

Are You Thankful?

I Timothy 1:12

Thank you for joining me today. We're going to be looking in just a few moments in I Timothy chapter 1. Let me remind you that you can see a reference to all the Bible verses that we're using and you can actually replay this broadcast on your computer by going to www.LRWM.org. I realize we have just a few minutes during the program to go over these verses with you, but you can see all these verses by visiting the website today. You can download a free copy of a transcript of this program or the other programs that have been aired on "It's a Good Life." You can also listen to the program once again. As you go to our home page, you'll see the current program there. You can also go to the other web pages that will allow you to listen to other programs of "It's a Good Life."

In I Timothy chapter 1, we want to read verse 12 today. It says, *And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.* Something today I want us to look at is the subject of being thankful. I am thankful today, and each of us needs to be thankful.

Now, there are several things that we need to be thankful for in the Lord today. According to the Bible, we should be thankful for our material needs. In I Timothy chapter 4, verses 3 through 5, it says, *Forbidding to marry, [and commanding] to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God [is] good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.* We need to pray for the things that we do receive at the time we receive them, but we also need to remember those things in the future.

Now, in Psalm 103 and verse 2, *Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.* Remember this—we can't remember all His benefits, but don't forget them all. Remember some of them. There are so many things that God has given us. It's impossible for us to recount everything that He's given us, but let's not forget to thank Him for some of them.

And something else we need to be thankful for is the goodness and mercy of God. In Psalm 106 and verse 1, it says, *Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for [he is] good: for his mercy [endureth] for ever.*

We need to also thank God for the victory over death and the grave. In I Corinthians chapter 15 and verse 57, it says, *But thanks [be] to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

And then, I'm thankful today for the triumph of the Gospel. In II Corinthians, chapter 2 and verse 14, it says, *Now thanks [be] unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.* So we need to be thankful for many things today.

And first, we need to be thankful for the material needs that He supplies, the goodness and mercy of God, and triumph of the Gospel, and we need to be thankful for the conversion of others. In Romans chapter 6 and verse 17, the Bible says, *But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.*

Now, we need to be thankful and we need to understand that even the angels in Heaven rejoice when one soul is won to the Lord, and those people are won through the efforts and

through the prayers of God's people who are on the earth at this time, spreading the Gospel.

And this next one is something that is sometimes hard for us to understand. We need to be thankful for all men. In I Timothy chapter 2 and verse 1, it says, *I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, [and] giving of thanks, be made for all men.*

In summing it up this way, we need to be thankful for all things. Ephesians chapter 5 and verse 20: *Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.* That's the reason that, when we pray, we end our prayers by saying, "In Jesus' name." Everything that is accomplished for God is through His Son, Jesus Christ. We are saved by Him, we are kept by Him, and our prayers are answered through Him. We have trusted the Lord to save us and to answer our prayers, so, therefore, we need to give thanks for all things through Him.

But I want you to notice, in particular now, three very important things that we need to be thankful for. Now, I've mentioned several things here, but today, I'm thankful for the Savior. In verse 12 of chapter 1 of I Timothy, it says, *And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord....* Paul was thankful for the Lord Jesus Christ.

And our Savior cries out in II Corinthians chapter 9 and verse 15, *Thanks [be] unto God for his unspeakable gift.* Well, what is that unspeakable gift? The unspeakable gift is the Lord Himself. The unspeakable gift is what He gives to each person who receives Him as Savior, and I quote this verse many times, and you've heard me do it before, *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: [it is] the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift....the gift of Jesus, and that gift is translated into eternal life through Jesus Christ.

And I can say with J. Wilbur Chapman, I'm thankful that living, He loved me; dying, He saved me; buried, He carried my sins far away; rising, He justified freely forever. One day he's coming, oh glorious day. What a time that's going to be when we see Jesus descend from Heaven with the voice of the archangel and saying, "Come up hither," and we're all changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. So I'm thankful today for the Savior.

I'm also thankful today for strength. In verse 12 of I Timothy chapter 1, it says, *And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me....* Notice the term, *who hath enable me.* This means to empower or to increase in strength. Now, Paul used the same verb in Philippians chapter 4 and verse 13. He said, *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.* Notice, Paul used this verb and he says he was thanking Christ. He says, *I can do all things through Christ* who strengthens or empowers me. And I'm thankful today that it's possible to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

Now, God has not given us the spirit of fear, but He's given us the opportunity to access or to come before Him and have the power that God wants us to have. In Ephesians chapter 6 and verse 10, it says, *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.*

And God promises as thy days, [so shall] thy strength [be]. In Deuteronomy chapter 33 and verse 25. *Thy shoes [shall be] iron and brass; and as thy days, [so shall] thy strength [be].*

God gives us strength today through the Lord Jesus Christ. He not only saves us. He not only keeps us saved, but he empowers us to do what

He would have us to do while we are on this earth as Christians.

And then, I'm thankful for service. Paul says, *[F]or that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry*—chapter 1 of I Timothy, verse 12. Now, the word *ministry* here means service or ministering. Each of us has been given a ministry unto the Lord. It's not only speaking of a person who stands in the pulpit and preaches the Word of God. It's not speaking primarily of a pastor or a minister or of an evangelist, but it's speaking to each one of us, and I pray that you and I may serve Him in truth with all our heart.

In I Samuel chapter 12 and verse 24, it says, *Only fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great [things] he hath done for you.*

We need to consider the great things that Jesus has done for us. We need to remember He saved us. We need to remember that He empowers us. We need to remember that He not only saved us and empowers us to do His job....the job that He has given us to do....the ministry He has given us to do....but He keeps us. He watches over us.

And may we be like David of whom it is said that *he served his own generation by the will of God*—Acts chapter 13 and verse 36. In the church today, there are needs that we see that need to be fulfilled. There needs to be singers; there needs to be cleaners. And we think oftentimes what an unlovely job it would be to go around, dusting in a church, dusting the pews, but what greater promise of God and what greater service is there than being able to dust off a rostrum, a pulpit where the Word of God goes forth, and unsaved people are able to hear the Word of God and come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

There are no minimal jobs in the ministry....singers, cleaners, Sunday school

teachers, nursery workers, deacons....each person, each one in the local body of Jesus, has a specific job to do, and I'm wondering today, are you thankful?

First of all, are you thankful that Jesus came? Are you thankful that He saved you? Are you thankful that He counted you worthy, putting you into the ministry of serving Him? Are you thankful today, or have you grown cold and indifferent toward Him and toward your fellow man? Jesus wants you to serve Him today, and if you have gotten away from Him, you haven't lost your salvation, but you have gotten to a place in your life where the fellowship has been broken between you and Him. Would you come back today? Would you say, "Lord Jesus, forgive me. I know I'm saved. I know I'm on my way to Heaven. I don't feel like I'm saved, Lord, because I've sinned. Please forgive me of my sin and cleanse me from all unrighteousness that I can serve you. Lord, I am thankful today. Please forgive me and use me for Jesus' sake."

And then maybe today you don't understand about being thankful to the Lord because you've never trusted Him as your Savior. You can say, "Lord Jesus, come into my heart. I receive you as my Savior just now. Please save me so I can go to Heaven." If you'll pray that prayer and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead and repent from your sin—that means turn from it—asking Him to save you, He'll save you today, and then you, too, can be thankful that you are on your way to Heaven.

Join me again at this same time next week and thank you for joining me today. Look at the website today, www.LRWM.org. On that website, you'll be able to download a free transcript of this program. Until this same time next week, this is Lewis Woodard saying thank you for joining me, and it is a good life, serving the Lord. May the Lord bless you.