



A bi-monthly periodical for young men

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EDITORIAL

Greetings in the Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! Let us remember our Saviour, and the salvation He won for us at Calvary 'which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast' *Heb 6:19*

I include these selections trusting that they will be a blessing to you. I encourage you once again to consider either writing an article, or sending one you have read and found encouraging. This would be a blessing both to you and others.

May God bless you as you seek to walk in His ways by the power of His Spirit.

WHAT AM I WAITING FOR?

Psalm 39:5

*And now, Lord, what wait I for?
My hope is in thee.*

How often we find ourselves waiting for something to happen. Do we find ourselves focussed on what we are waiting for, and losing our focus upon our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?

Let us remember that it is natural for us to place our focus on the things of earth, and very easy to do. Christ says, however, '*seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you*'.

What do we wait for? Are we waiting for some pleasure – not going ahead with the things of God until we have finished our time of pleasure. Have we told God we will do such and such – if

he gives us this or that thing, as though we are unable to serve God without some reward or benefit?

Are we waiting for some result? Do we refuse to take another step until we know what people think, or what the end result will be?

Waiting for any of these three things will take our focus from God to the thing we wait for. Note the Psalmist's reply – *What wait I for?...ALL MY HOPE IS IN THEE*.

All my faith, trust, expectation – everything is in Thee, comes from Thee, and I wait on Thee, trusting that in Your own good time not one thing shall be lacking in me. Is this our response, and daily attitude toward God?

By J. McPherson

A SIN FOR WHICH THERE IS
NO EXCUSE

Romans 1:20-21

So that they are without excuse: because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful.

Now we come to consider the second sin.... Have you ever thought of it in this light before—that men were without excuse *because* when they knew God they were not thankful?

Unthankfulness is a sin for which there is no excuse if it be attended with knowledge. I fear there are thousands who call themselves Christians, who are not thankful, and yet they never thought themselves very guilty on that account. Yet you see these sinners were without excuse, because they were guilty of a great sin before God, and that sin was unthankfulness. I tremble both for myself and you when I see want of thankfulness thus set in the front rank of sins. How is it that we may be unthankful?

I answer, first, there is in some a want of gratitude for mercies possessed. They receive many blessings without making a note of them or even seeming to know that they have them. Their daily mercies seem to come in always at the back door, where the servants take them in, and never tell their master or mistress that they have arrived. They never receive their mercies at the front door with grateful acknowledgements; but they still continue dumb debtors, daily owing more, but making no attempt at a return.

The Lord continues to bless them in things temporal, to keep them in health and strength, aye, and to give them the means of grace and spiritual opportunities. And they live as if these things were so commonplace that they were not worth thanking God for. Many professors are of that kind—recipients of countless mercies, but destitute of such common thankfulness as even beasts might manifest.

From them God hears no song of gratitude, no chirp of praise, though birds would charm the woodlands with their minstrelsy: these are worse than the dumb driven cattle, or the fishes in the brook, which do at least leap up and mean their Maker's praise.

Some show this unthankfulness in another way, for they always dwell most on what they have not got. They have manna, and that is angels' food; but then they have no fish, and this is a ready theme for grumbling. They talk very loudly of "the fish we did eat in Egypt," and lament those ample feasts provided by the muddy Nile. Moreover, they have none of those delightful vegetables—the leeks, and the garlic, and the onions. They have none of these rank luxuries, and therefore again they murmur and call the manna "light bread."

They put this complaint Over and over again to Moses, till Moses must have been sick of them and their garlic. They said that they could not get leeks, and cucumbers, and onions, and that they were therefore most hardly done by, and would not much longer put up with it. Thankless rebels!

And have I not known some of God's servants say that they enjoy much of the presence of their Lord, but they have no riches; and so they are not among the favored ones. Over their poverty they fetch a deep groan. Some live in the presence of Cod, so they tell us, and they are full of divine delights, but yet they are greatly afflicted with aches and pains, and all the dolors of rheumatism, and therefore they murmur.

