

Still a Year to Be Thankful

Thanksgiving Day is straight ahead. For many of us – perhaps most of us, especially in health care – this has been a very difficult and challenging year. But that doesn't mean we should not be thankful.



I read about Jean Schnelle, who works on a unique crisis hotline – Butterball Turkey's Turkey Talk-Line – fielding calls from frantic cooks who have left the giblets in the turkey, forgotten to defrost it, or accidentally locked the turkey in the oven and set it on the self-cleaning cycle.

One caller, however, had a unique, and heartwarming, dilemma. A woman from Florida called to ask some cooking advice. As she and Jean talked, the woman revealed that her home had recently been seriously damaged by a hurricane.

As her husband tried to patch up the holes in the roof, and her children cleared litter and parts of the house out of the yard, this woman attempted to cook a turkey in her storm-battered kitchen. Jean was astonished that the woman would still put forth the effort after all the family had been through. The woman replied that, of course, they would celebrate Thanksgiving, for they still had so much to be thankful for.

Many of us have been battered in one way or another this year – storms, deaths and disappointments in our nursing centers, stresses of one kind or another at home, and some unrest in the quietness of our hearts. Shallow Christians give thanks only when the sun shines, but many of us are weathered Christians. Life has not treated us gently, but even in the midst of the tempest, we give thanks.

Jesus told us not to worry:

Do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? (Matthew 6:25-26 ESV).

Does that mean that birds never have to worry about anything? Not at all. I don't know if birds have the mental capacity to worry. If birds could worry, though, they would have a great deal to worry about – jet engines, oil slicks, plate-glass windows, although none of these existed in Jesus' time. But there were other dangers, from predators, for example.

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Still, the truth of the matter is that God has created a bountiful world that is sufficient to meet the needs of all. And God is involved in that world. He sees even the smallest sparrow fall from the sky.

And we are the crown jewel of God's creation. Jesus assures us that God will meet our needs. We are never beyond God's love and God's care.



Such love and grace demand our praise, our thanksgiving to Him.

– Beecher Hunter