



'It would have been enough...'

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My mother had a saying whenever the news proudly proclaimed that scientists had made a major new discovery of what some might call the 'blooming obvious', such as that babies need touch and smiles to thrive. She would roll her eyes, pronounce a loud 'Ha!', and retort, 'Mothers have known that for years!' We have known much since time immemorial that science is 'discovering' to be true.

One of the latest such 'truths' is the growing body of research suggesting that thankfulness is integral to maintaining and promoting mental health.¹ Over the last decade, research has shown that expressing gratitude to another person helps build wellbeing and social bonds. Expressing gratitude, in general, is associated with lower levels of anxiety, stress, and depression.²

I can hear my mother saying 'Ha!' and rolling her eyes once again.

But we should **not** be surprised or roll our eyes. All truth is God's truth, as both Augustine and Calvin wisely observed.³ Today in our culture the scientific method is seen as the most effective way of uncovering how the universe works. But the same is true in reverse – just because knowledge is ancient and not drawn from modern science does not necessarily make it invalid.

So, while I do have to ask who an agnostic or atheist is thankful to when practising 'daily gritudes',⁴ Scripture urges Christians to give thanks constantly and for all things to God,⁵ the one in whom all things have their origin. Thankfulness for all God's gifts has been one of the central features of Christian prayer since before the time of Jesus himself.

The Jewish hymn 'Dayenu', sung at Passover for centuries (if not millennia!), sums up this thankfulness. *Dayenu* roughly translates as 'it would have been enough'. In recounting the story of the Exodus, in each of the hymn's fifteen stanzas, the refrain says, 'Lord, it would have been enough'.

*If he had split the sea for us,
and had not brought us through to dry land,
Lord, it would have been enough⁶*

I wonder how often we pray that way?

Lord, it would have been enough that I woke and started my day with breakfast, but you showed me that sunrise on my walk to work through the car park.

Lord, it would have been enough that we saved that patient, but you let me see his family's relief and joy.

Lord, it would have been enough to have made it through my shift in one piece, but you gave me a friend with whom to talk and pray it over.

God is a generous giver. Twelve-basketfuls-of-leftovers generous.⁷ The current narrative in the media and our professions is about crisis and stress, overload and despair. While this challenging time can neither be denied nor ignored, neither can we forget thankfulness for the blessings with which God still daily showers us.

In editing this edition of *Triple Helix*, I have much to be thankful for. Firstly the topic of new technology. The authors in this edition have reminded me that we have so much to thank God for in modern medicine, from the pioneering surgery of John Hunter and Christian Barnard in previous centuries to the potential of AI and genome sequencing in diagnostics, robotics in surgery, and computers powered by neurones, in this. The authors have done a wonderful

job of balancing the potential for good and evil as they explore these emerging technologies. We hope you are similarly stimulated to thanksgiving and prayerful watchfulness.

I am also thankful to God for the fantastic creative team who pulled this edition together. The authors, in particular, deserve considerable credit for grappling with such complex, dense, and fast-moving ideas. I am also thankful for our Editor, David Smithard, for his creativity in networking, commissioning, and exploration of new ideas; Kevina Kiganda, our Digital

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It would have been enough if the Lord had given us good writers, but he also gave us all these other creative individuals. We hope you like what their combined efforts have produced.

Finally, our prayer is that we all find encouragement and thankfulness in our day-to-day lives, as we remember all God's abundant goodness to us amidst our trials and hardships. ◦

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5. For example: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 and Colossians 2:6-7
6. Dayenu. *Wikipedia*. bit.ly/3ZF9y64
7. Luke 9:17 [see Luke 9:10-17 for context]