflessly as a blessing to others. If we don’t recognize the blessings from God and give Him thanks for them, then we don’t really know or appreciate what we have to give. When our thanksgiving engine is revved up, we’re ready to send those blessings to whomever would benefit.

It may seem a bit clichéd, but I love the practice of counting your blessings. Take a moment and push away all the troubles and worries. Simply list out as many gifts from God that you can muster. Start with basic things like food, clothing and shelter. Move on to your relationships and all those who share life with you. Don’t forget to thank God for being God and saving us through Jesus! That’s a big one. Don’t stop until your cup runs over in blessing! Chances are, after listing all those blessings you’ll be much more ready to step out and share those blessings with others.

I would encourage you to do this and see how God has uniquely equipped you to serve. Just think of what we could accomplish in God’s name with our thanksgiving engines at full throttle!