

SIMPLE PLEASURES

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“You make known to me the path of life;
in your presence there is fullness of joy;
at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”
(Psalm 16:11)

About two years ago, I wrote a blog called Cultivate Contentment as an exercise in spiritual self-discipline. I wanted to reflect upon the many everyday blessings of God in my life.

Those pleasure we often take for granted. On the positive side, we enjoy a good night's sleep, enjoyment of food and drink, fellowship with close friends, beautiful music, or nature's splendor. On the negative side, we welcome freedom from natural disasters, travel problems, ill-health, criminality, accidents, and malfunctions of all types.

This new blog is a brief reminder to myself about the necessity to continually cultivate contentment by pondering life's simple pleasures as gifts from God. Here are three examples.

The first is a wild bird that we cared for. My grandchildren named him, Poopy McPato. He stayed with us a month and towards the end became very friendly. Sometimes, when I sat in the living room, he flew to the armrest and visited me. Other times, he perched on my knee. It was a pleasure to watch him and share a few moments of existence together.



The second is our terrace. We are blessed to have many plants with vibrant colors and pretty flowers. This is one of them.

The third simple pleasure is a picture. This is very meaningful for me. A few years ago very special friends of mine from South Africa gave us a, large, beautiful tablecloth. But, we could not bear the idea of staining it with spaghetti sauce or spilled wine. So, finally after a few years we decided to divide it into segments. One big piece we put over our bed and this smaller segment we hung in our living room. Every day it reminds me of the blessing of Rob and Penny, my far away friends.



I sometimes list my blessings, though I should do it more. May I suggest that you develop the habit of listing your simple pleasures and God's benefits? You can use the format of Psalm 103:1-3.

Step 1 (verses 1 and 2): "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

Step 2 (verse 3a): “who forgives all your iniquity”

Step 3 (verse 3b): “who heals all your diseases”

Step 4 (verse 4a): “who redeems your life from the pit”

Step 5 (verse 4b): “who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy”

Step 6 (verse 5): “who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's”