

*Connected to Joy through Divine Adventures*

*When doubts filled my mind, your comfort gave me renewed hope and cheer. The Lord is my fortress; my God is the mighty rock where I hide.*

*Psalm 94:19, 22 (CEB)*

My personal intentions are an important part of my nighttime falling asleep ritual, and they are renewed in my mind as soon as I awake each morning. Recently, I have felt an urge to add the gift of joyfulness to my life. I feel I can start each day with the realization that the hours of the day are a blessing because I am a child of God. When I start out with that thought, I remember what I am, whose I am, and ask how I can add adventure to the day ahead.

Each week, I struggle with choosing a topic and scripture to support it. The best thing about writing is getting affirmations from what was written. But more important to me is getting really good ideas from Sandy. You know the one. You know that I often refer to her as “my bride.” Amazingly, the good in our relationship comes from me listening to her ideas about the topic for the weekly TEDDY TALK words.

The incessant lack of ideas for topics causes me to ask my bride’s advice. This morning at a brunch, I casually asked, “Any ideas about a topic for today’s talk?” With no hesitation, she said, why don’t you choose to write about the feelings and lessons from church hymns. Immediately, a hymn came to mind. It is not my favorite by any means, but the words for “Count Your Blessings” are still dancing around in my brain. As a child in an Apostolic Faith environment, I sang the words with our sparse congregation at least once every few weeks. Do you remember these words?

*When upon life's billows you are tempest tossed, when you are discouraged,  
thinking all is lost, count your many blessings, name them one by one,  
and it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.*

*count your blessings, name them one by one;  
count your blessings, see what God hath done...*

*Johnson Oatman, Jr., pub.1897...*

Remembering the song conjured the idea of being joyful and of greeting each day with delight. The memory encourages me to realize each day holds much to be thankful for. I am joyful when I encounter beauty, experience kindness, hear a giggle, or see the smile on a child’s face. Even the smallest things add up to a bounty of blessings by the end of the day, and I offer my gratitude to God for the gift. At day’s end when I give thanks for what has blessed me, I am content and at peace.

When all is right with our souls, we can confidently repeat Psalm 144:15:

*Happy are the people to whom such blessings fall.*

*Amen??*

Peace always,

Ted