

MercEmail A Weekly Devotional by Steve Higginbotham

A Note From My Grandmother

by Steve Higginbotham (July 12, 2016)

A couple years ago, my sister found an entry in a journal that belonged to our grandmother, Garnet Higginbotham. The entry was from the day her daughter, our aunt passed away after a very long struggle with illness. Here is what she wrote:

"Joreen passed away 6 A.M. She is no longer suffering. I am thankful to God."

At a time when many people question God; at a time when many people curse God with a raised fist; at a time when many people feel deserted by God, our grandma was giving thanks to God!

Apparently, our grandma understood something that many of us fail to comprehend, namely, "God is good...all the time!"

Oh, it's easy to give thanks when things go our way. When we're healthy, happy, prosperous, and our plans succeed. When all these things line up just right, it's so easy to say, "I'm blessed. Thank you, God!" But how do we react when we are ill, broken, in poverty, and our plans fail? Do we still say, "I am blessed, thank you, God?"

It's a mature faith that can thank God in the midst of trouble and heartbreak. Job possessed such a faith and asked, "Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity!" (Job 2:10)? Friends, God doesn't stop blessing us because our circumstances become unpleasant.

- Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord (Genesis 6:8), but God's favor sure didn't make his life easier.
- Mary, the mother of Jesus was blessed above all women (Luke 1:42, 48), but being pregnant and unmarried could not have been easy.
- Paul was blessed by God, even being called a "chosen vessel" (Acts 9:15), but look at what that blessing cost him (2 Corinthians 11:24-28).

And then there's your story. You too have been blessed by God. You too have countless reasons to give thanks. Does all that change when bad things happen to you? Are you no longer blessed when you are called upon to suffer? Do you have no reason to give thanks when you walk through "the valley of the shadow of death?"

As children of God, we're blessed (period). Circumstances don't change that. God is good...all the time! And he is worthy of thanksgiving in good times as well as bad.

As we consider reasons for which to be thankful, I can say that I am thankful to God for my departed grandma for reminding me that God is good...all the time.

By Steve Higginbotham, 2016. Permission is granted to copy these articles.