

THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

November 19

2023

“I Thank God...”

The apostle Paul in writing his second epistle to Timothy penned the words, “I thank God...” (2 Timothy 1:3). Here the inspired apostle expresses his thankfulness to God for Timothy and his genuine faith. However, as I reflect upon the words “I thank God” I too am reminded of some things in which “I thank God.” For instance...

I Thank God For His Beautiful Creation.

In Genesis 1:1; we learn, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” Yes, my friend, it was God who made the world and everything in it (Acts 17:24), and for that, I thank God. You see, “The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork” (Psalm 19:1). Likewise, “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead...” (Romans 1:20). Therefore, when I stand still and consider the wondrous works of God (Job 37:14) I thank God!

I Thank God For His Love.

The love of God, our Father in heaven, has been demonstrated towards us in that He gave His only begotten Son Jesus the Christ to come to this world to die for our sins, so that we might be saved. In John 3:16, we learn, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” We also learn in Romans 5:8, “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Once more, love in it’s highest form has been demonstrated towards us in that God the Father sent His Son Jesus the Christ to this world to lay down His life for us (1 John 3:16), and for this, I thank God!

I Thank God For Revealing His Will.

Sadly, there are too many today who don’t care about the will of God. However, I thank God for the Holy Spirit who has revealed the will of God to us (Ref. 1 Corinthians 2:10-12; 2 Peter 1:20-21), and I thank God for His all inspired word (2 Timothy 3:16). You see, we all should be thankful for the revealed will of God, and we must recognize that if we fail to understand and follow the revealed will of God, we will someday miss heaven, and be condemned to hell (Ref. Matthew 7:21-23). So knowing that, do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is (Ephesians 5:17).

I Thank God For All My Blessings.

Each day I thank God for supplying all of my daily needs, and for all of the benefits that He provides (Ref. Psalm 103:1-5). You see, it is God who makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust (Matthew 5:45), and it is God who gives to all life, breath, and all things (Acts 17:25), and because of this I thank God for all of my physical blessings, and I likewise thank God for all of my spiritual blessings that are in Christ (Ephesians 1:3).

I Thank God For My Family.

Every day I thank God for my parents who taught me the way that I should go (Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:1-4), and I thank Him for my wife whom He has given to me (Ecclesiastes 9:9), and for my children whom are a gift from Him (Psalm 127:3). Yes, every day I thank God for my family!

I Thank God For My Brethren.

Not only do I thank God for my physical family, but I also thank Him for my spiritual family. You see, I like the apostle Paul thank God always for my brethren (Ref. Romans 1:8; 1 Corinthians 1:4; Ephesians 1:16), and I am so thankful to God for my brethren, and for all of the support and encouragement which they provide to my family and I!

I Thank God For The Victory That Is In Jesus Christ.

In 1 Corinthians 15:57, the inspired apostle Paul penned, “But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, my friend, the victory over sin and death is only through Jesus Christ (Ref. 1 Corinthians 15) and for that, I thank God!

Once more, I thank God, and I encourage each and everyone of us to be like the Psalmist of old, and to always express our gratitude to the LORD our God. “O LORD my God, I will give thanks to You forever” (Psalm 30:12).

Truly Blessed

There is a song we sing that encourages us to “Count our blessings; name them one by one.” Frankly, I find that impossible! The material blessings abound (Matthew 6:19 – 34), and the spiritual blessings abound even more (Ephesians 1:3) From the air we breathe to the water we drink, to the inexplicable way our daily needs are met through the providence of Almighty God, how can the Christian say he is NOT blessed beyond measure?

Included with these blessings, have you considered the blessings of “life’s experiences?” (What else would you call them?) For example, how many Christians have positively influenced you in the work of the kingdom of Christ? Think of Timothy who “from his youth up,” had been taught by his mother and grandmother an “unfeigned faith.” Can you name all the bible class teachers who have contributed to your understanding of truth and righteousness? Which of them had the greatest influence on your continued diligence? How many gospel preachers have you known well, and still consider them “closer than a brother” because of the camaraderie you share? Then think of all the brethren you’ve known through the years and the several places where you met them and formed a strong bond via the blood of Christ.

Of those experiences, how many of you men received encouragement from one of the “old timers” who would say, “How about you serving communion in my place today?” just to introduce you to public participation in the worship? Do you remember the first time you were asked to publicly read the scriptures, or word a prayer? How many of us men were blessed to have elderly men purposely establish “men’s training classes” that taught us how to speak at the table, serve communion, word prayers, read the scriptures, and give “short talks?”

For the women, how many of you experienced one of the elderly women teaching you how to prepare communion, how to instruct the small children in a bible study, or how to be a lady that would eventually become a preacher’s wife or the wife of an elder or deacon? Which godly woman taught you by her example precisely what Paul told Titus women must be, and impressed upon you the meaning of Proverbs 31: 10 – 31? Such life experiences are priceless blessings!

Today’s children need the experience of being mentored by a couple unrelated to them, but just as caring and dedicated to their being raised in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. They need to experience caring for the elderly in exchange for listening to their accumulated wisdom. Those contemplating marriage need to consult those whose lives have experienced at least fifty years of matrimony and learn from those experiences. What a blessing for a young man desiring to preach, to be the “chauffer” for an aged, experienced preacher. What a blessing to the young woman desiring to learn the meaning of a meek and quiet spirit to share several hours, days, and weeks, in allowing that godly woman to be to her as Naomi was to Ruth.

What a blessing it is to visit other churches of Christ during their gospel meetings! Not only are you blessed with the acquaintances of those of like precious faith you would never have otherwise known, but you hear preaching from someone you don’t often hear. You join in singing songs of hymn and praise you might not often sing, or even know. But in doing so, you find yourself admonished and taught.

What a blessing it is to record notes of the bible studies and sermons we’ve heard, and never discard them! After a time, we reopen the notebook or folder and review those blessings; restudying them even years later as we mature in our knowledge and wisdom of Truth!

Then, as the autumn years of life begin to create their reflective state in our minds, what a blessing to mentally recall all those wonderful Christians who shared their best to help make you your best in service to God. We recall their faces as though they are still before us and flood our minds with those precious incidentals that fashion each of those blessings. As we continue reflecting on these blessings, we give God thanks for each one. Through God’s providence, we have endeavored to utilize these blessings as we grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Oh, that every Christian would be found as such a wonderful blessing to other Christians!

✍ Mike Davis

Belleville church of Christ

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Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Study	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship	4:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study	7:00 p.m.

Evangelist

Brad Phillips (765) 720-2816