

**Thursday, November 26, 2020**  
**Devotional Thoughts from Pastor Jim Murr...**

**"I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound.  
In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger,  
abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me."**

*Philippians 4:12-13*

If you are reading this devotion on its appointed day, it is Thanksgiving Day! First, I want to give you encouragement if you are not spending Thanksgiving Day the way that you would like to be spending it. You may be alone. Some family members may not be present the way they would be in a normal year. Take heart! Thanksgiving is still Thanksgiving when we remember the God who loves us and is with us all the time!

I'm thinking that there are some secrets that tend to float around on Thanksgiving. The secret to a really moist turkey. The secret to really good stuffing. (Actually, it's no secret. Just put in three sticks of butter, and it'll be good!) Good cooks often tend to like to keep their recipes a secret. Kind of a funny thing. I guess they don't want anyone else's food to be quite as good as theirs. I get it.

To me, the biggest "secret" for Thanksgiving, and especially for THIS Thanksgiving, is the "secret" of being thankful or content under any set of circumstances. Those who know the "secret" have a contentment and a joy that seems to contradict the circumstances of life. Those who don't know the "secret" might ask a thankful person, "What's your secret for being so joyful and peace-filled in spite of everything that's going on?" As Christians, maybe we can spill the beans this year a little bit more than other years.

The Apostle Paul had trouble keeping a secret. He said, "I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need." And no sooner had he written those words, he began telling everyone his secret. His secret is this: "I can do all things through him who strengthens me."

This is like the person who cooked the turkey coming right out and saying, "This is how I keep the turkey so moist..." or "This is why everyone loves my pumpkin pie..." Paul was saying, "This is how I stay thankful no matter what life is like ... I borrow Jesus' strength!"

If you do happen to be with family or friends this Thanksgiving, maybe you could look for the opportunity to "spill the beans" about how everyone can endure a year like 2020 or any other challenge in life. The secret is, don't try to endure it with your own strength. It's not about thinking positively, or keeping a stiff upper lip (whatever that means), or finding ways to escape reality. The secret is recognizing that Jesus is in charge, and trusting His Word and His promises. You can do "all things through Him who strengthens you!"

God's Peace!  
Pastor Jim