

Better Relationship with Jesus – Remembering His Blessings

Psalm 145:1–7

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Right now there is something I would like to transfer into you. It is the intensity I'm experiencing about the future of First Baptist Coshocton. I've been working with the Future Team for the past several months. This group has prayed and dreamed big dreams about our future. The newsletter contains some of the outreach ministries for all of us to implement.

I believe in this future that God has laid upon the hearts of the future team members. I am excited for how the Lord sees us as a congregation. Some of what God has laid on our hearts has already begun. Each one of us has the opportunity to carry out God's plans and purposes, to do God's will.

Working with the members of the future team has been encouraging. I've come to the conclusion that three things are necessary for us to move into the future: Trust that God will provide; Having the will to be disciple makers; Along with the spirit of giving.

Are you motivated by the Holy Spirit of God to give of yourself? All the things of the past have prepared you and me for the future. Now, we have the opportunity to give ourselves freely to minister to others. Are you inspired by the Holy Spirit of God to make disciples, to mentor others? You love the Lord with every ounce of your being. You have the capacity to help others grow in their faith. Are you willing to trust God for the future? You may have questions, but they don't need to stop your faith. Those questions might not all be answered, but they don't need to stop your faith.

I'm excited about the future of First Baptist Coshocton. God has positioned us right where we need to be so we can trust Him with tomorrow. We are standing at the start line ready to go. No longer do we need to kick the can down the road. With the hope of Jesus, the power of the Holy Spirit, and the guidance of the Father we can pick up the can and start the race. I'm excited by what the Holy Spirit has put on my heart through the work of the Future Team. I am ready to rejoice and proclaim God's greatness, God's power, God's salvation to our community.

I will exalt you, my God the King; I will praise your name for ever and ever. Every day I will praise you and extol your name for ever and ever. Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom. One generation will commend your works to another; they will tell of your mighty acts. They will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty, and I will meditate on your wonderful works. They will tell of the power of your awesome works, and I will proclaim your great deeds. They will celebrate your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness. Psalm 145:1–7 (NIV)

Everyone who is growing in their relationship with Jesus is thankful for God's blessings.

If your relationship with Jesus consists of whining and begging you aren't welcome His love and hope. We all whine and beg to Jesus. We all get caught up in the crises past, present or future. We all just want Jesus to solve our problems. But, we know that our relationship is about more than all our problems. We want a better relationship with Jesus so we create a quiet place to be alone with Jesus. That's why we have a desire to be in His presence, to see His face. That's why we cling to Jesus and sing His praises. We know that we are created by God for a relationship with Him. We've

answered the call to be a disciple of Jesus. As disciples we strive to make disciples who make disciples.

Therefore, we want our relationship with Jesus to be filled with thanksgiving for His many blessings. It is the desire of our hearts, our spirits, our souls to share with others God's grace. The problems of each day are the distractions that keep us from being thankful. There is a huge challenge to turn a crisis into a moment of giving thanks.

Emotionally the crisis takes control of our minds and bodies. Those emotions can throw a wet blanket on the words thank you Jesus. What is spoken from our lips to God's ear is help. Help me in this moment. Help me right now. Then the next crisis comes and we're praying the same prayer. Someplace in between the crises there was no room for thank you Jesus. Somehow when the end of the crisis came we forget to give thanks. I'm right, right?

Those who are thankful for God's blessings believe God will continue to pour out His peace and joy. Through the crises we might've learned that God can handle our lives, any situation, and every circumstance. Since we've learned to trust the Lord we are at peace. There may be conflict here, there, and everywhere, but we have the peace of Christ. Chaos may reign in every direction, but we have the peace of Christ. Noise and confusion may surround us, but we have the peace of Christ. We are able to give thanks to Jesus.

As a result of trusting Jesus with our salvation from sin, we are filled with joy. More than being happy, we have the joy of Lord. More than plastering a smile on our faces, we have the joy of Lord. More than pretending everything is okay when it isn't, we have the joy of Lord. We are able to give thanks to Jesus. When our eyes are on the storm, we surrender our peace and become afraid. When our attention is consumed by the problems, we give up our joy and become afraid. Fear drives us to fighting or flying away. Fear may turn to anger, and anger to violence. Fear can create sadness, discouragement and withdrawal.

Jesus gives salvation. In His salvation is peace and joy. Every believer, every disciple of Jesus is filled His peace and His joy. His peace and joy result in giving thanks. Every believer, every disciple of Jesus is strengthening their relationship with Him by giving thanks day in and day out, hour by hour.

I will exalt you, my God the King; I will praise your name for ever and ever. Every day I will praise you and extol your name for ever and ever. Psalm 145:1–2 (NIV)

Most people struggle to count their blessings for one day, what about giving thanks for eternity. I'm talking about perspective. We are privileged to have the opportunity to talk to our Creator. It is an honor to be in the throne room of God. We're blessed to be in the presence of the Lord. Sinners don't get into God's presence. Sinners don't have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Sinners can't talk to their Creator, because they don't have a relationship with Him. What I'm saying is you aren't forced to talk the Lord, you get to talk with Jesus. You get to talk to Jesus whenever and wherever you are. There is nothing that keeps you from talking to Him forever and ever, except you.

When I take my eyes off of Jesus, He calls me back to Him. As I do my own thing, He calls me back to Him. While I chase after my own desires, He calls me back to Him. Our loyalty to God seems to be divided between what we want and what God has done. Jesus has already provided you and me,

Christians, with everything we need. The nature of every person, believers and non-believers, is to want more. It is also our nature to take what we have for granted. Unless we teach a child to say thank you, they just keep taking and taking.

