

# The Gospel News

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Thankful*

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## Thankful

By Sister Carolynn O'Connor

"**N**ow more than ever..." We have heard these words so often during 2020. It is typically followed by a statement about how we should feel or a suggested action that we should take during our current circumstances. One that we do not hear too often, yet could actually be the key to our thriving and not just surviving "in this challenging time" (another common statement), is "Now more than ever—we should be Thankful."

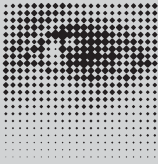
***"In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."*** (1Thessalonians 5:18)

Sometimes, it is a challenge! We have all been affected by this pandemic in different ways. For some, depending on the area you live in or even your age or circumstance, maybe your day-to-day life did not change much. For many, there have been concerns about jobs, trying to adjust to working from home, time on furlough, and the threat of losing their jobs altogether. Others had loved ones who were ill or died from the virus, elderly parents that were in assisted living facilities whom they could no longer visit, small children who needed to adjust to learning from home, older kids that were in college which caused concern, reduced income or ability to obtain the basic needs, other health concerns that went unaddressed—the list goes on and on.

Our stories are all different. For me, I have a primary immune deficiency; I receive infusions of plasma every week to help me maintain my "normal" way of life. When this all started, it was as if everyone was catching a glimpse of how I always live. I am always careful, wash my hands frequently, sanitize my area daily, I need to be cautious in groups and occasionally wear a mask. Because I am in a high-risk category, I have been required to be even more cautious than most during this pandemic. This means working from home only, avoiding even grocery stores, and making sure that not only myself but also my family follow safety precautions.

There have been moments when I have been wrapped up in self-pity, not just because of the pandemic but because I was constantly reminded that I have this immune deficiency. Typically, those moments would then be followed by guilt about feeling sorry for myself, because I have a very blessed life; I have everything I need. What has brought me through? Focusing on gratitude and being thankful for what I do have. I am blessed in so many ways, both naturally and spiritually. I have a home and a family, access to medical care, brothers and sisters who care about me, the Restored Gospel, I can obtain salvation and eternal life. I have hope, I know Jesus Christ and HE LOVES ME.

(Continued on page 7)



The Word of God gives such meaning to the idea of being **thankful**; let's explore:



Colossians 3:15  
And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye **thankful**.

Jacob 4:3  
...hoping that our beloved brethren and our children will receive [these words] with **thankful** hearts...



Alma 48:11,12  
And Moroni was a strong and a mighty man;... Yea, a man whose heart did swell with **thanksgiving** to his God...



1 Timothy 4:4  
For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with **thanksgiving**.



Isaiah 51:3  
For the Lord shall comfort Zion... joy and gladness shall be found therein, **thanksgiving**, and the voice of melody.

Jonah 2:9  
But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of **thanksgiving**; I will pay *that* that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord.



Psalms 100:4  
Enter into his gates with **thanksgiving**, and into his courts with praise: be **thankful** unto him...



(which line was left out on our bookmark this month?)

## BFTP Blast From The Past

By Sister Kellie Speck

Ninety-nine years ago this month Brother Ishmael D'Amico's life was miraculously saved from a fall. "While employed in the construction of a building in Detroit, in November 1921, I was handing material to the bricklayer. I was standing on a board about one foot wide, which was supported by a scaffold, some distance from the ground. Suddenly the board upon which I stood broke and fell to the ground; but I remained standing in mid-air, safe and sound. I was neither injured nor afraid, and I glorified God that I was preserved, although the board had broken and fallen from under me. I then stepped over to other boards, which had not broken. It was just as if someone had held me up until I could reach a place of safety. Later I was telling this experience in a testimony meeting here in Detroit. The spirit of God descended on one of the brothers, and he saw in a vision that when the board had broken, the Lord Jesus Himself came and held me by my arms to keep me from falling. I thank our Lord again and again that He saved me from perishing.



Source: "My Testimony" by Ishmael D'Amico, Brother Ishmael D'Amico ►

## Purpose Statement

- To fulfill the plan of God by bringing salvation through Christ to all people.

