

The Old Hickory

Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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ARE YOU THANKFUL?

We all have much to be thankful for, much more than we realize. I went to an auto parts store many years ago (in my younger “whippersnapper” days) and asked the clerk if he had a certain part for a particular model automobile. Instead of the usual reply of, *“Just a minute and I’ll check,”* he immediately answered, *“No.”* That encouraged me to ask, *“Do you know every part that is in stock just that quickly?”* To my surprise he answered, *“Yes.”* I just had to say it then: *“OK, name them!”*

Do you thank God for *EVERY* blessing He gives? (Be careful before you answer.) I could form a very long list of things to be thankful for, but I know I would overlook many. God blesses us in so very many ways it is not difficult to disregard many.

My list of things to be thankful for begins with **Jesus Christ**. As my soul faces an eternal future, I can appreciate what God has provided in order to remove the

sin barrier between us. (Isa. 59:2) He has given all men the opportunity to be reconciled to Him and have heaven. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3:16). I am thankful that God provided a sacrifice that would bear what I deserve because of my sins. How thankful we will become if we meditate upon the available "redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace." (Eph. 1:7). "But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." (Eph. 2:4-7).

I am thankful for the **word of God**. Jehovah did not leave man on earth without a standard of right and wrong. Certainly, "I know, O LORD, that a man's way is not in himself, Nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps." (Jer. 10:23). Man cannot accurately decide right and wrong without revelation from our Creator. Thus I am thankful "that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence." (2 Pet 1:3). We can please Him when we listen to and obey His instructions. "Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path." (Ps. 119:105). We should be thankful for His revelation which charts the course to heaven for us (Matt. 7:13-14).

Are you thankful for **brethren in Christ**? If you are not, certainly something is wrong. We all have ups and downs in life. We all have failures and successes.

How good it is that we can share our lives with those of like precious faith and receive help, strength, encouragement, understanding, and prayers. Just ask some brethren what it means to them for other Christians to care about their burdens when there is a serious illness, injury, or death in the family.

We do not appreciate our brethren like we should. Our brethren are family. Jesus said, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the gospel's sake, but that he will receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions; and in the age to come, eternal life." (Mark 10:29-30). Many Christians have had to forsake their physical families in their obedience to the gospel. Many have chosen Christ above their dearest relatives and most cherished possessions, making the sacrifice for Christ and the gospel. They love the Lord and His word above all. Loyalty to the Lord comes at a high cost, and not everyone is willing to pay it. Do we appreciate those who do? Many fall away (Luke 8:13; Heb. 6:6). Do we appreciate those who put forth the diligence to continue spiritual growth (2 Pet. 1:5-11) in order to insure that they don't fall away? Do we love the family of God?

More could be listed, but can you see the point? Do we realize that EVERYTHING we have comes from God? We should appreciate and be thankful enough for these things that we always put God first (Matt. 6:33) and put "things" in their proper perspective. We need to be thankful EVERY DAY, not just at certain times of the year. "I will praise the name of God with song And magnify Him with thanksgiving." (Psalm 69:30). Are you thankful?

- GFS

NEEDED: FIFTEEN MEN, EIGHTEEN FEET TALL!

A road was being laid through a swampy area, and a lieutenant reported to his commanding officer that the task was impossible. The mud was over the men's heads. The commander retorted, "Nonsense! Make out a requisition slip and I will see that you get anything you need, but do the job." In a few minutes the lieutenant laid a memorandum on the commander's desk which read, "NEEDED: FIFTEEN MEN, EIGHTEEN FEET TALL TO CROSS A FIFTEEN FOOT SWAMP."

God needs some spiritual giants "eighteen feet tall" to do his work today. He needs leaders of vision and determination like NEHEMIAH who will not fold up in the face of opposition and criticism nor allow the hindering spirits that be to prevent them from doing a great work. He needs leaders in the mold of JOSHUA, who accomplished in three days what his predecessor failed to accomplish in forty years because he dared to take God at His word and venture forth in faith. He needs leaders with the optimism of a CALEB who will go forth claiming victory while the doubters discuss problems and whine about the impossibilities.

God needs spiritual giants like ANDREW who are not content until they have shared their glad discovery of Christ with others. He needs men like MATTHEW who will leave all to follow Christ. He needs God-fearing men like PETER and JOHN...men who will hazard their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus in the fashion of a BARNABAS. God needs righteous men like NOAH... patient men like JOB...virtuous men like JOSEPH. He needs preachers like AMOS who will see to it that men get God's message, whether they like it or not...TIMOTHY who is not only well read and versed

in the Scriptures, but one who has a genuine and anxious concern for the spiritual welfare of his hearers...PAUL who will preach not only to a great public assembly, but also to the individual, and that, from house to house.

Fourteen men! All of them "eighteen feet tall!" The fifteenth man? Oh, that honor is reserved for you when you become "filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God" (Philippians 1:11).

-Harry Gipson, via Bulletin Digest, January, 1983

GIVING HIM WHAT HE WANTS

Dr. A. C. Dixon used to tell of a lady who had a very spoiled and willful youngster. One day when a wasp flew in the window, the boy, seeing its brilliant colors began crying for it. At last the mother called to the servant who was tending the child. "What is the boy crying for? Will you please let him have it!" A few minutes later she was startled by a loud scream. "What's the matter?" the mother exclaimed in alarm. "He got what he wanted," was the servant's calm reply.

- Author unknown

> WORRY IS THE INTEREST PAID ON TROUBLE BEFORE IT IS DUE.

> WHEN YOU HAVE NOTHING LEFT BUT GOD, YOU BEGIN TO LEARN
THAT GOD IS ENOUGH.

SUNDAY'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: *“Three Keys to a Joyful & Productive Life!”* (text: Psalm 31:21-24; Rom. 12:12); Sunday evening: Bi-monthly singing & congregational meeting.