



Reflections and Revelations Newsletter
(November 3, 2007)

FORGET NOT HIS BENEFITS

Psalm 103:2 (KJV) ²Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.

Now, I have to be honest and admit, the first time I heard someone talk about not forgetting all God's benefits, I was a touch tad annoyed. One, I didn't realize this scripture was in the Bible. Two, far too many Christians equate God's benefits with gaining things, but things have never motivated me to serve God. I've always had a longing to get to know this mysterious God I knew was up there watching over me. I don't know how I knew He was there. I just did. So, it always annoyed me for God to be treated like Santa Claus. Then, I became involved in a lot of faith-based teachings that equated prosperity with God's blessings. Unfortunately, my life began to play out that way as well. The more my husband and I grew in God, the more prosperous we became, and I found myself worshiping the blessings more than I was the blessing!

Well, the time came when I had to have what the older generation calls a "come to Jesus meeting." I was tired of being stressed about finances and wanting to hold onto all of my stuff. So, I released everything back to the Lord in my heart and decided I can live without stuff, but I cannot live without the peace in my heart that only God can bring. Yet, it wasn't until yesterday I realized how important Psalm 103:2 is to me being able to obtain God's peace.

See, I've been studying spiritual warfare and the armor of God lately. While I've understood the components of the armor, I've never been able to explain to anyone how to actually use their armor. I know the things I do to overcome when faced with a challenge, but I could never quite articulate to someone else how to put on their own armor.

Yesterday, as I was working on an essay for the class I am taking, thinking about God's benefits helped me to understand what motivates me to "[cast] down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and [bring] into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (**2 Corinthians 10:5 KJV**). The benefits of God are what motivate me--the benefit that says, He rewards those who diligently seek Him (**Hebrews 11:6**), which is actually my life verse. That verse created a change in my heart to truly start serving God and trying to become who He created me to be instead of that angry soul I had become.

Even when Hebrews 11:6 became my life scripture, I was not looking to be rewarded with things. I was looking for peace in my life. I was looking to fill that big empty hole in my heart that lay underneath all the emotional pain. So, knowing God would reward me if I became more diligent in my search for Him was definitely a benefit that caused me to get into His Word and begin learning what He had to say about life. It was definitely a

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benefit that helped me to begin changing my thought processes, despite what my circumstances said or how my emotions were running wild. It was definitely a benefit that kept me searching for those who would not co-sign with me in my misery, but would encourage me to cancel my pity party and rejoice in the Lord.

See, what I now realize is whenever we are making a choice, we are making that choice based off the perceived benefits. So, I guess my question today would be, "Whose benefits am I seeking?" Truthfully, I see only two options: God or the world. If I'm seeking God, the fruit of the Spirit should characterize my life: "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" (**Galatians 6:22-23 NKJV**). However, when I seek the world's ways, "the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outburst of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like (**Galatians 6:19-21 NKJV**). Well, the choice for me is easy. I choose God.

Father, I pray every person that reads this will receive Your love into their heart and know beyond a shadow of a doubt just how special they are to You. I ask that You would pour out Your spirit of grace upon all who read this that they will find the courage, the strength, the motivation from within their own hearts to seek Your benefits and to leave behind the ways of the world. Father, I do ask that You would help every soul reading this to never lose sight of the conviction You bring when we are transgressing against You, but I ask that You would help all to know the difference in conviction and condemnation. Father, I ask that You would help all to find that path that leads to Your forgiving heart, to Your loving nature, and to Your grace that empowers us to make a better choice. Father, I give You all the glory, all the honor, and all the praise for all You have done in my life, and I ask that You would help all who read this to know and believe in their heart that no matter what they are struggling with or what they are going through, You and You alone have the answer. I pray You would help us all to hunger for Your Word and to thirst after Your presence that we may each be changed from glory to glory to fulfill the purpose for which You created us. I pray You would help each of us to seek the wisdom that comes from You and not that of the world. Father, help us to turn our eyes upward and to look to You for You are the One who has all we need. Father, I ask for peace, for joy, for love to be upon and within all who read this as they seek to know more of You! I thank You. I praise You. I seek to honor You with the fruit of my lips and the actions of my heart. May Your kingdom come and Your will be done in our hearts and in our lives. In Jesus' name. Amen.

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