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Pause the Pace and Live in Thanks

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(This piece was written for aNew Season Ministry [1]...and posted here for you to hear...)

Do you remember when the time between school starting and Thanksgiving seemed like ages? Or how the time from Thanksgiving to Christmas crept by as you awaited that magical morning with anxious anticipation?

Not anymore, right?! The older we get, the more we experience, the greater our lists of responsibilities grow, the faster time flies by. *'In the blink of an eye'* becomes more and more relatable to real life.

That's why taking time to look back and linger on the life lessons the Lord provides becomes so much more important. If we don't, it's easy to get into a mad rush and mindlessly meander right past His preparation and plans for us!

Many days, I feel like the stresses and messes of life consume so much of my time and energy. Other times, I reach the end of the week without any awareness of the significance in the last seven days. Unless I really pause to seek out what God desires for me to learn, apply and pass on, I'd easily miss my little mission!

That's one reason I write. It's my time of reflection. And recently as I sat down to scribble out some ideas for an article, I realized I wasn't paying attention again. I've been letting His lessons slip by. I needed to pause, put myself into a place where my heart's open to linger on the Lord's path for me and seek peace with where He's put me today.

I needed to focus on the gifts and blessings I'd been passing by in the fast pace of this mom's time. Because feeling blessed in abundance always leads to peace no matter the place....

I'm wondering if you'd like to linger a little, too. Together, let's take a moment to look at where we are right now as we discover gifts of grace and opportunities for thanks.

Join me as I reflect and align my attention on the blessings before me. NOW as we enter November, a month of giving and gratitude, what's more important than setting our minds straight to give abundant thanks?

Pause life's fast pace and ponder with me. Let's start by staring right into this simple verse that says so much:

'Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.' 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18

As I sit and reflect on what I've got to give gratitude for, God's right there in the rearview.

In the last few years I've had days...even months...of heart ache, exhaustion and soul-sorrow so excruciating I couldn't see straight.

I was broken. Beaten down.
But, I rejoice! Because looking back, I clearly see I've been so blessed! Yeah, He's in every circumstance so I can give thanks for it all.

By taking time to retrospect, I see how God's hand has been etching my exhaustion with unexpected plans for a blessed future I can't even fathom! He's used every ounce of my experience to knit together where I am this November. He's molded me into more of who I'm supposed to be using the tool of tough times.

I see why I had to wait and be worked on before I could receive gifts of today. And, all along, in Him, I've been whole…

How about you? Has stress and struggle plagued you? Do this life's problems stop you from seeing His bigger plan? Are you in such a rush, that you haven't slowed to see how God gives you ALL things

for the greater good and it all deserves gratitude!?

Pause now. Peer into the rearview. Can you see His hand working in your life preparing you, molding you, carving you out?

Let's take the road God paves and begin to see how today's pain or a broken past serves a beautiful purpose. That's when God's grace wraps itself around any heart and gratitude sets the pace!

Yeah, slow down and let God's grace and overwhelming gratitude set the pace…
Then we really can give thanks for ALL things and in ALL circumstances.

Let's practice it together today and all month as we prepare for this precious time of year. With time ticking by, we must create moments to pause and praise Him! Let's mindfully cultivate hearts overflowing with gratitude for our gifts, even those that come in unassuming packages.

Because He'll never get confused as He unconditionally covers you with His love and grace. So, give thanks!

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Links
[1] http://www.anewseason.net