

Thirty Days of Thankfulness

November 2, 2021

United Thank Offering

By Heather L. Melton, staff officer for the United Thank Offering



Over the past few weeks, I've heard so many people say, "I think people are tired and they don't want to add another thing to their lives." Each time I hear this it resonates with me. I'm tired; my guess is that the person who says it is also tired. If we are honest with ourselves, it's safe to say that we are all pretty emotionally exhausted. Many of us have found that boundaries or systems that used to protect our downtime disappeared with the pandemic, while others are experiencing the exhaustion that comes from being disconnected from community, or the kind of tired that comes from wondering what going to the store will look like this time. I know the struggles that I've had since March 2020, and that those I care about have had, and I can only imagine the innumerable ways people are experiencing the collective grief, trauma, and pain that the pandemic has caused.

So where does this take us? For me, I started thinking about the passage from Matthew chapter 11. Jesus has praised John the Baptist and told everyone they messed up by not listening to what John had to say. Jesus then stops and gives thanks to God. Then we get the passage that most of us know: "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." Notice, give thanks, and rest—that's what I hear in this passage, and it might be what we all need to hear right now.

To that end, I am committing to 30 days of gratitude. One of the traditions at our house on Thanksgiving is to ask everyone to share one thing they are thankful for from the past year. Some years, the gratitude flows easily; sometimes, people need time to think or need help coming up with something. This year, I am taking the time to think about this question long before we sit down to eat.

"Almighty God, You are the giver of every good and perfect gift. We know how easily we take and how often we reluctantly give. Give us the gift of grateful hearts, that we may want to share freely with others all You have given us. Amen."