

How Thankful are We?

Yes we pray before meals, maybe even give thanks at the conclusion of our day. We offer up prayers of thanksgiving for the many blessings that occur in our lives every day. But what about the times when life gets challenging? The deadlines at work, the surprises that happen with the kids or the constant pressure of having too many irons in the fire keeping our lives overloaded. Do we take time to pause and give thanks in those times?

There are times when it is difficult to give thanks and praise. We are struggling. We are tired. Maybe we have even slipped away from God for a time. We don't feel as close to Him or question whether He really cares about the stuff that is bothering us. Life and its challenges have sent us down a bad trail.

We can choose to stumble down the troubled road or take a different path. It is hard to be angry at someone when you are praying for them! It is more difficult to be burdened by life's trials when on all occasions we give God thanks. Maybe it is looking for the silver lining or what we can learn from the situation. It is often about our attitude. God doesn't just work to change our circumstances or help us through our problems, He changes hearts. We are lifted up by His strength, His peace, His joy.

Psalm 28:7 is a great reminder for us. It reads, "The Lord is my strength and shield; my heart trusts in Him, and I am helped; therefore my heart exalts, and with my song I thank Him."

Being thankful does several things for us.

- Gets the focus off us and back on God.
- Reminds us we are not in control but God is, and He can do all things.
- Confirms we have much to be thankful for, even little things that might be overlooked.
- Fills our hearts with gratitude rather than negativity and self-pity.

The world will notice how we react to the curves and bumps in our road. Make a list of all the things God has provided and how He has blessed your life. Don't overlook the small stuff that is easy to take for granted. And don't forget the most important gift we receive, the gift of Eternal Life.

As you ponder Gifts both large and small, plan for the time when you will obtain the Gift of Heaven. Create your Estate Plan to remind your family of all God's Blessings to you and remember your most cherished Ministries. Maybe it is the gift of a Final Tithe to Ministry or adopting Ministry as another member of your family, dividing your estate equally with the children and the organizations that continue to bring the saving message of Christ to the nations. They will be blessed as the world watches your final act of Thanksgiving.

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