
Words of Truth

What Shall I Render Unto The LORD?

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It is very easy to get caught up in a negative mindset. When we look around at the world we live in, we see an evil place (Galatians 1:3-4 and I John 5:19). Like Paul, we can often feel “troubled on every side” because we don’t fit into this world (II Corinthians 4:8 and II Corinthians 7:5). We could, in haste, find ourselves uttering words like “all men are liars” (Psalms 116:11). We could feel like good men have perished from off of this earth (Micah 7:2). We could look around and see that stupid abounds (Jeremiah 10:8). Yes, it is easy to slip into a dark place when we look at what surrounds us. We could end up thinking everything is worthless (Ecclesiastes 1:14).

What can keep us from such a negative mindset? We need to spend more time thinking about how blessed we are. The Psalmist said: *“Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation”* (Psalms 68:19). From our food (Acts 14:17) to our salvation (Acts 13:26 and Titus 2:11), God has blessed us with innumerable blessings. Could we ever find a way to repay God?

Benefits Far Beyond Our Ability To Repay

The Psalmist asked: *“What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me”* (Psalms 116:12)? The Lord is He that hath created us (Genesis 1:27 and Psalms 100:3). How do you repay that? The Lord is the creator of the entire universe (Genesis 1:16, Psalms 8:3, and Isaiah 40:28). How do you repay that? The Lord has kept us alive through providing for our physical needs (Psalms 65:9-13, Jeremiah 5:24, and Matthew 5:45). How do you repay that? The Lord sent His only begotten Son into the world to die so that we can be alive (II Corinthians 5:14-15 and I John 4:9). How do you repay that? The Lord has put up with stupidity from the beginning of the world (Genesis 3 - your life and mine). How do you repay that? God has been merciful and longsuffering with all of humanity (Psalms 86:15 and II Peter 3:9-14). How do you repay that?

We all know that the answer to every question above, and many more that could be posed, is that we cannot repay God for His acts toward us. His love, mercy, just judgment, etc. are far beyond our reach. His blessings to us are far more than we could ever number.

We Cannot Number Our Blessings From God

The Psalmist understood that the benefits God gives us are many. In fact, they are far too many to think that we could ever repay God for what He has done and will do. Notice this Scripture: *“Many, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered”* (Psalms 40:5).

While we cannot create a numbered list of all that God has done for us, we can recognize that He has blessed us (Galatians 3:8-9). Doesn't that show you that you have an innumerable amount of things to be thankful for? With so many blessings, we have many more reasons to express thanks to God (Psalms 34:1, Ephesians 5:20, Philippians 4:6, and I Thessalonians 5:17-18) rather than complaints (Philippians 2:14). So, when we look at the world around us, let's look past the negative and rejoice in all that we've received from God (I Thessalonians 5:16).

With an innumerable amount of blessings there often becomes a greater desire to repay God. Paul felt indebted not only to God, but all men (Romans 1:14-15). It is right to want to repay good with good (Romans 15:25-27). Some think that by obeying God they will, in some way, repay Him for what He has done. In fact, some even think that they can obey God and earn what He has done. Is that true?

Is Our Obedience Repayment For God's Works Toward Us?

Rather than looking at our obedience to God as repayment for something He has done for us, we should look at obedience as our expression of love to Him (John 14:15 and I John 5:2-3). Even when we do everything God expects us to do, we're still not repaying Him for His works toward us (Luke 17:7-10). Some misapply these truths and try to dismiss the need for obedience. Yet, we know we cannot be saved if we do not fully obey the Lord's will (Matthew 7:21-27, Matthew 12:46-50, Matthew 28:18-20, Luke 6:46, Luke 11:28, Hebrews 5:8-9, James 1:21-25, I John 3:24, II John 9, and Revelation 22:14).

That being said, there is an understanding we must have. The Bible shows us that we cannot earn what God has and will do for us (Titus 3:3-8). That does not mean we're not supposed to do good works (James 2:14-26), but it does mean that we are not "earning" our way to Heaven. Notice how clear this is in Paul's inspired letter to the church of Christ in Ephesus: *"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (**by grace ye are saved;**) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. 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. For **we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them**"* (Ephesians 2:1-10).

Conclusion

God does not ask for us to repay Him. As we've noted already, we cannot do so to even consider the discussion. What God does want you to give unto Him is yourself (Matthew 16:24-26 and John 12:25-26). He wants us to live according to His will (I John 2:3-6). That is not debt repayment, but it is love for the one who has done so much for us!