

DEMONSTRATING THANKFULNESS

Robyn Passante, who wrote “29 beautiful stories that will restore your faith in humanity” for *Success* magazine, tells about Trail Angel Mary.

In 2001, Mary Parry was homeless. Her life had taken a tough turn. Living in a tent right off the Appalachian Trail, she earned the nickname Trail Angel Mary from the hundreds of hikers she helps each year. Mary discovered a new sense of joy and purpose in her life, and her life began to improve when she focused on helping others.

The Appalachian Trail is a marked hiking trail in the Eastern United States extending between Springer Mountain in Georgia and Mount Katahdin in Maine. It is about 2,200 miles long and is the longest hiking-only trail in the world.



“Helping them is my way of thanking God for Him bringing those people to me when I was having a rough time in my life,” she said.

Mary is just one of many people in the world who have found that serving others is the best way to show our thankfulness to God for what He has done for us.

Another example ...

When Scott Macaulay was 24 years old, his parents were going through a divorce. His family was arguing and torn apart by bitterness. And Scott dreaded the thought of Thanksgiving. He wanted to share Thanksgiving with people who wouldn't take the holiday for granted.

He decided to put an ad in his local paper inviting anyone who might be alone on that holiday to come to his house for dinner. He cooked a big meal. A few people came, and they all had a good time.

So, Scott decided that this was the truest way to celebrate Thanksgiving, and he's done this every year since. He has fed police officers, newly widowed or divorced people, immigrants who are new to the United States and still learning English, and people who have just moved to his town and haven't made friends yet.

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Scott tells of one woman suffering from Parkinson's disease who hadn't left her senior living facility in seven years. When she heard about his Thanksgiving dinner, she hired an ambulance to drive her to his house. She had a great time at his dinner and cried when it was time to leave.



Scott said that he wants the theme of his life to be *Brighten the Corner Where You Are*. He is a great example of how the spirit of thankfulness spreads joy to others – not just on Thanksgiving Day, but the year around. It's a life-changing exercise.

Jesus said it:

Give and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you (Luke 6:38 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter