

Scriptural Truths

E-Mail Meditations

The Lord Will Come . . . Perhaps Today . . . Behold, I Come Quickly . . . Rev. 22:7

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In Our Despondency, What Can We Thank God For?

Introduction

I remember reading about a man circumnavigating the world in his yacht. At one point when he hit the doldrums, his boat basically sat still for days, only moving inches in a day. That happens in life. I wonder how many saints are like myself, times when life goes into the doldrums, all ones get up and go is gone and anything spiritual, like everything else, becomes a real chore. Of course added to the natural lack of “umph” is the working of the evil one pushing us down spiritually, thus it can be a double edged sword. Yet, these are good times for which to give God thanks even though all one can manage is a momentary prayer. It serves as a reminder to how much we need the help of the Lord and the truth of being in a spiritual battle. Perhaps it is because we are nearing the end of this year and it is so easy to reflect on ones deficiencies in the past years.

Give God thanks

Sometimes we look at life and it seems so depressing and we ask, “How can we give God thanks for these ‘lifeless’ experiences, both physical, emotional, physiologically and spiritually?” How easy it is to sing, “Count your many blessings, see what God hath done”, but in the gloom of darkness it is very hard to see any blessings. One looks at life and a loved one is gone, life is so empty, there is food in the cupboard but no interest in eating, there is health but no umph to enjoy it. In the morning there is a wishing for the night and at night a wishing for the morning. I know, I’ve been there! What can I do to get out of the emotional and spiritual doldrums? My experiences have taught me what helps me.

Give God thanks for what?

We have so much, both material and spiritual, to be abundantly grateful for. There is a getting down on my knees, despite the fact I do not know what to pray or feel like praying, and just talk to God as my Father. I call Him “Abba”. Abba does not mean “daddy” but indicates child-like trust whenever I do not know what or why things are happening and I being very honest with God, for He knows my feelings and I cannot hide them from Him. Wonderful to know and remember that the Lord “knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust” (Psa. 103:14), and that, “It is of the LORD’S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness” (Lam. 3:22, 23). As I bow there and begin to sense His loving arms around me, or the sense of His presence, I begin to pour out my heart, at times telling God I am not happy the way things are, or that my heart is breaking because I had been hoping He would do something. At times there is deep disappointment when things did not turn out the way I expected. Then the gracious Holy Spirit causes one to remember, apart from the spiritual blessings, those mundane things so necessary for life and comfort. For instance: A roof over our heads to shield us from the snow, wind, and rain; clean

food to eat and bodies which can assimilate it to give energy to do a work for the Lord; clean water to drink and bathe in to help keep our bodies clear from defilement; to know that there are those who not only care for us but love us irrespective of what we do; clean clothes to keep us warm in the cold days of winter and a few dollars in my pocket. Having these blessings ought to make me thankful for what I have and know contentment. Then add the spiritual blessing for which to give thanks:

- a) The fact I am still alive assures me that God has a work for me to do in life. None of us are on this earth just to fill a space, or have nothing else but the paltry existence to eat, work and sleep. We are not here just to get more money or buy more toys. We are here by the divine purpose for John informs us that, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created" (Rev. 4:11). We are still on this earth for the supreme purpose of fulfilling the will of God, for the magnification of Christ and enrichment of the saints. Some people are never satisfied for they have not found the blessing of contentment and the true pleasures that are found at the right hand of God. The Psalmist wrote, "At thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Psa. 16:11) and at God's right hand is the Person of Christ. When we feed on Him and He becomes the delight of the heart, we have found true riches. This is why God still has me alive and I can thank Him for that.
- b) I can thank Him for informing me ahead of time that there is a day of assessment coming. How dreadful it would be if when we get to heaven the Lord says, now I am going to judge you and reward you according to how you lived. Because God has informed us that there will be an evaluation of our lives, my next question would be, "What will He evaluate?" and "What can I do not to show less ungratefulness?" The scriptures are clear, we will be called to give an account of our works, motives, intents and words. Taken into account will be the duration of time we had for serving the Lord. We will wish we could do even the most mundane things again and do them better. Thank God for the information He has given to us.
- c) I can thank Him for the rewards He will give for true service to Him. We all have a task to do and He graciously appreciates every little thing one does, even to give a cup of cold water. I recall Grandma Jennings had a broken gate post. Asking Dad to fix it, he got a new post and setting it in concrete. She said, "No one could have done it just like you". What a word of commendation and Dad never forgot it. What would it be to live in such a way, do His work in such a way that when the Lord reviews it He will say that word of commendation, "Well done thou good and faithful servant" (Matt. 25:21), then it will be worth every iota of energy and time we ever invested for Him. Well has the hymn writer written the hymn, "By and By".

By and by when I look on His face,
Beautiful face, thorn-shadowed face;
By and by when I look on His face,
I'll wish I had given Him more.

More, so much more—
More of my love than I e'er gave before;
By and by when I look on His face,
I'll wish I had given Him more.

By and by when He holds out His hands,
Marvelous hands, welcoming hands;
By and by when He holds out His hands,
I'll wish I had given Him more.

By and by when I kneel at His feet,
Wonderful feet, nail-pierced feet;
By and by when I look on His feet,
I'll wish I had given Him more.

Grace Reese Adkins

- d) I can thank Him for the knowledge of His purposes for time and eternity for the child of God. There is insufficient space to review His purposes for the duration of earth, but for we who are His own, He will bring us to the Father's house, having glorified bodies like His, to live in the unclouded sunshine of His presence, to see His face, to be led by the Lord in that land of fadeless day, to have undiminishing ever delighting developing wonders of Himself. That will be glory for me and I am sure no matter how heavy the heart is and the darkness of the depression, every saint can say, "That will be glory for me".



. . . Rowan Jennings

www.scripturaltruths.org

e-mail: scripturaltruths1@shaw.ca

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