## Mission Statement

- The Church of Jesus Christ will teach the Gospel to all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things commanded by Jesus Christ, while working to draw Israel to Christ through efforts focused on the indigenous peoples of North, Central, and South America



## Vision Statement

- Living and worshipping in unity and righteousness will result in the fullness of God's Spirit and power among the Saints, culminating in continuous growth of the Church and fulfillment of Christ's promises concerning His Kingdom on Earth.



## “What If It Rains?”

By Elder Doug Obradovich

**“He sendeth rain on the just and the unjust.”  
(Matthew 5:45)**

**A**s often happens in tropical regions, an ominous rainstorm rolled in unannounced. Still 15 minutes from home, her broken passenger side window created serious concern. Moments later she saw the swirling rain just a block or so ahead of her, and immediately knew the duct-taped cardboard was no match for the storm. She prayed desperately. And God stayed the storm until my mother arrived home.

Fifty years later, when dark clouds appear while driving, I immediately recount Mom's testimony. I grew up expecting God to quiet every storm as He did for her. Sometimes innocence and faith coexist within a young heart. Early in my walk with the Lord, I carried myself with a certain naïveté, which protectively guarded my heart; but spiritual maturity brings a different level of faith.

Because, what if it rains? Jesus warned, “For He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust” (Matthew 5:45). Throughout my life, rain has been plentiful, and much like South Florida, many of life's storms appeared with little warning. Jesus told a parable involving a foolish man who built his house upon sand and saw it destroyed when the storm appeared. He continued His address, identifying a wise man who built his home on rock (Jesus Christ), which remained safe as it withstood the same storm (Matthew 7:24-27). But a storm, nonetheless.

So, what if it rains? When Paul was overtaken by affliction, he began

to beg God's rescue until the Lord answered, “My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness” (1 Corinthians 12:9). God had already provided Paul all that was needed. Paul understood his request for healing had been categorically denied, as God explained Paul had received the rain gear required for the impending storm. God had deemed Paul's request a want, versus a need. Paul's spiritual maturity allowed him to accept the rain.

Rain does not discriminate. It is essential for many natural reasons, but it also can serve God's spiritual purposes. God's people are best defined in the most difficult times, not by the easiest. It is much less challenging to remain faithful when the sun shines. The rain provides unbelievers with front-row, eyewitness seats to how true followers of Jesus serve courageously and faithfully during the most difficult times, answering the question, “What if it rains?”

Forty years ago Brother Paul Palmieri returned from a missionary trip to Africa and shared a song he had learned: “There's no disappointment in Jesus” (clap clap), “There's no disappointment in Jesus” (clap clap). Brother Paul said these were the only words to this simple song. Of course they were; nothing else need be said ... clap, clap!

Whether sunshine or rain, there's no disappointment in Jesus. It seems that early on I used spiritual duct tape, as with my mother's window, to hold things together. But now I've found God provides better solutions, more permanent protection. Why? Because, what if it rains?

# Songs of Praise and Gratitude

Take some time this month to reflect on these songs of Praise and Gratitude. Sing them in your home or listen to them on YouTube or your favorite music channels.

1

## *"Great Is Thy Faithfulness"*

The biggest thing we have to be thankful for is God's faithfulness. Morning by morning new mercies I see!

2

## *"Goodness of God" by Bethel Music*

This song discusses the reasons why we love the Lord. It evokes thankfulness by fixing our minds on God's goodness. The chorus begins by saying, "All my life You have been faithful. All my life You have been so, so good."

3

## *"The Flowers Still Bloom"*

Regardless of difficult times we may face, we are assured that God is in control. The next morning will always break, and we find solace that the flowers still bloom.

4

## *"Never Lost" by Elevation Worship*

God's power is never-ending. What a thing to be thankful for! The chorus states: "You can do all things. You can do all things but fail. 'Cause You've never lost a battle." God has never lost a battle, and He isn't going to start losing now."

5

## *"Dwelling in Beulah Land"*

"Let the stormy breezes blow, their cry cannot alarm me; I am safely sheltered here, protected by God's hand." These words bring comfort and thanksgiving to our souls. Stormy times in our lives will not move us. We are forever sheltered by God's hand.

6

## *"The Blessing" - Kari Jobe*

This song is written from Numbers 6:24-26. It has a powerful message and a strong melody that can be sung as a prayer over our lives in this Thanksgiving season.

7

## *"Sheltered in the Arms of God"*

"I feel the touch of hands so kind and tender. They're leading me in paths that I must tread." This line reminds us to be thankful for God's ever-present touch that guides us each day.

8

## *"Abundantly More" North Point Worship*

"I find all I need here in Your presence, Lord. I open up my soul and You fill me up with all I need here in Your presence, Lord. Where blessings overflow, there's always abundantly more." This chorus brings to mind our need to be open to all God has for us, and we're thankful for God's overflowing blessings each day.

9

## *"I Am Redeemed" Jessy Dixon*

The moment our names were written down in the Lamb's Book of Life is a time that should be celebrated and remembered. This song reminds us that "if anybody asks you, just who I am, tell them I am redeemed." Reflecting on our baptisms should always cause us to be thankful.

10

## *"What a Friend We Have in Jesus"*

"Can we find a friend so faithful who will all our sorrows share? Jesus knows our every weakness. Take it to the Lord in prayer." Thankfulness begins and ends with prayer. We start our prayers with thanksgiving and we end our prayers with thanksgiving. It is our job as believers to remember to take everything to God in prayer—both our cares and our thanksgiving

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## The Tree of Life *By Elder Duane Lovalvo*

**A**s we reflect on this time of Thanksgiving in America, like the Pilgrims did nearly four hundred years ago, we have much to be thankful for. Not only do we live in a promised and choice land, blessed with many material comforts, but we have more importantly obtained a promise of salvation through Jesus Christ. One of the most incredible portrayals of this salvation and eternal love is through the **Tree of Life** which is described for us in Nephi's vision from the First Book of Nephi.

You see, Nephi had a desire to see the things that his father, Lehi, had seen and prophesied about. One day, as Nephi sat pondering the things of God he was carried away in the Spirit to a very high mountain.

***"And the Spirit said unto me: Believest thou that thy father saw the tree of which he hath spoken? And I said: Yea, thou knowest that I believe all the words of my father."***

(1 Nephi 11:4-5)

Notice that Nephi had faith and believed the revelations of his father who had seen Christ descending from the midst of heaven and shining brighter than the sun. Therefore, because Nephi believed in The Son of God, he was permitted to see more. Likewise, all men must believe in Jesus Christ before they can begin their journey toward salvation.

Then Nephi was shown the tree that his father saw. ***"[A]nd the beauty thereof was far beyond, yea, exceeding of all beauty; and the whiteness thereof did exceed the whiteness of the driven snow."*** (1 Nephi 11:8)

Nephi further declared that the tree is ***"precious above all,"*** and he had a strong desire to know what it represented.

Then Nephi looked out from the mountain and saw the great city Jerusalem and the surrounding towns. His view then zoomed in to the city of Nazareth and down to a beautiful virgin who looked more beautiful than any other virgin he had ever seen.

Suddenly, the heavens opened, and an angel came down and stood in front of him. The angel asked Nephi, ***"Knowest thou the condensation of God?"***

And Nephi looked again and saw the virgin holding a child in her arms. And the angel said, ***"Behold the Lamb of God, yea, even the Son of the Eternal Father!"***

***"Knowest thou the meaning of the tree which they father saw?"***

And Nephi answered him, saying: ***"Yea, it is the love of God, which sheddeth itself abroad in the hearts of the children of men; wherefore, it is the most desirable of all things. And he spake unto me, saying: Yea, and the most joyous to the soul."*** (1 Nephi 11:21-24)

The vision continued and Nephi saw many things about Jesus.

***"[A]nd I beheld the Lamb of God going forth among the children of men... And multitudes of people who were sick... And they were healed by the power of the Lamb of God..."***

***"And I looked and beheld the Lamb of God that he was taken by the people... he was lifted up***

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## Editorial Viewpoint

(March 1998) *By Brother Don Ross*

**H**ave you ever felt lost? Did you ever travel somewhere and had no idea where you were going, where you were, or where you might be? Without excellent directions, it is difficult if not impossible to find your way.

