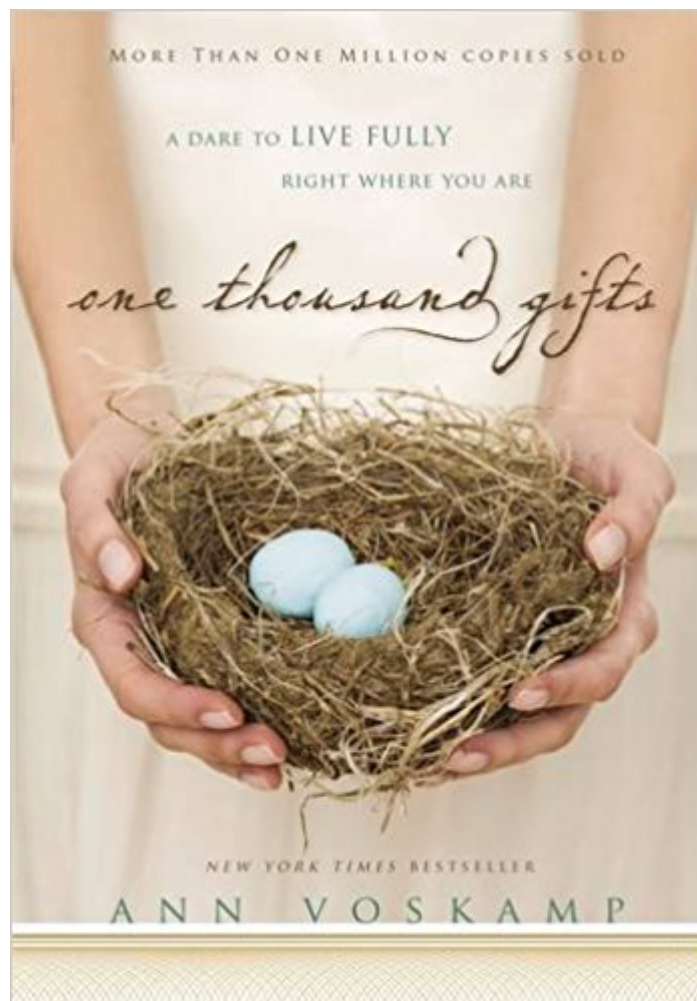




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One Thousand Gifts: A Dare To Live Fully Right Where You Are



Synopsis

Just like you, Ann Voskamp hungers to live her one life well. Forget the bucket lists that have us escaping our everyday lives for exotic experiences. 'How,' Ann wondered, 'do we find joy in the midst of deadlines, debt, drama, and daily duties? What does the Christ-life really look like when your days are gritty, long--and sometimes even dark? How is God even here?' In *One Thousand Gifts*, Ann invites you to embrace everyday blessings and embark on the transformative spiritual discipline of chronicling God's gifts. It's only in this expressing of gratitude for the life we already have, we discover the life we've always wanted...a life we can take, give thanks for, and break for others. We come to feel and know the impossible right down in our bones: we are wildly loved--by God. Let Ann's beautiful, heart-aching stories of the everyday give you a way of seeing that opens your eyes to ordinary amazing grace, a way of being present to God that makes you deeply happy, and a way of living that is finally fully alive. Come live the best dare of all!

Book Information

Hardcover: 240 pages

Publisher: Zondervan; 1st edition (January 26, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0310321913

ISBN-13: 978-0310321910

Product Dimensions: 5.8 x 0.9 x 8.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 2,314 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #2,777 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #26 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Christian Living > Personal Growth](#) #35 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Christian Living > Inspirational](#) #52 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Christian Living > Spiritual Growth](#)

Customer Reviews

Ann Voskamp invites us to slow down, to learn how to live the full life of eucharist (with grace, thanksgiving, joy) regardless of circumstances. With lovely word pictures inspired by everyday life in her family and on her farm, she writes about her struggle to live joyfully amid sin and sorrow and suffering. (WORLD Magazine)

Just like you, Ann Voskamp hungers to live her one life well. Forget the bucket lists that have us

escaping our everyday lives for exotic experiences. 'How, ' Ann wondered, 'do we find joy in the midst of deadlines, debt, drama, and daily duties? What does a life of gratitude look like when your days are gritty, long, and sometimes dark? What is God providing here and now?' In *One Thousand Gifts*, Ann invites you to embrace everyday blessings and embark on the transformative spiritual discipline of chronicling God's gifts. As Ann discovered, when we give thanks, we find ourselves wildly loved by God. In expressing gratitude for the life we already have, we discover the life we've always wanted---a life we can take, give thanks for, and break for others. Let Ann's beautiful, heart-aching stories of the everyday give you a way of seeing that opens your eyes to thanksgiving, a way of being present to God that makes you deeply happy, and a way of living so you are not afraid to die. Come feast at the table of joy.

I think this is one of those reviews that I'm going to take some heat over because I know this book and the author are very popular in Christian circles right now. That's why I wanted to read it myself, because I had heard so much about it. First, the positive. I know several bloggers who are sharing their own 1000 gifts/gratitude lists and I'm always blessed to read them. I have kept my own accounting of what I call "grace notes" for years so I understand the blessing of looking for things to be thankful for. Voskamp shares from her heart with stories about her family and her own spiritual journey, and I think anyone reading this book would come away with a heightened sense of looking for God's grace in daily life whether it be having one's child come through surgery or the admiring the beauty of a full moon. I appreciate the encouragement to live life fully right where we are without feeling we need to work through a "bucket list" of daring experiences or exotic locations before we can be fulfilled. But, this was a difficult book for me to read. Voskamp is obviously a poet at heart but the entire book is sing-songy with long descriptions and awkward word phrases and metaphors that I found distracting. It doesn't read as someone would actually talk in real life conversation. As an example: "...tonight over our farm will rise the Great Hexagon of the blazing winter stars - Sirius, Rigel, ruby Aldebran, Capella, the fiery Gemini twins, and Procyon, and in the center, scarlet Betelgeuse, the red supergiant larger than twice the size of earth's orbit around the sun - and I will embrace the skin of a boy child that my body grew from a seed. The low heavens outside the paned windows fill with more snowflakes than stars, no two-stacked crystals the same; the trees in the wood draw in collective green breath to the still of January hibernation, and God in the world with birth ice from His womb, frost of heaven, bind the chains of the Pleiades, loose the cords of Orion, and number again the strands on my head." Those who like this kind of poetic narrative with mystical undertones will enjoy this book. Those who don't will likely struggle to find the message in the sea of

