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Thanksgiving: Serving up the perfect prescription

Here at the Anderson home, November's prescription is simply "Thanksgiving." And, each year we struggle to remember that this concept isn't just a repetitive annual family holiday, but a seasonal attitude takes front and center. For example, a family video favorite the "Veggie Tales of Madame Blueberry." It's an animated tale of a "very" materialistic French berry, who suffers from great sadness as a result of her extreme materialism. Ironically, she is not cured by prescription drugs (as one might expect) but through discovering the attitude of thanksgiving. If you haven't seen it, you're missing out on a delightfully funny, and truly important lesson. And, when our girls require that familiar fix on being thankful, guess what? In goes our favorite "Veggie Tales" video... Again.

My wife, Stephanie and I are truly amazed on other occasions, when, for no real incentive of personal gain, the girls display a genuinely mature attitude of thankfulness... usually at night prayer time. They've memorized 1 Chronicles 16:34 "Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good." And, my heart swells each time I hear their prayers, innocently hoping this thankfulness lasts forever.

Most of our thankfulness issues stem from television's constant bombardment to make us want more stuff. If perhaps, we were all thankful for the stuff we already have, consumer spending could dip dangerously below Wall Street's typical expectations. If we feel our kids should be more grateful, then we as adults should demonstrate restraint where material possessions are involved. We must also remember our children imitate our actions. Here are a few other tips that may be helpful in your family.

- Give them responsibility. Children who do chores are more thankful.
- Express a thankful attitude. Positive daily focus rewards the many small blessings present in our lives.
- Encourage interaction. Children feel gratitude when they're actively helping others.
- Volunteer. Donate your time. Empathy grows with thankfulness.
- Do without. Sacrifice causes us to be a little more grateful.
- Make being thankful part of your family's daily conversation. If it's family tradition, then take time to give thanks for your daily bread.
- Be patient. Don't expect thankfulness to develop overnight. The skills to better thankfulness can require weeks, months and even years of practice and reinforcement.

Maybe the "Veggie Tales" creators are onto some sound, remarkable, medical advice. These "Thanksgiving" prescriptions should not be served alone, but be taken with a happy, healthy serving of the season's turkey, dressing, and pumpkin pie.

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