I admit that rheumatism is a dreadful pain enough, but at the same time to dwell always on the dark side of things, and to forget our mercies, is a sad instance of ingratitude. We are few of us as thankful as we ought to be: and there are some people who are not thankful at all, for instead of a song concerning their mercies their life is one long dirge for their miseries. Must we always hear the sackbut? Is the harp never to give forth a joy-note?

Some show their unthankfulness by fretting under their supposed ills. They know from Scripture that even their afflictions are working for their good, yet they do not rejoice in the prospect, or feel any gratitude for the refining process through which the Lord is passing them. Heaven and perfection are left unsung, but the present processes are groaned over without ceasing. Their monotonous note is always this pain, this loss, this burden, this uncomfortable sensation, this persecution from the world, this unkindness from the saints, and so on: all this goes to show that, though they know God, they do not glorify Him as God, neither are they thankful.

We can be guilty of unthankfulness, also, by never testifying to the goodness of God. A great

many people come in and out of your houses; do you ever tell them about God's goodness to you? Did you ever take up a single ten minutes with the tale of the Lord's lovingkindness to you? Oh, what backwardness there is to testify to God as God and to all His goodness and love! Our mouths are full of anything rather than the goodness of the Lord. Shame on our wicked lips!

Some fail also in their singing of God's praises. I love to be singing in my heart, if I may not sing with my tongue. Is it not a good thing for you housewives, when you are about the house, to sing over everything?

I remember a servant; that used to sing at the washtub, and sing in the kitchen; and when someone asked her why she was always singing, she said that if it did not do anything else it kept bad thoughts out of her mind. There is a great deal in that; for bad thoughts are bad tenants, who pay no rent and foul the house.

I knew a dear old Methodist preacher, who is now in heaven, who when he came downstairs of a morning was always tooting a bit of a hymn over, and he did the same in the barn and the field. I have passed him in the street and noted his happy melody: indeed he was always singing. He never took much notice of anybody, so as to be afraid of being overheard. Whether people heard him or not did not make much difference to him.

He was singing to the Lord, not to them; and so he wells on singing. I do not think that he had much of a voice or an ear for music, but his soul was made up of praise, and that is better than a musical education. God does not criticize our voice, but He accepts our heart. Oh, to be singing the praises of God every minute of our lives and never ceasing therefrom! Do you not think that many fail in this respect? They are not preparing for heaven, where all is praise; or they would take up the joyful employment at once.

It is plain that many are not thankful to God, for they never praise Him with their substance. Yet when the Jew was thankful, he took care to give a portion to the house of the Lord: before he would eat of his corn, he would send his sheaf to the sanctuary.

If we are grateful to God, we shall feel that the first thing to do is to give of our substance an offering of thanksgiving to the Most High. But this does not strike some people, whose religion is so spiritual that they cannot endure to hear of money, and they faint at the sound of a collection.

Their thankfulness rises to singing a hymn occasionally, but it never goes as far as giving a button to the cause of God. I am afraid their thankfulness is not worth more than what they pay to express it: that is to say, nothing at all. God deliver us from such a state of heart as that, and may we never, in any of these senses, be found amongst those professors, of whom it is said that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were they thankful.

They knew God, but they glorified Him not as God, neither were they thankful. And the first result of it was that *they fell into vain imaginings.* If we do not glorify God, the true God, we shall soon be found setting up another god.

This vain-imagination business is being done quite as extensively now as in Paul's days. Depart from the inspiration of the Bible, and from the infallibility of the Spirit of God who wrote it, and where will you go? Well, I cannot tell where you will go. One wanders into one vain imagination, and one into another, till the dreamers are on all sides.

I expect to see a new doctrine every day of the week now. Our thinkers have introduced an age of inventions, wherein everything is thought of but the truth of God. We do not want these novelties. We are satisfied with the word of God as we find it. But if you do not glorify God as God, and are not thankful to Him

for His teaching, then away you go into vain imaginations.

And what next? Well, *away goes the mind of man into all sorts of sins*. The chapter describes unnatural lusts and horribly fierce passions. Men that are not satisfied and thankful—men that have no fear of God before their eyes—it were a shame for us to think, much more to speak, of what they will do.

