

Daily Devotional, March 25, 2021 Giving the Gift of Thanks

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 2 Corinthians 5:17-19 (NIV)

God has given us a most wonderful, undeserved gift; all we need to do is accept it. Think about the last time you gave someone a gift. Did that person receive the gift joyfully? If so, how did that make you feel? I know when I give someone a gift and they receive it with joy, it makes me feel joyful as well. I feel appreciated.

Now think about how you would feel if you gave someone a gift and they did not receive it with joy, but instead they ignored it. I know I would feel sad and unappreciated and hurt. God is the same way. When God gave us the gift of His son, Jesus, and when He forgives our sins, He wants us to receive that gift with joy. When we do, it brings God immense pleasure, in fact it brings God great joy! But when God forgives us our sins and we yet refuse to let go of the pain, the guilt, and the shame, we do not glorify God. In fact, it grieves God's heart. God gave us His son, Jesus, who shed His blood for us. He shed His blood to wash away our sins. When we do not accept this gift, we are basically saying we do not believe in what Jesus did for us on the cross. We belittle this extravagant, most generous, and heartfelt gift.

However, when we confess our sins and draw near to the Lord, He forgives our sins and we are made new. All the things of the past are gone. Our sins are forgiven, and God wants us to move on with our lives. In fact, God sets us free to live our new life for Him. For us to truly move forward and to live a fresh and full life, we must let the old things that have weighed us down and held us back to pass away in order for us to become the new creation that God intends for us to be. It is then that we can live freely in who we truly are meant to be in Christ Jesus.

The only thing holding you back from believing and knowing that freedom is *you*. You must let go of the doubt and the lies that you have bought into and instead trust in the promises that God has made to you in the salvation and the everlasting freedom that God has offered to you. Stop listening to that other voice of the deceiver that has been whispering in your other ear. It's time to stop buying into that long drawn-out laundry list of one failure after another and to start buying into your worth. For God has paid a heavy price for you. God has called you into God's new creation and has washed away the grime and has made you fresh and new. You have been reconciled to Him through Christ. If you haven't already, start buying into God's grace and be reconciled into God's family. You are loved and accepted, and no one can take that away from you. It is time to start experiencing the joy of receiving the greatest gift ever given!

Prayer: Dear God, thank You for Your Son Jesus Christ our Savior and for the salvation that we have received through trusting in His death on the cross and His resurrection. My heart overflows with grateful thanks and praise for His amazing sacrifice for our sin. There is no greater gift of blessing that You could have given to us. I just thank You, Father, for Your amazing gift of salvation, in Jesus' holy name, Amen.