

February 17-Genesis 48

Many of you know the words to the great hymn “Count your blessings.” Some of the lyrics in the song say “count your blessings count them one by one, count your blessings see what God has done”. The idea is that when you take time to really think about it, you can come up with a great number of ways that God has blessed you. This is most certainly true, the problem is that often we focus on the negatives or things we would like to see change instead of on what God has done on our behalf. Genesis 48 shows us that Jacob did not make this mistake towards the end of his life, instead of concentrating on all of the problems he had endured during his lifetime he chose to see the great blessings God had bestowed upon him.

Thinking back, Jacob had endured some pretty terrible trials. He lost his wife early, he endured some pretty difficult family conflicts, and most of all he lived thinking his favorite son had passed away for years just to name a few. There were many things Jacob could have wished were different about his life, but Genesis 48 shows us that Jacob was still one to “count his blessings”. In verse 11, Jacob tells Joseph “I never expected to see your face; and behold, God has let me see your offspring also.” I’m sure that the average reader wouldn’t blame Jacob if he was a little bitter about how his relationship with Joseph was affected by his other son’s actions. I mean after all, Jacob missed a major portion of Joseph’s life. It would be quite natural for Jacob to have said something like “I never expected to see your face; and behold, I wish we would have had more time together”. Certainly he must have hated the fact that he missed so many years of his son’s life. Surely he disliked the idea that his other sons so despised their brother that they were willing to sell him into slavery. Undoubtedly, Jacob would have chosen for some things to occur differently, and yet here towards the end of his life he is counting his blessings.

Have you taken time to count your blessings lately? I’m sure you have taken time to voice your complaints but have you reflected on all that God has done for you? I suspect that if you do, you will be amazed at how many blessings God has sent your way. Every person’s situation is different. I realize that not all of you have the family situation you would desire or the health you would choose. Many of you deal with challenging work situations or problem relationships. While it is true that I cannot universally say that you enjoy great blessings at home, at work, or in any temporal area of life, one thing I can categorically remind you to be thankful for is the blessing of Christ. In Christ, we have the “hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27). It is through Christ that His children have received “grace upon grace” (John 1:16). This grace is totally underserved but it is glorious! It is the grace of God bestowed upon us through the salvation of Christ’s death that is our ultimate and eternal blessing.

So, today take time to count your blessings. Remember first and foremost the blessing of the Cross. Thank God for His love and indescribable grace. I pray that as you meditate on His mercy and love He will change your disposition and outlook upon the rest of life making you more like Jacob who chose to count his blessings rather than dwell on his troubles. Thanking God for what He has already done has an amazing impact on the soul and it also reminds us that God is truly very good. He has blessed us all more than we ever would deserve!