A heart that cannot feed at God's table will riot somewhere. He that is not satisfied with the cup that God has filled will soon be a partaker of the cup of devils. An unthankful spirit is, at bottom, an atheistic spirit. If God were God to us, we should not be unthankful to Him. If God were glorified in our hearts, and we were thankful for everything that He did, we should walk in holiness and live in submission. And if we do not thus behave ourselves, the tendency will be for us to go from bad to worse, and from worse to the very worst.

This has been done on a large scale by nations, whose downward course of crime began with want of thankfulness to God. It is done on a smaller scale by individuals, to whom departure from God is the beginning of a vicious career.

Get away from God, and where have you gone? If you do not love Him and delight in Him, whither will you stray? May the Lord tether us fast to Himself and even nail us to the cross.

It seems that these people, of whom Paul wrote, fell into all kinds of bitterness, such as envy, murder, deceit, malignity, whispering, backbiting, hating of God. They became spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, and so forth.

Well, if your spirit is not sweetened by the adoration and the love of God, it will grow bitter. If love does not reign, hate will rule. Look at unthankful people. Hear them talk. Nobody's character is safe. There is no neighbor whom they will not slander. There is no Christian man whom they will not misrepresent. The very angels of

God would not be safe from suspicion if they lived near to people of that kind.

But when you glorify God as God and are thankful for everything—when you can take up a bit of bread and a cup of cold water, and say with the poor Puritan, "What, all this, and Christ too?"—then are you happy, and you make others happy.

A godly preacher, finding that all that there was for dinner was a potato and a herring, thanked God that He had ransacked sea and land to find food for His children. Such a sweet spirit breeds love to everybody, and makes a man go through the world cheerfully.

If you give way to the other order of feeling and do not glorify God, but quarrel with Him and have no thankfulness for His mercies, then you will suck in the spirit of the devil, and you will get into Satan's mind and be of his temper and by-and-by his works you will do.

Oh, brothers and sisters, dread unthankfulness! Perhaps you did not think that it was so bad, but it is horrible! God help you to escape from it!

From message by C.H. Spurgeon

QUOTE...

If you do not make Him Lord of all, you do not make Him Lord at all.

I SHALL NOT BE MOVED

Psalm 62:1-6

I shall not be greatly moved...

I shall not be moved.

Let us notice the progress of the Psalmist. He moves from the statement *I shall not be greatly moved*, to *I shall not be moved*. What made the difference? How is he so confident? How does he know he will not be moved?

Verse 2 and 6 are identical with the exception of this one word (greatly), that makes such a difference. In the first instance there will not be much movement; he is confident that he should be able to remain fairly firm, but in the second he is absolutely confident that he will not move at all. Jowett calls this 'confidence born of Divine communion'—and he is right!

In verse 1 the Psalmist says he waits upon God: *from him cometh my salvation*. Because of this, he shall not be greatly moved. It is wonderful to know that our salvation is in the Lord God Jehovah, who made heaven and earth. It is a good thing to learn to rest in Him alone for salvation, for there is no salvation in any other! May we all wait upon God for salvation!

In verse 5 the Psalmist says he waits *only* upon God: *for my expectation is from him*. Now he shall not be moved—at all. It is amazing that while we think we are waiting upon God, we find we cannot do without some earthly thing. Would this not suggest that we are resting upon that *as well as God*?

The Psalmist has come to the point where he can honestly say he waits *only upon God*. Have we come to that point? Has the Lord worked in our lives, removing our dependence upon the things of this life? Our flesh does not like this—especially if it means a loss of comfort or pleasure!

Notice further that the Psalmist has come to the point where *all his expectation comes from God*. Do we expect some benefit, or pleasure from things in this life; are we disappointed? When we can honestly say, as the Psalmist, that all our expectation comes from God, we will also be able to say *I shall not be moved*.

By J. McPherson

*Life is so busy
God is so good
May He have the glory,
As only He should!*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The author of *Higher Ground* is Joshua McPherson. He is a young man who desires to walk closer to the Lord each day, and wishes to encourage other young men in the same pursuit.

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