

BE THANKFUL



AN ACTION PLAN FOR A RADICAL THANKSGIVING

BASED ON THE BOOK, *RADICAL*, BY DR. DAVID PLATT

FOR INDIVIDUALS & FAMILIES

- **Fast and pray for those who don't have enough to eat.**

For most of us in America, Thanksgiving is a time of feasting. But did you know that the world is facing a hunger crisis unlike anything it has seen in more than 50 years? According to the United Nations, over 1 billion people are undernourished today, up from 854 million in 2006. Poor nutrition is responsible for more than 5 million child deaths each year. Those living with hunger often suffer from learning disabilities, stunted growth, and vulnerability to disease.

On or around Thanksgiving this year, spend a day in fasting and prayer for the world's hungry. During your normal meal times, and whenever you feel a hunger pang, bring their need before our loving God.

If you are doing this exercise with young children, rather than asking them to fast, explain to them what you are doing and why. Talk to them about how not everyone in the world has enough food to eat. Together, ask God what else he would want you to do to help in overcoming the problem of hunger.

- **Discover what the Bible says about thankfulness to God.**

The Bible is full of references to thankfulness toward God. Find out just how full by using a concordance, topical Bible, or online reference tool like Bible Gateway to look up verses about thankfulness in the Bible. You're going to find verses like "Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever" (Psalm 107:1). Verses like ". . . always giving thanks to God the Father for everything" (Ephesians 5:20).

Then go further: Choose one passage that seems especially relevant to you or your family. Meditate on it. Memorize it. Think about what it would mean to live it out, and then act on that understanding. Last, read your chosen passage aloud at your Thanksgiving celebration this year and tell about your insights.

- **Give a secret gift of money to someone you know.**

In tough economic times like these, you probably have several friends and acquaintances who are hurting financially this Thanksgiving. Maybe your own finances aren't great either. But if possible, pick at least one person who would

be encouraged by a gift of money. Send whatever cash you can afford to this person, along with an anonymous note of encouragement. The money may not fundamentally change this person's situation, but it will certainly give him or her something to be thankful for this Thanksgiving.

I know this kind of off-the-grid giving is contrary to what we're used to. No, you won't get a tax deduction. But I think it is good to do sometimes. It's perhaps the most literal fulfillment of Jesus' command of secret giving (Matthew 6:3-4). And you know what else? It's fun!

- **Invite an international visitor to your Thanksgiving dinner.**

The United States is one of only two countries to celebrate Thanksgiving (the other is Canada). The American harvest celebration has its roots in the meal shared by the Pilgrim colonists and Wampanoag Indians at Plymouth Plantation in 1621. Thanksgiving became a national holiday in 1863 by proclamation of Abraham Lincoln. Its name comes from the motive to give thanks to God for his blessings at the time of reaping.

Think of a newcomer to our country—perhaps an international student or recently resettled refugee family—whom you could invite to share your Thanksgiving celebration this year. Prepare to share with your guest(s) the history and meaning of the day. More importantly, share with this person what you are personally thankful to God for.

- **Comfort a hurting brother or sister in Christ.**

Think about people in your church who might feel as if they don't have much to be thankful for this season. A widow who recently lost her husband. A family whose breadwinner has been out of work for months. A single man who received a frightening diagnosis.

The Bible says that in the church we are to weep with those who weep. So don't feel you have to fix anyone's problem, or perhaps say much of anything at all. But give encouragement, a listening ear, and best of all, your presence. This is the church alive.

Return to

WaterBrookMultnomah.com/Radical

in December for the Action Plan for a Radical Christmas
and in January for An Action Plan for a Radical New Year

WHAT PART OF THE GOSPEL IS OPTIONAL?

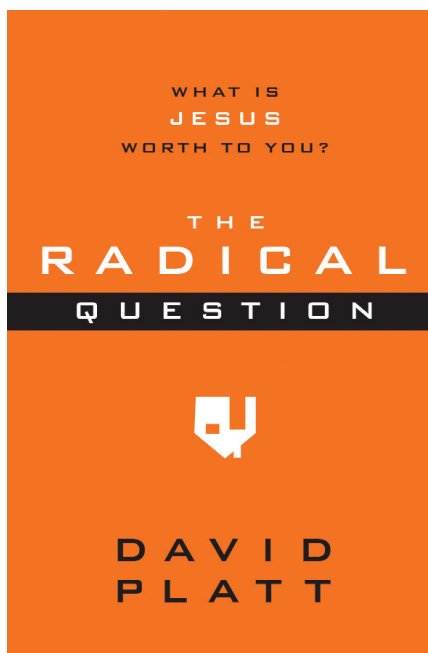
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“David Platt challenges Christians to wake up, trade in false values rooted in the American Dream, and embrace the notion that each of us is blessed by God for a global purpose... This is a must-read for every believer!”

—WESS STAFFORD, President and CEO, Compassion International

Radical is a daring call for Christians to believe and obey the gospel according to Jesus—even if it flies in the face of success according to the American church. David Platt reveals what can happen when we exchange our convenient beliefs for authentic discipleship.

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