

# THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

November 21

2021

## Be Thankful To God

In the first century, the apostle Paul instructed the saints in Colosse to “be thankful” (Colossians 3:15). You see, before Americans began the tradition of setting aside a day to reflect upon their blessings, and to be thankful for what they have (Thanksgiving Day), Christians were instructed to express their thanks for the blessings which only come from our one true Almighty God. So, with that thought in mind, let’s express our thanks to God because...

### He Is The Almighty Creator and Giver of All Things.

We need to be ever thankful to God, simply because He made the world and everything in it (Acts 17:24). You see, without God, we do not even exist. Knowing that, let’s be continually thankful to God for all of our many blessings which He provides, and let’s always remember, *“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning”* (James 1:17). So again, be thankful and express your thanks to God our Almighty Creator and giver of all things.

### He Is So Good.

Another reason for why we should be thankful and express our thanks to God is because of the fact that He is good. You see, God is so good to both you and me, and the inspired Psalmist affirmed this when he penned, *“For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting, And His truth endures to all generations”* (Psalm 100:5). Brethren, be thankful and do not neglect the goodness of God, but rather acknowledge His goodness, and keep these inspired words in mind, *“The Lord is good*

*to those who wait for Him, To the soul who seeks Him”* (Lamentations 3:25). Yes, God is good, therefore give thanks to the Lord, for He is good (Psalm 107:1).

### He Is Righteous.

Not only do we need to be thankful to God because He is good, but we likewise need to be thankful to Him because He is righteous (Psalm 119:137). You see, God is righteous in all His ways (Psalm 145:17) and when one is righteous they are right or justifiable. In Psalm 7:17, David acknowledged the righteousness of God, when he declared that he would praise the Lord according to His righteousness. Therefore, praise the Lord our God, and be thankful for the righteousness of God.

### He Is Loving.

Furthermore, we should be thankful to God for His love for us. You see, God so loved the world (i.e. mankind) that He gave His only begotten Son, so that the world might be saved (John 3:16-17). In Romans 5:8, Paul writes, *“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”* The truth is, without the love of God, we have no hope. Therefore, be thankful to God, for He is rich in mercy and His love is great (Ephesians 2:4).

### He Is Gracious.

Last, but certainly not least, we need to be thankful to God for His grace (i.e. unmerited favor). You see, the grace of God is a gift (Ephesians 2:8) and His grace which brings salvation has appeared to all men (Titus 2:11). In Psalm 84:11, the Psalmist informed, *“For the Lord God is a sun and shield; The Lord will give grace and glory; No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly.”* Remember that, my beloved brethren, and be ever mindful, and thankful for the grace (i.e. unmerited favor) of God.

Once more, we have so much to be thankful to God for, and because of that, I encourage us all to always express our thanks to our Almighty, Good, Righteous, Loving, Gracious, Father in heaven (1 Thessalonians 5:17-18).

✍️ Brad Phillips

# Gratitude

In this life we have innumerable blessings for which we are to be thankful. And the Bible tells us that these blessings come from the God of heaven. "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" (Jas. 1:17). As we look about us, seeing what God has done, surely, we ought to be affected by his magnificent works. We should be overwhelmed with awe and reverence as we contemplate life itself - whether it be a tiny insect, a fragrant flower, or a human being who is so fearfully and wonderfully made.

I wonder, though, are we truly grateful for all that God has done? If we are honest and humble in heart, what changes have been made in our lives because of the goodness of God? It should lead us to repentance. "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" (Rom. 2:4) But the trouble with so many today is that instead of being humbled with repentance, they have become calloused in heart and drunk on materialism. Hence, they fail to "count their blessings."

The goodness of God should cause us to be generous with our time. But with regard to time and duties, some seem to always be saying, "I don't have time to study," "I don't have time to visit," "I don't have time to teach others," "I don't have time to attend all the services of the church," "I don't have time to encourage weak Christians," etc. Oh yes, we do have the time! Everyone's day is made up of twenty-four hours. Our time may be ill-arranged (especially as far as the work of the Lord is concerned), but we all have the same amount of time. The trouble is - we are not grateful enough to give it to Christ. We are being selfish and self-centered when we have time for television, camping, boating, fishing, golf, tennis, secular reading, movies, ball games and a host of other things, and yet, not enough time for the Lord.

Our gratitude should cause us to be generous with our money. However, in the matter of giving, can it be said that we are grateful to the Lord when we have spent so much on our own selfish desires that we are not able to give as we should? The Bible says that "God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7). But no man can be a cheerful giver unless he has first acknowledged the great gifts of God to man. The trouble with so many of us is that we never take the time to fully reflect on how much we have received from God. When we take our eyes off ourselves and contemplate the goodness of God, our gratefulness for these blessings will be reflected in our giving.

All too often, when others perform deeds of kindness in our behalf, our attitude is that this is what we expected of them all along. In other words, "You owe this to me, therefore, it's not necessary for me to be grateful." Is this your attitude? Obviously, this kind of an attitude is reflected if we fail to express our sincere thanks for the kindness others have shown toward us. If this disposition of heart describes you, this is spoken to your shame.

It seems that the lack of gratitude has always been a problem. When Jesus healed the ten lepers, only one man (a Samaritan) was grateful enough to return and thank Jesus for his cleansing. The record says, "And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks. and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole" (Lk. 17:15-19). Only ten percent of those who received the blessings here showed gratitude. All ten were ready to receive a blessing; all cried, for mercy; but nine were not concerned about giving praise and thanksgiving. Many today are far too much like these nine lepers.

A failure in thanksgiving for the blessings enjoyed in this life gives evidence of the alienation of man from God. "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful" (Rom. 1:21). On the other hand, the Christian, realizing what God has done for him and the world, continually lifts his heart in praise and thanksgiving to God. "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thess. 5:18).

R.J. Evans

**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 .....	5:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study .....	7:00 p.m.

**Evangelist**

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