

Giving Thanks for God's Gifts

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17). There are a few verses that come to my mind nearly once a day, and this is one of those verses. If anything is considered a gift, God gave it. It is not determined by our ability to earn it; it comes freely from the hands of the God who loves us.

We need to give thanks for the big things God does for us: *"I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause: Which doeth great things and unsearchable; marvellous things without number"* (Job 5:8,9). We also need to give thanks for the smaller things that are often overlooked. The Bible says, *"For who hath despised the day of small things?"* (Zechariah 4:10). In our everyday existence, may we praise God for:

1. The Gift of Sight

Did you see it in the sky? It was very present from one end of the horizon to the other, just this past week, Tuesday in fact. No, I am not talking about the rain, I am talking about the beautiful rainbow God stretched out just after the rain to remind us – the Promiser keeps His promises!

God said, *"I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth"* (Genesis 9:13-16).

Look up; God has placed the cloud in the sky, but He also places the rainbow. In every sadness there is an accompanying gladness. The purpose behind the cloud makes it bearable. Isn't it great that God gives us messages to see, if we just look?

2. The Gift of Sound

Today as I rode in my car, I was able to appreciate the spiritual music of the Marshall Family. Mrs. Lord gave me their most recent album and today I was deeply touched as the music lifted me into the manifested presence of our Lord. Then later I listened to Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* and John Berry's magical strings. I heard the words "I love you" from my wife, which to me is one of the sweetest sounds this side of heaven.

Early this morning I heard the song of the bird, welcoming the day. When we hear the birds we need to remind ourselves, *"Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?"* (Matthew 6:26).

3. The Gift of Smell

Recently one of our kids sent their mom a lovely bouquet of stargazer lilies. I was doing some work at the table in which they were placed and every so often the fragrance would waft over my direction. What a great reminder, *"Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?"* (Luke 12:27,28).

Tonight, my wife and I walked into a restaurant and enjoyed the smells of delicious food. I recently went outside and took in a deep breath of fresh air; what a delight! All of these are perfumed reminders that we, too, should be "...a sweet savour of Christ"

(II Corinthians 2:15).

4. The Gift of Family

"God setteth the solitary in families" (Psalm 68:6). In God's mercy, He observed, "...It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him" (Genesis 2:18).

To show our appreciation we should be determined to speak kindly to those we love most and show our appreciation by loving unconditionally those whom God has assigned us to love.

5. The Gift of Friends

"Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel" (Proverbs 27:9). "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend" (Proverbs 27:17). This would be a good time to reassure your friends of your friendship to them. God providentially places us in fellowship with people that He longs for us to get to know better to further His love and kingdom on this earth.

-Pastor Pope-

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