

Be Thankful

Matthew Henry, author of a widely-respected 19th century commentary on the whole Bible, was once robbed. In his diary that evening he wrote the following words: *"Let me be thankful: First, because I was never robbed before; second, because although they took my purse, they did not take my life; third, because even though they took my all, it was not much; and fourth, because it was I who was robbed, not I who robbed."*

Doesn't that remind you of the beautiful song, Count Your Many Blessings? Think of the words: "Count your many blessings, name them one by one. And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done." God has been so good to each one of us. We have received blessings we certainly have not deserved. Let us be ever thankful, and express our thanksgiving to God constantly in prayer.

- **selected**

A Dog's Nose!

A friend of mine in the Navy had an uncle who did a good bit of lumber-jacking in the Northwest early in the 20th century. The biggest and worst surprise he ever got was in an Indian camp. The policy of the logging companies in those days was to stay on as good terms as they could for the sake of peace as well as prosperity. A nearby Indian tribe had invited them all for a meal, and my friend's uncle said the main dish, some sort of stew in a huge cauldron, really was not that bad. It was a different sort of taste, but it was all right. As a matter of fact it was good enough that he decided he wanted another bowl of the stuff. He got the dipper and stirred around in that big pot and dished himself up a 'mess'. Apparently, he dug a bit deep. Out of the depths of that pot he dished up - - - I suspect I had better just go ahead and say it - - - A DOG'S NOSE!! It's truly amazing how a fellow's appetite can disappear as he comes face to face (or nose to nose!) with the main ingredient!

In the denominational man-made religious world of today there is something that tastes good. It may be the sincerity of its followers, although this is not enough in itself (Acts 26:9). It may be the beautiful buildings which please the eye, although Jesus points us to other things (John 4:20-24). It may be doctrines of easy acceptance, and simple belief, and no possibility of falling from grace, although Jesus demanded strict adherence and faithfulness to His ways, not ours (Revelation 2:10). It may be the appeal of the social gospel rather than basic concern for souls. It may be smooth and eloquent preachers able to paint beautiful word pictures instead of God's simple truths. But behind everyone of these things lies the old dog's nose: it is the tradition of men that makes for vain and unacceptable worship (Matthew 15:9).

Men need to dip deep into their beliefs to see if it is God's truth or if it is the dog's nose. It may make you sick at your stomach, but you will at least know what you are eating. And it may just make you change your diet. "Prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2).

- **by Robert Hines**

Premarital Advice

A girl once came to a gospel preacher for advice in her contemplated marriage to a boy who was not a Christian. The preacher asked the girl to step up on a chair .. then onto a desk. He said, "Now pull me up to where you are." She tried with all her strength, and failed. The preacher then gave a light pull, pulling her easily to the floor. He then said, "It is more probable that this boy will pull you down to his level than it is that you will pull him up to yours." The illustration was effective. The girl did not marry the boy until he became a true Christian.

- **by Harry Lewis**

"Almost" Is Not Enough

It is sometimes said of an individual who has not yet obeyed the gospel, "I believe he is almost ready to be baptized," or that "she is close to becoming a Christian."

Friend, are you one of those people? Can we not somehow impress upon you (1) that "almost" is not sufficient to make one a Christian; (2) that being "close" is not the same thing as being "in Christ"; (3) that you are still in a LOST condition; and (4) that Christ is coming in judgment one day? It is essential for you to note the words of Paul in 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 Where he states that those "who obey not the gospel will be punished with everlasting destruction . . ." We URGE you to take a serious look at your life, your need of salvation, and the hope that can be found only in Christ. Obey the gospel TODAY.

- by Barney Keith

The One Who Loved You Enough

Can you remember who it was that taught you the gospel? Maybe it was a friend or neighbor. Perhaps it was a co-worker. For many of us it was our parents. No matter who it was, there's something we know about them for sure -- they loved you! They loved you enough to teach you the saving gospel of Christ.

Think about it for a minute. It would have been easier for your teacher (whoever it was) to simply keep quiet. It requires effort to teach others. You have to know the truth yourself. That means you have to spend the time to study and learn. Then, you have to be willing to speak up, to invest the time to teach, to expose yourself to the possibility of rejection. And, not a few have had to withstand the unpleasantness of being ridiculed for what they have taught.

Why did they do it? What motivated them into action? The answer is simple - they loved you! They loved your eternal soul, and they were willing to do the work of teaching you because they did not want to see your soul lost forever in hell.

Now, what will you do? You have learned about the salvation that is in Christ. You have benefited from this knowledge in obeying the truth. Your sins are forgiven. You have the hope of heaven when you die. You have all the spiritual blessings that are in Christ Jesus.

Are you going to stop the chain of loving concern? Are you going to refuse to do for others as was done for you? If you do not teach the gospel to others, you are, in effect, saying that you don't love them enough. You are showing that you are unwilling to make the effort, to go to the trouble, to speak up to save them. Is it possible that you don't love them like you should?

Someone loved you. They loved you enough to teach you. Won't you show that same love to others? Think!

- by Greg Gwin