

Faith Life Weekly 10/13/09

Reflection:

This is the time of the year when we look at "Stewardship", stewardship of each of God's gifts, each moment of each day, each moment in time, each exchange with a friend, each tear, each smile, each flower petal, each kernel of corn, each meal, each footprint in the soil, each hour slept, each yawn in our day. All of this belongs to and comes from God. As you begin to add it up we are given so much; we have so much. Count the daily blessings. Count them up. Count up God's savings acts. If a person went through the Bible and counted up each saving act I wonder how many there would be, let alone God's saving acts in our life. I know that today at least God saved me from oversleeping. God saved me from another heart issue, as I was encouraged to go work out with the Tuesday morning team. God saved me from the rain with a coat that God, by the way, allowed me to buy and gave me the means to buy by the way of a great occupation and a great call and a great job in a great city. I count up the neighbors and I say God saved me from an unfriendly part of the world. God saved me through my eyes with which I can search the stars at night. God saved me through my intellect with which I am able to have a means of living and go in and out each day and have a way in life. Come to think of it, wouldn't you agree? God has given us "More Than Enough".

Now when it comes to saying thank you back to God, returning a thanks, a gift to God, I can approach this in two ways. This is a new discovery for me this year. The first way is called "Support". I ask myself what my Fair Share is with the groups of people with whom I worship and count as members of my faith family. I ask, "What will it take for me to contribute my part to do my part and to fully celebrate the concept of "One member rejoicing and we all rejoice together, and when one member suffers we all suffer together"? The second way is through cheerfully giving a "Sacrifice" to God; a cheerful sacrifice. In this arena it really does need to hurt in order to be effective. I ask, "How am I giving in such a way that it affects me"? One thing to keep in mind is that God loves a cheerful giver. God does not want us to give out of a sense of guilt or to give our gifts begrudgingly. This is a challenge but it is one more step toward faithfully giving a thank you back to God.

So this week, this day, spend some time reflecting on your return of thanks to God.

At camp we teach a special practice of returning thanks after each meal. We not only pray before meal times but we pray after meal times. I wonder how it would be if we each took some time between now and Christmas to return thanks after each meal, each meal; let me see, is it 1 – 2 –3 or 5 meals counting snacks between meals? Phew! God really does give us so much, doesn't God? Would that change how we look at things? Would that challenge us to look at life in any new way?

God's peace to you as you take up this year's stewardship challenge. We really do have "More Than Enough", you and I. We really do!

SONG:

"God of Wonders" - Chris Tomlin and Third Day

(www.youtube.com/watch?v=1CBNE25rtnE)

Lord of all creation

Of water, earth, and sky

The heavens are Your tabernacle

Glory to the Lord on High

God of wonders, beyond our galaxy

You are holy, holy

The universe declares Your majesty

You are holy, holy

Lord of heaven and earth (2x)

Early in the morning

I will celebrate the light

And as I stumble through the darkness

I will call Your name by night

**God of wonders, beyond our galaxy
You are holy, holy
The universe declares Your majesty
You are holy, holy**

Lord of heaven and earth (2x)

Hallelujah to the Lord of heaven and earth (3x)

**God of wonders, beyond our galaxy
You are holy, holy
Precious Lord, reveal Your heart to me
Father holy, holy
The universe declares Your majesty
You are holy, holy, holy, holy**

Hallelujah to the Lord of heaven and earth (6x)

**Lord of heaven and earth
Lord of heaven and earth**

**Early in the morning
I will celebrate the light
And as I stumble through the darkness
I will call your name by night**

**God of wonders beyond our galaxy
You are holy, holy
The universe declares your majesty
You are holy, holy**

**Lord of heaven and earth
Lord of heaven and earth**

**Hallelujah to the Lord of heaven and earth
Hallelujah to the Lord of heaven and earth**

**God of wonders beyond our galaxy
You are holy, holy
Precious Lord reveal your heart to me
Father holy, holy**

**The universe declares your majesty
You are holy, holy, holy, holy**

**Hallelujah to the Lord of heaven and earth
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Hallelujah to the Lord of heaven and earth
Hallelujah to the Lord of heaven and earth
Hallelujah to the Lord of heaven and earth**

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Prayer:

God of abundance, God of the every day, God of our everything, grant us grace. Grant us truth. Grant us the wherewithal to see and know and appreciate all that you have given to us and all that you have done for us in your acts of salvation, in saving us. And God, "Thanks! You are super cool" Amen.

R.F.