

Counting our many blessings without money

David B. Jones

A good exercise for everyone of us would be to take a sheet of paper and record all the blessings we enjoy for a 24-hour period. Where would most begin? Most would begin with the “things” that mattered most -- things we wanted and received. It might be a new CD, a better car, more money in the bank, a faster computer, playing a round of golf at a good course, etc. How many of us would begin with the air we breathe, each daily meal, the ability to walk, to be at ourselves in our right mind, the ability to work, the ability to give, etc.?

We can see the trend of today – selfishness at every hand - ***“But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” -- 1 Tim 6:9-10.*** Because of selfishness therefore, we have a people, for the most part, who are ungrateful and unthankful, looking for everything they want. This selfishness was also a characteristic of the Gentiles about whom Paul wrote: ***“For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.” -- Rom 1:20-25.***

When we stop and consider those things which should be the most important to us, we realize if we have these blessings, we are rich indeed! What are some of these things?

HEALTH

A person who has good health is a person who should count his blessings each day. How many people think they are in good health one day – only to find out the next day their health is not so good? How many people (in poor health) would trade places with those in good health – no matter what their financial situation might be? Think about the cancer patient, those who have children with serious illness, those who have things such as heart trouble, blood pressure problems, etc. If those who have good health were more thankful, there would be less complaining about some things. Those who complain about things such as: (1) having to assemble each time the church meets;(2) having to give as they have been prospered; (3) having to do some type of work which takes their time, talent or money; (4) having to serve in some capacity – visit, fix food, clean, etc.;

should talk to someone who has a serious health problem. The person with the serious illness would most likely exchange places in a heartbeat!!

John had something to say about our physical health – *"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth. For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth."* -- 3 John 2-4. What would be our physical condition based on our spiritual one?

FAMILY

How many times do we count our families as a blessing as we count our many blessings? Spouses ought to stop and take stock of how important their mate is to their life and to their overall good. If we have a mate who helps us get to heaven, we are blessed indeed! We also need to be a mate who helps the other get to heaven. If we have a mate who is considerate of and compassionate toward the mistakes the other makes, we are blessed. If our mate is one who is concerned about the family and the spiritual condition of that family and is forgiving, forbearing and faithful, we are truly blessed.

Children, how thankful are you for parents who discipline you and make you mind? The Bible tell us: *"He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes."* -- Prov 13:24.....*"Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him."* -- Prov 22:15.....*"Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell."* -- Prov 23:13-14.....*"The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame."* -- Prov 29:15. The discipline applied by godly parents, helps train and mold their children according to the will of God.

FRIENDS

Too often we look for the wrong type of friends – we look for friends who will tell us what we want to hear and can do for us what we want and can't do for ourselves: *"The poor is hated even of his own neighbour: but the rich hath many friends."* -- Prov 14:20.....*"Wealth maketh many friends; but the poor is separated from his neighbour."* -- Prov 19:4.....*"Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful."* -- Prov 27:6.

We need friends who bring out the best in us and reprove us when we are wrong: *"Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful."* -- Prov 27:6.....*"Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel. Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not; neither go into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity: for better is a neighbour that is near than a brother far off."* -- Prov 27:9-10.....*"Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."* -- Prov 27:17.

There is divine advice when it comes to friends: *"A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity."* -- Prov 17:17.....*"A man that hath friends must show himself friendly:*

and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." -- Prov 18:24....."Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." -- John 15:13-15.

Very seldom do we find a person who is all the above – one who is our friend not because of anything we can do for him, one who is there no matter the adversity, one who will tell us what we need to hear and not what we want to hear, and one who brings out the best in us – hence, will help us go to heaven. We need to remember what Paul wrote: ***"Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners."*** -- ***1 Cor 15:33*** (worldly friends may be able to help us here physically, but they can do nothing for us spiritually). Paul would know something about these things: ***"Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry."*** -- ***2 Tim 4:11***. If we come to the end of our lives and there is one true friend who sticks it out with us – we are blessed!

CHRISTIAN

Most people in this world (and in this age) are concerned about riches and wealth. A Christian is heir to all the true riches and the true wealth which will last through eternity: ***"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:"*** -- ***Eph 1:3***. We do not need to concern ourselves with those who can **only** help us now, but whose help will burn with the rest of the world: ***"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."*** -- ***2 Pet 3:10***. We need to concern ourselves with the One who owns it all and whose wealth will pass the fire of judgment and endure throughout the ages.

To be a Christian is truly a great blessing – the blessing which will cause us to be accepted in the Beloved and to grant us a home in the land fairer than day.

CONCLUSION

How difficult is it for us to count our blessings? Living in this country we can begin to count from any point in our lives. Too often we get swept away by the greed and glamour of this life and we forget the things which matter the most. Are we grateful for the blessings we have without money? Are we grateful enough to obey God and be faithful till death?