

A WORD OF INSPIRATION

The emphasis of our national holiday in November focuses on Thanksgiving. This is a wonderful occasion for families to get together for a lovely and delicious traditional meal of turkey, dressing, potatoes and all the trimmings. And don't forget that pumpkin pie. Thanksgiving should be celebrated by Americans in their traditional ways for we have much to be thankful for. Our heart attitude should be one of gratefulness considering God's blessings upon this great country.

And gratitude pleases God as expressed by the Psalmist in *Psalm 103:2* where he states, "*Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget none of His benefits*". What are your "benefits" this Thanksgiving?

Why would the Psalmist need to give such a reminder to God's people? How in the world could anyone forget God's benefits and not be thankful for all we have received? Let me give you some answers to these questions from an editorial by S.S. Lapin, November 25, 1911.

1. *The benefits received by the children of God are not usually those they would have chosen.*

Have you ever seen a child sit down to a table full of good food and try to eat the dessert first? If he had his choice he would probably do just that. Did you ever see the same child get upset and rebel when he is made to eat the meat and vegetables first? The child has a wonderful spread of benefits before him, but because he does not get what he chooses he forgets the benefits and remembers only the frustration.

We are so bound to the physical that we choose the things that give momentary sensation rather than the substantial things that build character and faith. We are forgetful of God's benefits, no doubt, because we did not get what we wanted.

2. *Sometimes the benefits are sent in disguise.*

God does not do everything with splash and fanfare. Often His blessings are in packages with rough wrappings. We must learn to look beneath the surface of things and discover God at work.

3. *Often His benefits are more spiritual than material.*

We tend to be more impressed with money in the bank than peace in the heart. God offers eternal benefits while we, like Esau, settle for temporary pottage (Genesis 25:29-34). God offers great prospect while we demand here and now.

It is the infant mind that must have countable, "feelable" benefits here and now. It is the immature Christian who fails to look deep enough to see his "benefits". The mature Christian looks beyond the surface. He is able even to look at his difficulties and see God at work. He takes his vegetables first and says, "Thanks, I needed that".

May we, look well below the surface to see the loving hand of Almighty God at work in the lives of His children. May we recognize the "benefits" and "be thankful".

The Apostle Paul would echo the same sentiment in writing to the church in Thessalonica when he stated, "*In everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus*" (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

Happy Thanksgiving!
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