

My Thanksgiving List

Once upon a time, many married years ago, I made a list, a thanksgiving list. It wasn't the typical Thanksgiving list - *What do I buy for the meal?* No, this list wasn't about food but about my heart. It was the best list I ever made.

My list grew out of a particular skill I have: I can pick out faults with an expertise that would dazzle you if it weren't so obnoxious. And that was the issue impacting my marriage. I could easily see my husband's faults; I was not as skilled at seeing his strengths. At times (i.e. often) I missed his strengths entirely. I was a most unhappy wife. (He undoubtedly was unhappy too – I didn't notice.)

Then, out of the blue, I had an idea, one so contrary to my "skill," it had to come from the Lord. I would make a list of how my husband was like God. Really? Yes. It seemed innocuous enough, no harm in trying, though I didn't think I'd come up with much of a list. And I had no idea that my thanksgiving list would transform my perception of the man I'd married.

I started in. *He's committed to me...* Well, yes, that's true. I'd taken it for granted. *He's responsible...* Hadn't paid much attention to that before. *He's a man of peace...* My heart calmed. *He's kind...* I love kindness. *He has my best interests at heart...* Warmth towards him began to grow. And so did my thanksgiving list.

Issue after issue, strength after strength, goodness after goodness. I'd never realized I had such wealth. My list opened my eyes and changed my heart. My thanksgiving list – just a *list* - unveiled his gifts. It taught me to delight in him. It was the best list I ever made.

A Thanksgiving Suggestion

Think of someone who you can easily criticize – outwardly or in your heart. Now ask the Lord to show you how they are like God. Start your list. (And watch how it changes your heart.)

May the Lord open your eyes to unexpected and lovely surprises.