The same condition exists in your spiritual life. Without the Lord directing you, you will never reach your spiritual destination, which is the Kingdom of God. When you ask the Lord, He will direct you. We read in Alma 37:37, "*Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings and He will direct thee for good...*" When we inquire directions of the Lord, He will answer and set you on His holy highway which is not crooked, but straight as an arrow.

The Lord does not walk in crooked paths. His path and way are straight. The subject of geometry instructs the student that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line. So are His directions. They are straight and narrow but they are exact and true. You will never get lost when you follow the Lord.

There are those who say it is very hard to follow the Lord. According to the Scriptures, it is not hard to follow the Lord. In fact, the opposite is true. We read it is "easy" to follow our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

In the 37th chapter of Alma, it states that it is "easy to give heed to the word of Christ which will point you to a straight course to eternal bliss..." When you follow Him, He will bring you to the promised land!

Consider the experience of Lehi and his family. They had no idea where they were going when they left Jerusalem as commanded by the Lord. Please remember that Lehi and his family were city dwellers. Lehi was not schooled or wise in how to live, much less survive, in the wilderness. That did not concern Lehi at all. It did not matter to him. He would follow the Lord. Lehi knew the Lord would not allow him to become lost or be lost in the wilderness as long as he followed the ways of God.

How did the Lord take care of them? Did they wander aimlessly in the wilderness, or were they directed by the power of God? What happened? The Lord prepared the way for Lehi.

Our Saviour miraculously provided a compass-like device, a director which Lehi called a Liahona. It appeared outside the door of his tent one morning, put there by the hand of the Lord. The director was prepared to show Lehi, his family, and followers the course they should travel in the wilderness.

The Liahona, the director, was shaped like a ball. The manufacture and craft was a curious workmanship. Naturally! It was made by the Lord! It was made of fine brass. Within the ball were two spindles and one pointed the way they should travel in the wilderness. How did it work? By their faith! It worked according to their diligence and heed to the instructions and commandments of the Lord. The directions and instructions were written in a "new writing." Although the writing was new, it was plain to read and it gave them understanding in the ways of the Lord. A new writing and immediate interpretation!

The director took them to the more fertile parts of the wilderness.

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## GOSPEL NEWS FACTS 1990S

### Did you know...

1. From June 26-July 2, 1999, The Church of Jesus Christ gathered at Olivet Nazarene University for a World Missionary Conference.
2. The GMBA held a campout in California from June 27 to July 3 in 1998. The theme was, "For Even Me."
3. In 1999, the price for an annual subscription to the Gospel News was \$12.
4. GMBA Campout used a hard copy registration form that was printed in the Gospel News for readers to complete and mail in. The total cost for camp in 1991 was \$170/person.
5. In the early 1990s, the editor-in-chief for the Gospel News was Brother Anthony Scolaro. He served in this position from 1984 to 1994.

We have all been more thankful for the everyday things we took for granted, simple necessities like toilet paper, food, and cleaning products, or bigger things like our jobs, the ability to go to school, and spending time with friends and family. Are we not more thankful for the doctors, scientists, and tools like masks that we have to help combat this virus and work to stay safe, and for technology which has allowed us to meet throughout the week from the safety of our homes until we were able to reopen our buildings? Most of all, are we not more appreciative for the hope of salvation and the opportunity to focus on what is most important in our lives?

Gratitude for these things came by way of a trial. Achieving gratitude every day is obtainable, though. The key to a grateful heart is PRACTICE. Like most good things in life, it does not happen on its own. It requires work and planning. In past issues we have shared suggestions on how to practice it. Brother Ken Lombardo shared an experience in the November 2018 issue of a time in his life where he had to work hard to feel grateful. Along with his family each day they would write something they were thankful for on a Post-It and put it on the wall. He wrote, "We were surprised how these little notes lifted our spirits and disciplined us to see the Hand of God in our lives." In the November 2018 issue, we suggested a similar project with a gratitude jar, where you write something daily that you are thankful for and put it in the jar. We also

suggested that you choose one prayer each day where you ask for nothing and only thank God. In the 2019 issue, Brother Anthony Scolaro wrote in an editorial that an attitude of thankfulness benefits the bearer physically, psychologically, and socially, and said that, "gratitude transforms our nature." Brother Doug Obradovich encouraged us to "Set aside time to intake nothing more than His Spirit (fast) and send back all glory to our Creator" in a "Fast & Prayz" day in the 2016 Thanksgiving issue. Sister Jan Bork challenged the kids in the November 2015 issue to take their age and say thank you to that many people in the month of November. All of these are great ideas, and you can read about them and more in the past issues of the Gospel News on the Church website [www.thechurchofjesuschrist.org/resources/gospel-news](http://www.thechurchofjesuschrist.org/resources/gospel-news).

