



# Lofty News

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for all families and youth

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## *Grateful*

Up until about 3 years ago, I loved going out in the woods and sitting in a tree stand. If I didn't see any deer that morning, it was okay. It was the fact that I was sitting there, before sunrise, just waiting for God's green earth to come alive. That is so exciting to me! The morning sun slowly paints the ground and all the different species of trees with different colors become visible. On top of that, you have many animals waking up, scurrying through the leaves on the ground. It is so beautiful.

We, as people, take things like this for granted. I never realized that I took these things for granted until my crossbow broke. Not wanting to spend money for a new bow, I let it go, and never went out to the woods except on shot gun weekends. It just was not the same, but I didn't realize it until this year. A good friend called me up and asked if I was interested in a crossbow? He said he had located a like new one and that it had only been shot a very few times. It was cheap compared to most bows. I said yes, and since then I'm excited about going hunting again. I knew I could hunt in early October while things were still green and fresh in the cool of the mornings. I could spend time with the Lord God in His beautiful surroundings. It was such a thing, I didn't realize why I wasn't thrilled about going hunting.

I am so grateful for the things God has given me and my family. We are to look at the grace and favor around us, near us, in our homes and to give thanks. Life is full of beauty. Notice it. Notice the bumble bee. Smell the rain, and feel the wind. Ralph Waldo Emerson said "never lose an opportunity of seeing anything beautiful, for beauty is god's handwriting." We cannot possibly be crabby when we are grateful. We are hands open, heart open and lives open. Let's practice whispering a thank you for each thing we take for granted.

I thank God every morning when I am able to bend over and pull my socks on. Maybe that sounds crazy, but there was a period of time after I broke my back that I could not put my own socks on. I would rather be crazy and grateful than any other way.

Just as God made everything in the woods and on the ground, He made us also. He made us, He knows us and yet He still loves us. He made the beginning and the end. He knows our full story.

With this Christmas time upon us, may we remember that He came upon this earth for us. He came small and helpless, in a smelly barn, in a small manger. He loves us all and He is for us. I am grateful that His arms are big and wide open just for us.

No matter where we are at or what we have done, He is still for us. He still loves us. Thank you God for the beauty you created on this earth for your kids to enjoy. I am grateful for your love and all you bless us with.