

NOVEMBER 2025

THANKSGIVING 2025

As we prepare to celebrate Thanksgiving, the day after tomorrow, I would like to share my thoughts on thankfulness and gratitude.

The website, verywellmind.com, defines the word **gratitude** as "a positive emotion that involves being thankful and appreciative and is associated with several positive mental and health benefits."

The Bible describes **gratitude** as "the state of being grateful; a warm and friendly feeling toward a benefactor, kindness awakened by a favor received; thankfulness." **It typically refers to our expression of appreciation to God.**

I have a client who consistently expresses **gratitude**, regardless of his current circumstances. **Think about it – God uses life's challenges to equip us for the next battle better, so let's be thankful for the valleys as well as the peaks.**

If you try to take a shortcut or avoid the battle altogether, you will only cheat yourself. You will deny the blessing that awaits you because you develop resourcefulness, resilience, and discipline from each battle.

My friend **Dave South** sent me an inspiring devotional recently from "The Twin Thieves," by Steve Jones and Lucas Jadin. Its title, "**Struggle is a Necessity**":

"There was once an old man sitting on his porch. As he sipped his morning coffee, something on the ground caught his eye. It was moving. Looking closer, he realized it was a cocoon.

Watching it struggle, the kind older man decided to help the cocooned butterfly escape. So, he went into the house and grabbed a tiny pair of scissors. He bent down on one knee and gently cut the cocoon open without harming the butterfly.

And soon after, the butterfly died.

You know why? The butterfly wasn't prepared for the world outside. It wasn't strong enough to fly. It's the process of struggling out of the cocoon that strengthens the butterfly. If it doesn't have the opportunity to grow through adversity, it never will."

This Thanksgiving season, let's give thanks to God for the struggles that strengthen us and make us more resilient and resourceful.



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Please take three minutes to conduct this exercise with me; you will be amazed at how your outlook for today and this Thanksgiving weekend will be elevated.

Turn off the TV and the radio now and list **16 things** you are thankful for now. Yes, 16. Once you get started, you'll discover you could easily have listed several times that number.

Here is my Gratitude List (yes, with 16 items!). I encourage you to recognize the blessings of your family and friends, and surprise yourself by identifying other areas of gratitude:

3 minutes



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I am thankful for:

1. **The holy, living God** who created the world and made a place for me in it – and the wonders of this world—when we observe hummingbirds, flowers blooming, the smell of fresh cut grass, and, of course, the fragrant aroma of turkey & dressing.
2. **Jesus Christ**, who died for my sins and shows me grace every day.
3. **Rebecca Barksdale** – the love of my life, a woman of incredible faith, who encourages, inspires, and patiently shows her understanding of me.
4. **My son, Drew, and his wife, Lynsi, and my daughter, Katie, and her husband, Michael**, and their three children – my grandchildren – each live to honor God.
5. **My frustrations, struggles, and failures**: While they frustrate me, they also develop my patience and resilience, and they prepare me for even greater successes to come.
6. **Former "Voice of the Texas Aggies" Dave South**, who began the **Run With Endurance** devotionals more than 15 years ago, and who still faithfully sends me devotionals every day.
7. **The 177 subscribers of my morning devotional, Run With Endurance**, who start their day with positivity (If you'd like to subscribe – it's free with a money-back guarantee, [please email me here](#). Please type **"SIGN ME UP, FLETCH"** in the subject line).
8. **My clients and friends who serve as my mentors**, as well as my mentors who have gone to be with Jesus (most recently, my friend, client, and mentor, **Gary Fickes**).
9. **Jesse Cole and the Savannah Bananas**, because they consistently make me smile with every post on LinkedIn; Rebecca and I had the opportunity to see them play in Houston in September. They
10. **Squire** (no, that's not a typo – he capitalizes the first two letters) **Rushnell**, who created the **"Godwinks"** books. Look for his **Hallmark "Godwinks Christmas" movies** this Christmas season. They are annually the most-watched faith movies on TV.
 - By the way, **"When God Winks"** and **"Godwink Christmas"** are precious Christmas gifts ([I make no commissions on these books – I love to share the message](#)).
11. **Up-and-down discipline** – As of 5:15 this morning, I have been off soft drinks (both Dr Pepper and Coca-Cola) for just over six hours. Please pray for me! a. **Chocolate** – it helps when I need a pick-me-up, particularly when not consuming soft drinks.
12. **Snowball, our brave three-legged kitty** – He passed away last July, just before his seventh birthday. He saved our puppy Doc's life when they were only a couple of months old.
13. **Praying friends and clients**: I have a circle of friends **who I pray with and who pray for me**, and we close our conversations with prayer, whether in person or on the phone. It's amazing when your time together ends with a prayer of thanksgiving to God and lifting up friends and family.
14. **Chambers of Commerce** – for their executive directors, staff, and board members who are passionate about serving and making their communities stronger. They are the voice of small business in our communities.
15. **The nonprofits that serve our communities** and are, like the chambers of commerce, heroes every single day.
16. The kind folks I've featured on my podcast, **15 on Fridays with Fletch**. Many of them have shared insights they have never publicly revealed.

And a bonus: **Clients who are committed to serving their local communities** and who make a difference – they are the **Go-Givers**



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I appreciate the kindness from **clients who have inspired me:**

- **The late Allen Samuels** – my client of 15 years, who created a legacy of doing good for his community
- **Hall of Fame Rodeo Announcer Bob Tallman** – we've worked together for over 25 years, and I love his passion and his boldness of faith in action
- **Dalworth Restoration** – my client who introduced me to the concept of "**Restoring Kindness**", where the company dedicates its entire team and resources to doing kind things for others
- **My friends and clients Dane and Cathy Bailey**, who launched a nonprofit called **Autos of Love**. On Nov. 13, they donated their third pre-owned car to uplift someone's life. Check out the story [here \(Star-Telegram\)](#), [here \(The Business Press\)](#), and [here \(Fort Worth Report\)](#). You'll also see a feature on Monday morning, Nov. 24, on WFAA News 8.
- **My friends and clients - too many to name, but you know who you are** – who have taught me that relationships add meaning and a sense of purpose to life

Realization of who I am: My late client, Bart Cooper from Waco, once observed, "John Boy, you are an acquired taste. **Not everyone will want to drink from your cup, but those who do will be better off for it!**"



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Now that I've completed my list, it may be time for a Coke or Dr Pepper – or at least some Twinkies and Ding Dongs.

Finally, there's a book, "**The Go-Giver**" by **Bob Burg** and **John David Mann**, that has a simple premise: **You can never out-give God, so be generous and be blessed!**

Thank you for being my friend.
Rebecca, Doc the Puppy, and the spirit of Snowball, the late three-legged kitty, and I wish you a Happy Thanksgiving and a very Merry Christmas!



*We wish you a
Merry Christmas!
Rebecca, Snowball, Doc and John*