

We give thanks

By D. SHELBY CORLETT

Centuries ago an appreciative person asked "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" (Psalms 116:12) This question is on our lips today, for the spirit of gratitude is the essence of the Christian life. God's benefits are countless, yet it is a most profitable exercise for us to count them by recalling in detail many of His rich blessings. A grateful person is an observing person.

The manner in which this ancient Psalmist said he would express his thanksgiving provides a pattern for us. He first recounted many of the ways in which God has helped him: he prayed and God heard him; when he was in trouble and sorrow, God delivered him; when he was brought low, perhaps ill, God helped him; his soul had been delivered from death, his eyes from tears, and his feet from falling. He had so much for which to be thankful!

He pledged himself to do something positive "I will take the cup of salvation" (Psalms 116:13) A most effective manner in which we may express our thanksgiving is to gratefully take more and more of the gracious blessings God has provided for us. How we take determines whether or not our taking is an act of thanksgiving. We may take from God and do it in such a manner as to honor Him as we acknowledge our utter dependence upon Him and take "the cup of salvation."

He further said, "I will pay my vows unto the Lord" (Psalms 16:14). During the times of trouble and sickness he may have made vows to the Lord as to what he would do if God helped him. These vows were not empty words to him; they came from his heart. He would express his thanksgiving by paying his vows unto the Lord; he would do it in the presence of all God's people. We express our thanksgiving by sincerely carrying through with our vows and in giving the loving service we have pledged in our full surrender to Him.

Perhaps the most helpful way in which he would express his gratitude to God is to "offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving" (Psalms 116:17). This was a willing and generous offering given from a grateful heart, the most precious to God of all sacrifices. We honor God when we give without being pressed into giving, when it comes from our hearts as a true love-offering—a "sacrifice of thanksgiving." The greatest of these offerings is the gift of ourselves, living and serving Him, and through Him those about us, in a sacrificial manner because we love Him.

We give thanks when our eyes are open to behold God's many gifts, when we accept His gracious blessings lovingly and appreciatively, when we are faithful to the vows we have made to Him, and when we offer to Him the sacrifice of thanksgiving—something extra that a deep love for Him inspires us to give.

—Herald of Holiness

MORE THAN MAN

"Whenever Jesus Christ is presented as a model of moral excellence, but a mere man like ourselves, there is no conscience awakened to see the enormity of sin and to turn from it with a perfect loathing. Revivals can no more come from such preaching than orange groves can spring up and bear fruit among the glaciers of Alaska."

—DANIEL STEELE.

"This generation knows everything about life except how to live it."

—Dr. E. Stanley Jones.

The King's Highway

GOD WANTS TO HEAR OUR PRAYERS

by Rev. Sheila Graham

Is there a possibility that God does not hear some prayers? There are conditions to prayer being heard and answered. The first is that we must be in a right relationship with God, I. Jn. 3:22 reads, "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments and do those things that are pleasing in his sight." The message the Lord gave the prophet Isaiah to Jerusalem and Judah was, "When ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from mine eyes. Cease to do evil". Thus we must examine our hearts. If in our heart there is condemnation, we must ask Christ to remove those things that are displeasing in His sight.

The second condition to prayer being heard is to ask according to God's will. I. Jn. 5:14 reads, "And this is the confidence that if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him." When one is praying for the souls of men, he can be certain it is God's will, for the Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

A third condition is praying that our prayer be answered for the glory of God. If there is any selfish motive in our prayer, the answer will not come. James 4:3 reads, "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss that ye may consume it upon your lusts. "When praying for revival, we must not pray with the motive in mind that we or our church might receive glory, but that Christ might be exalted in our midst. When Elijah prepared the sacrifice on Mount Carmel, after Baal's prophets prayed to Baal receiving no answer, his prayer was, "Let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel."

The final condition to prayer being answered is the exercising of faith. We are to ask in faith, nothing wavering, for God's promise is "Ask and ye shall receive." Heb. 11:6 reads, "HE that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." We must believe when there is not even any evidence that the answer is on the way. A blessing is extended to those who believe without seeing. Jesus said, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. "Faith is to believe what we do not see, and the reward of our faith is to see that for which we have believed. "Because the answer is not given when we expect it, remember God's delays are not denials. We are also admonished to let our requests be made known unto God with thanksgiving. A small boy's grandmother once promised him a photograph album for Christmas. At Christmas time when the gifts were opened there was no evidence of the promised gift, yet when naming his gifts to his friends, he would add, "And a photograph album from grandmother". When he was rebuked for making such a remark, with great confidence he exclaimed, "But she promised me one!" A few days later, with still no parcel in the mail, he asked his mother, "Would it help if I wrote and thanked grandmother?" After the letter had been mailed, the boy received a reply, "I have not forgotten my promise. I was waiting for circumstances to work out in order that I might obtain what you desired. Your "thank-you" helped. We could well follow that little lad's pattern when requesting things from God. When we bring our requests to God we must trust him to work out the circumstances and thank Him for the same. None of us would like to feel we were not trusted. How it must grieve the heart of God when we fail to trust Him.