

WE ARE SO FORGETFUL TO BE THANKFUL

Psalm 103:2

Introduction: We are indeed forgetful and so often we are reminded of our forgetfulness by others, by our sudden realization that we "forgot," and there are many, many reasons for our forgetfulness. Sometimes our forgetfulness doesn't hurt anybody, doesn't affect anybody but sometimes it does. How forgetful are we about things that are not all that important to us at the moment, for instance, the things of God and the Christian life. One of those things we are so forgetful about is to be "thankful."

I. BEING THANKFUL IS A CHOICE WE MAKE

1. Out of our mouths can come the most vile, deadly poison or there can come a most lovely, beautiful person.
2. From each of us there can come the flower of "gratitude."
 - How do we go about being grateful?
 - It is more than just uttering the words, "thank you" although it is good to do this, but too often it is with little or no real feeling or gratitude - just an unconscious reaction.
 - Our "thanks" is too often from our lips only but for it to be real, it must come from the heart.
3. How can we be "grateful" from the heart?
 - We can refuse to be forgetful - "*...forget not all His benefits...*"
 - It is impossible for us to even be aware of all God's benefits, but those that we do know of we can be "grateful."
 - God tells us to "think" and then we will "thank."
 - We are so often thankless because we are so thoughtless.

II. HOW ARE WE TO THINK IN ORDER TO THANK?

1. We are not to think about our enemies.
 - Those who get on our nerves.
 - That grouchy person who "rubs" us the wrong way.
2. We are not to think of our petty injuries and hurt feelings.
 - There are those who don't seem to be able to shut up and are always complaining or gossiping about this or that.
 - There are those who seemed to never have had anything good happen to them and they are quick to tell you about all their troubles.
 - After listening ten minutes to them it takes you two weeks to recover enough strength to face the world again.
3. We are not to contrast our own benefits with those of others.
 - We don't need to be complaining about some inferiority we "think" we see.
 - It's so easy to think that somebody else (neighbor) is better off in life than we are.

4. We don't need to make a catalogue or alphabetical list of what we don't have, but the opposite, make a list of what we do have.
 - We need to think of God's benefits, to remember His gracious gifts to us.
 - It may seem like just a few "flowers in one's life" but they are enough to make a bouquet of gratitude if we only remember TO GATHER THEM.
 - We never realize our own wealth till we take the time to think upon IT instead of looking enviously at what everybody else has.

III. SOME THINGS THAT SHOULD CAUSE US TO BE GRATEFUL

1. Our day by day mercies we received that we regard as common place, because they are always there and so constant.
2. What about the beautiful sunrise, the order of the seasons, the bloom of the flowers, the song of the birds, the handshakes, hugs of dear friends, the tender love of our family circle?
3. Then there are the benefits that we have received directly from the hands of God, Himself.
 - It's impossible to list them all, or even to know all that He gives us.
 - There is God's revelation of Himself to us through Moses and the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - There is the beauty of God revealed by His revelation, His compassion, His loving caring.
 - God is like a father to us who love the Lord Jesus Christ and we can never ever get away from His wonderful love.
 - God's heart is always a forgiving heart and He is eager and plenteous in mercy, completely forgetting we have sinned when we go to Him in confession.
4. There is this world of restlessness and weariness, full of broken hearts and broken hopes, we have found the ONE who can abidingly satisfy our every need. *"...What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and miss Him who alone can satisfy...?"*
 - What have we lost if we miss the things for which people are searching for most madly and never find when we have found satisfaction in the Lord Jesus?
 - Remember the hymn "I am Satisfied With Jesus"?
 - If we are truly satisfied with the Lord Jesus, then we have sufficient reason to make our life down here and our eternity up there one great thanksgiving.

CONCLUSION:

1. It's not enough to be grateful in our own hearts:
 - We must give expression to our gratitude in some way and in doing so, it will increase ONLY as we share it. To keep it shut up as we usually do is but to lose it.
2. When we give expression to our gratitude it brightens the day for those around us.
 - Why are we so stingy with sharing a "treasure" that would enrich both us and those around us?
3. When we give expression to our gratitude, gladness will fill the heart of God.
 - Think about the times you have come home, tired to the bone and here came your children whooping and hollering and climb upon your lap and hug your neck and give you a

childish kiss and then bounce away with all the noise and "to do" as before. They were so glad to see you and they shared their feelings with you. Didn't that tiredness and edginess seem to disappear after those little arms had hugged your neck?

- God is a father, too! His heart is warmed at our giving thanks.
- Therefore, "*...let the redeemed of the Lord say so...*"

4. Christian, let's not be so forgetful from now on and remember to be grateful, thankful and express it in some way to those around us, letting them share in how we feel.