

THE GREENWOOD BULLETIN

Church of Christ
371 W. Main Street
Greenwood, IN 46142
(317)888-8288

www.churchofchristatgreenwood.org

VOLUME 8 NO. 12

May 22, 2011

Count Your Many Blessings -- Then Weigh Them

by Tim Nichols

The old suggestion that you count your blessings in the midst of difficult times is a good one. Any realistic person who will sit down and begin to number his or her blessings will soon discover that they are many. In fact, one might discover that they are so numerous that it is virtually impossible to literally "name them one by one". Even after the list is very long and we think we've made the last entry we realize that we've left something out. Job encountered this "problem" when he attempted to make the count while he was in the midst of great distress.

I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause: Which doeth great things and unsearchable; marvelous things without number: Who giveth rain upon the earth, and sendeth waters upon the fields: To set up on high those that be low; that those which mourn may be exalted to safety (**Job 5:8-11**). Which doeth great things past finding out; yea,

and wonders without number (**Job 9:10**).

But some pessimist might want to argue that his or her list of problems is equally long. When he compiles his list of problems he is always able to think of one more item to add. You would have a difficult time convincing him that his blessings outnumber his difficulties and it would be a lengthy debate. For every blessing he could find a problem. Both lists would, like the energizer bunny, keep going and going. Simply counting the number of items on the two lists may not be enough to bring relief to some who are dedicated to the proposition that problems are things to nurture while blessings are things to minimize.

It would be a helpful thing if we could discipline ourselves to compare our problems with our blessings and to assign some relative weight to each when compared with the other. If we would make a short list of our greatest blessings and compare them with our short list of worst problems we would soon find that our blessings far outweigh our problems. Paul was reckoning correctly and by inspiration when he

2

measured the relative weight of the two.

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us (**Romans 8:18**).

Moses weighed the affliction that he suffered with the people of God and compared it with the reward that awaited him in heaven. He saw that the value of the eternal reward far outweighed the temporary affliction. He looked "at others with their lands and gold" and thought that Christ had promised him "His wealth untold". He realized that "money cannot buy" his "reward in heaven" nor his "home on high".

By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward (**Hebrews 11:24-26**).

Would you trade your worst problems for your greatest blessings? Would you give up the promise of eternal life for the eradication of your temporary grief or pain? Would you exchange your life itself for the luxury of not having a flat tire? Would you give up the love of your family in exchange for

a day without disrespect or unkindness from others?

Would you trade (fill in the blank with any of your greatest blessings)

_____ for the removal of (fill in the blank with any of your worst problems)

_____?
No, you would not. Your blessings always outweigh your problems.

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal (**2 Corinthians 4:17, 18**).

Are They (We)

Christians

by Robert Turner

Someone once asked David Lipscomb if certain digressives of the day (using mechanical instruments of music in the worship, and doing the work of the church through human societies) were Christians. Here is his reply, taken from *Queries & Answers; Shepherd; p. 77-ff.*

"A follower of Christ is a Christian. One must take Christ as his only Lawgiver, Ruler, Leader, and Governor; his Prophet (teacher), Priest (intercessor), and King (ruler). We must seek to think like Christ, to feel and purpose as

Christ did, act as Christ acted, and in all things seek to follow Him.

The heart, the inner man, thinks, feels, purposes. Solomon says: "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." This means all the purposes and courses of life originate in and flow out from the heart. To follow Jesus, we must be like him in heart.

The highest desire of Jesus was to do the will of his Father. **(Jn. 6:38; 5:30; Lu. 22:42)**

The fundamental, ruling desire of every child of God is to do the will of God, to subjugate his own will to the will of God in all things. The heart, then, that desires to change the law and order of God in anything is not right in the sight of God, no matter how kind and charitable he be.

A man's heart may be perfect, and yet he fall into sin. David was a man after God's own heart, yet fell into grievous sin. "The heart of Asa was perfect all his days," yet he fell into sin that brought the punishment of God upon him. It means that, while the desire and purposes of the heart are to serve God, the fleshly appetites and passions may tempt a man into sin. There are two classes of sins — one, the sin of the spirit, or heart, that sets aside purposely the law of God; the other, the sin of the flesh, that is drawn into sin contrary to the desires of the heart. The later sin, if it is persisted in, overcomes and

perverts the spirit, or heart, and drags the man into willful sin. The sin of the heart is the presumptuous sin. It consciously and purposely sets aside the law of God and substitutes something that the person thinks will do better or is more effective in honoring God and saving men. The motive of doing good may prompt it. But it is presumption that dares to think man can improve on the appointments of God.

Men who consciously change, or modify, add to or take from, the law of God in the slightest particulars are not Christians; it is misleading to call them so. Churches that change add to, or take from the commandments of God are not churches of Christ; it is sinful to so call them. He who is not for God in such issues is against him. Be true to God."

Lipscomb hit the core of the matter when he centered upon the heart. Objectors may say a sincere man, desirous of serving God, could misunderstand his word; but such a one would continue to study, welcome assistance, and draw closer and closer to truth.