The gift of salvation alone is worthy of giving thanks every second of every day. Without the gift of salvation we are separated from our Creator God forever. Not just a day, not just a week, but forever. We live for the moment, and the needs of the moment. We forget that Jesus has always been. He existed before the beginning. He is with us now. He will always be with us. Nothing can ever separate us from the joy, hope, peace, and love of God in Jesus Christ. Jesus always loves us.

May we never take for granted the death of Jesus on the cross and resurrection from the dead. It is because Jesus sacrificed Himself that we are saved from eternal separation from God forever. Jesus brought us into God's presence. He placed us in the throne room of God for eternity. He sent His Holy Spirit to live within us every second of our lives.

We live in this world of sin, death, decay, corruption, and trouble. But we exist in the throne room of God. We are not of this world, even though we live in this world. Our existence is in heaven forever and forever. Praising God forever and ever begins one day at a time, hour after hour. We are privileged to be forgiven and given a new life. We have been blessed to be able to open our mouths and talk to Jesus. The blessing of God is that Jesus is always listening.

I like being saved. Thank you Jesus. I enjoy the hope and peace of having the Holy Spirit within me. Thank you Jesus. I love being loved by my Creator. Thank you Jesus, you didn't throw away an imperfect vessel like me. The joy of His salvation is the difference maker in my life day after day. Thank you Jesus. The love God has for me, to send His only Son to die for my sins, is life changing. Thank you Jesus.

One generation will commend your works to another; they will tell of your mighty acts. They will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty, and I will meditate on your wonderful works. They will tell of the power of your awesome works, and I will proclaim your great deeds. Psalm 145:4–6 (NIV)

A better relationship with Jesus blossoms as we proclaim Him to the next generation. When we give thanks we are proclaiming the love and peace of God. Sin holds the rest of the world captive, but we live in God's love and exist in His peace. As we say thank you Jesus the world sees us as either crazy or empowered. Through God's love in our lives we face each day at peace. We are set free from the fear that trouble brings. We are empowered to overcome the temptations. We are strengthened in the battles. We know that our God, our Savior, the Lord of all life is dwelling within in us. We are aware of His presence. We see Him face to face. We have no reason to be afraid. We are at peace. We have the peace of God building our faith in the midst of hardships. We have the peace of God that will lift us up as the world falls apart. We have the peace of God renewing us day after day. Are you giving thanks for the love and peace of God?

As we publicly praise the Lord then family, friends, and strangers hear about His joy and hope. As we say thank you Jesus others will see us as either crazy or filled with hope. We have hope that our God is God. We are not living in a random world of terrible events. This life is not luck or coincidence. Our God is the God who created all things. Everything that our Lord created is for Him. Nothing exists that He has not created.

In everything that happens to us, around us, for us He can use for good. Our God defines what is good. Our God gives us what is good. Our God is the source of our hope.

We have hope that brings joy to our souls. Hope is not a delusion of grandeur. Hope is not wishful thinking. Hope is not merely a desire for things to change, to be better.

Hope sees what cannot yet be seen. Hope believes what others cannot yet believe. Hope promises what is already ordained, planned, determined to happen by our God.

We have hope that that Jesus is returning someday. This life is not all that we live. When Jesus returns at the sound of the trumpet, with angels, all will see Him and bow down. He will make a new heaven and a new earth where there is no sin, where sin has not corrupted, and sin has no power.

He will make all things new. He will spread before us a banquet table with all that we need. We will praise Him forever and forever. Are the people around you hearing the joy and hope that's in your soul?

They will celebrate your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness. Psalm 145:7 (NIV)

Invite others to celebrate the love, joy, peace and hope of Jesus. Nothing is needed more in our world right now than Jesus. Money is not the answer. Sports is not the answer. Politicians are not the answer. Celebrities are not the answer. A big military is not the answer. Drugs, alcohol, peanut butter have never been the answer. Being liked by others wasn't even on the answer sheet. Jesus is the answer.

Jesus overcomes fear, anxiety, and worry. Jesus is the motivator and inspiration that gets us off the couch. Jesus takes away discouragement, disappointment, and depression. Wisdom, discernment and knowledge comes from Jesus. Hope, peace, joy and love come from Jesus. Jesus defeats temptations and sin.

Everyone needs Jesus. The darkness of our world, the violence, hatred, intolerance, and selfishness are destroying people. Lines have been drawn between friends and coworkers, neighbors and family members. People keep taking sides. Each side is right in their own eyes. Neither side is capable of listening with their ears.

The light of Jesus outshines the darkness. The love of Jesus is greater than hatred and violence. The joy of Jesus is satisfying. The peace of Jesus is empowering. The hope of Jesus is motivating.

Everyone needs Jesus. Everyone needs more love, joy, peace and hope in their lives. We don't need more clever sayings. We don't need more influencers. We don't need more positivity speeches. We need Jesus. You and I need Jesus every moment of every day. Sinners need Jesus to save their souls. Without Jesus there is no hope or peace. Without Jesus there is no joy or love.

Meeting Jesus isn't hard. But it does require surrender. Each person must surrender to Jesus. Each individual must give their own desires and their wants to Jesus. In exchange for all of our sins Jesus will give us love, joy, peace and hope. Today surrender yourself to Jesus. Welcome into your life His peace and hope. Experience His love and joy. Then invite the people around you to celebrate Jesus.