words. For me, it was just too much page after page, and it took me a while to finish the book because I had to take it in small doses. I was also wary of the mystical/contemplative spirituality/emergent church references, as she references those known to be mystics, panentheists, universalists, or New Age authors such as Brother Lawrence, Henri Nouwen, Annie Dillard, Brennan Manning, Sarah Ban Breathnach, Teresa of Avila, and Dallas Willard, among others. The influence of the teachings of these various authors is apparent in Voskamp's writing. In addition, I was uncomfortable with the chapter on making love to Jesus in which the author speaks of seeking communion with God in what can only be termed as sexual language, taking it to a level that I personally don't believe scripture intends. Voskamp writes, "Mystical union. This, the highest degree of importance. God as Husband in sacred wedlock, bound together, body and soul, fed by His body, quenched by His blood . . . God, He has blessed - caressed. I could bless God - caress with thanks. It's our making love. God makes love with grace upon grace, every moment a making of His love for us. . . . couldn't I make love to God, making every moment love for Him? To know Him the way Adam knew Eve. Spirit skin to spirit skin. . . The intercourse of soul with God is the very climax of joy . . . To enter into Christ and Christ enter into us - to cohabit." Scripture doesn't teach that our relationship with God is to be a sexual, orgasmic experience or that we are to know him the way Adam as husband knew Eve as his wife. Further, what are children and men supposed to do with the notion of making love to Jesus? Despite the doctrinal and personal issues with this book, I tried to stay focused on what I felt the author's intended message of the book was: live fully and abundantly in daily life by being thankful for the gifts that come from God's grace, no matter how small. I am inspired to live more fully in this kind of gratitude. This review is simply my opinion of what was actually in the book and not a reflection on the author herself, whom I do not know personally. Her writing style just doesn't appeal to me and I have to question some of the "theology" in the book which is why I recommend discernment when reading it.

This is not a how to, but more of a blog styled record of the author working through the issues that haunt her. She completely exposes herself sharing her thoughts and experiences in all of their beauty and ugliness as she hunts for reasons to be grateful. The writing is very romantic, flowery, and poetical *ÀfÂçÃ â -Ã â œ* which could be a turn off for some people, but I thought it was rather beautiful. Each entry is full of raw emotion and written as a string of consciousness thoughts and not structured essays. I will have to say this seems to be written for Ann to clarify her own thoughts and so on occasion I found it hard to follow, but the empathic bond created by one struggling human to another made the strength of her emotions and epiphanies hit me almost as hard as if they were my

own. This book is not for everyone, but for those who are attracted to it expect a soul wrenching experiences and a challenge to your own inconsistencies between belief and actions. For the full review and others visit [whymysylikesbooks dot blogspot dot com](http://whymysylikesbooks.blogspot.com)

I'm over 6,000! Once you read this life-changing book, you will be able to appreciate exactly what I mean! Ann Voskamp has shown us her heart and what the Lord Jesus Christ has done in her heart and can do in ours to bring us to the place in our lives where we don't take our lives for granted. We don't need to be envious of anyone else, and we can be thankful even in the midst of any pain that comes into our lives! Learn how to live fully right where you are, bringing joy and peace to your life and honor and glory to His!

Beautifully written autobiography of a woman's journey through life. It was a great encouragement to me as well as a challenge. The author learns in *One Thousand Gifts* to live life fully, embracing the pain and disappointments, counting it all joy. This book is her honest poetical account of her journey. I could not have enjoyed it more. And am living life differently. Thank you Ann!!!

One of the best books i have read in a long time! I am reading slowly, since Ann Voskamp has a deep understanding of our humanness! She is painfully honest from her life testimonies. I'm inspired by her reflective, poetic style of writing. For many years i have often wondered how it would be possible to be thankful in every situation! Ann beautifully describes the "Euchristeo" effect on our lives. it is definitely not a book to speed-read through, but she gently causes me to ask myself some deep questions. I like the phrase, "I can't fill with joy until I learn how to trust. The full life, the one spilling joy and peace, happens only as I come to trust the caress of the Lover, Lover who never burdens His children with shame or self-condemnation but keeps stroking the fears with gentle grace."I have bought several copies to give to friends, and i have also downloaded on my Iphone!

Linda Reinhardt

There are dazzling insights in every chapter. Real heart stoppers. That said, the writing style was difficult for me. Ann Voskamp has a gift for imagery, but I felt she sacrificed clarity in her attempts to be visceral. It was only because I found her insights so compelling that I continued to struggle with the unconventional, inverted sentence structures, the unpunctuated jumble of descriptors and hosts of adverbs stuck on the end of sentences and missing their "ly." It's obvious she is talented, but for the most part I felt I was reading a scribbled

journal rather than an edited book. Maybe that was the intent? And yes, I see the irony of complaining about a book that points out ingratitude is the cause of the Biblical fall. I give it four stars because the insights are well worth the work. I have many of them taped to my bathroom mirror. For them, I would read this book in Pig Latin.

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