

SIMPLE TRUTH: The Importance of Gratitude

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While this has been a year that many of us would like to forget, God has blessed wonderfully despite the circumstances. The year began with great promise as we entered a new decade and many of us began to implement great visions playing on the 20/20 theme. The hope we all had was quickly doused by the realities of a pandemic that swept across the globe. Schools shut down, governments closed, and businesses either closed or greatly reduced their services. We even dismissed in-person worship services for weeks as we attempted to flatten the curve of COVID-19.

In addition to the pandemic effect, we have also struggled with a tragic year in terms of natural disasters in Mississippi. In April we had a tirade of tornadoes pass through that took lives and destroyed property without regard. In the midst of all this, we've dealt with an election cycle that has brought intense social division across the nation.

In spite of all this, God has worked remarkably! Let's just count our blessings for a moment:

- While the pandemic has been terrible, our hospitals have

remained adequate for treating the medical issues we've had.

- While many of our churches have had outbreaks, most of them have remained clear of widespread COVID impacts by exercising measured caution.
- While the enemy has attempted to divide his church at every juncture, Mississippi Baptist churches have remained faithful and no fellowship has imploded.
- While most of our churches have felt the economic impact of the pandemic, giving to the Cooperative Program has remained consistent and the kingdom advance continues.

I could easily add more bullets to the list, but these suffice to remind us that God is good no matter what is going on. If there has ever been a year that many of us could justify minimizing the season of thanksgiving, this would be it. However, doing so would be the greatest mistake we could make! I'm praying this Thanksgiving will be the most celebrated of all as we remember God's grace and goodness in the midst of a rather distasteful season of life.

One anonymous author asked, "what if you woke up tomorrow with only the things that you thanked God for today?" That's a sobering thought, and I'm afraid many of us would have a lot less if that were the case. We, instead, should be filled with gratitude that grows out of our understanding that what we have is the result of God's grace and His grace alone.

What if you woke up tomorrow with only the things that you thanked God for today?

I once heard that there are only two kinds of people in the world. I'm generally skeptical about such generalizations, but this one is true. The two kinds of people are: (1) those who grumble because the roses have thorns, and (2) those who rejoice because the thorns have roses. Every one of us could fit in one of these two characterizations. We're either

grateful or we're grumbling. So let me ask you, in which category do you best fit?

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