We hope that these reminders give you ways to practice your gratitude and rise above any negative feelings you are having as we face the "challenges of today." In this issue we have included a list of songs of praise as suggestions to sing on your own or listen to on YouTube or your favorite music channel, and many scriptures that focus on gratitude. Read them as reminders of why this is so important. Start in the month of November and then do it again in December, January, and throughout the rest of the year.

***"To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever"*** (Psalms 30:12).

## The Tree of Life

Continued from page 5

***upon the cross and slain for the sins of the world.***" (1 Nephi 11:31-32)

So, based on what we have read, Nephi was given the interpretation of the Tree of Life, that from a broad perspective, it represents the love of God. And what is the love of God?

The love of God, or the Tree of Life, consists of all the things that Nephi witnessed in his vision; the Condescension of God, exceeding all beauty, the most desirable, precious above all, the purest, the most joyous to the soul, redemption, Jesus Christ.

Finally, I would like to close with John the Divine's vision of the Tree of Life. "***And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street... was there a tree of life... And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it...***" (Revelation 22:1-3)

## Topic Series

Continued from page 6

Lord, through the director, pointed them to food. He would not let them go hungry. The Lord cared for and provided their every need! Imagine, city dwellers in the wilderness. Not only did they survive, but they also completed their journey to the promised land! The promised land had more jewels, gold, and silver than what they left behind in Jerusalem. Just like Job, their treasures increased. They may have more than doubled!

The Lord will direct us to the more fertile parts in this vast wilderness we call the world. He will direct us and place us in good, solid ground. He will keep us in His care. He will provide for us. He will not allow us to go hungry, either naturally or spiritually. What we have to do is follow His directions. We must follow His new writing. The Church of Jesus Christ! We must follow His new writing, the Restored Gospel of Jesus Christ. We must follow Him!

Because of its simplicity and the easiness of the directions, there were those who would not believe its directions. Because they would not follow the directions, there were times they tarried in the wilderness. This sounds so familiar. It is no different in our generation nor will it be in generations to come. Because of the simplicity of the instructions of the Lord, there are those who will not believe or give heed to the way of the Lord. How tragic! Why must people look for thunder, lightning, blaring trumpets, and fanfare? Why is it that the gratification of the flesh and ego dictate flashiness and glaring lights?

This is not the way of the Lord. The directions of the Lord are not flashing neon lights. The Lord works in mysterious ways, His wonders to perform. His ways appear small to those who will not believe. They are large to the believers. The directions of the Lord hold promise and life to those who follow Him and believe in Him.

When we follow the Lord, He will direct us for good. The Lord is the great compass! He is the great director! Follow Him. You will never get lost or be lost.

## Testimonio de Gratitude de Víctor

Mi nombre es Víctor León. Pertenezco a la rama de Lake Worth, FL. Nací en Monterrey N.L. México en el año 1982. Vengo de una familia de padres divorciados. Yo fui criado por mi abuela, quien me acogió desde los 6 meses de edad junto con mi hermano. 19 años después llegué a Florida. 6 años después de esto tuve un accidente en el cual sufrí una caída desde una altura de 3 pisos. Pensé que la historia de mi vida terminaría ahí. Sin embargo, a 16 años de ese accidente veo como Dios me ha protegido durante todo el camino. Doy gracias porque en las temporadas difíciles Él me hizo fuerte.

Hace un par de semanas recibí un mensaje de mi media hermana donde me decía que mi sobrino estaba extraviado. Era una situación muy grave, debido al crimen organizado si en un periodo de 24 horas no piden rescate posiblemente significa que ha muerto, esto de acuerdo a la policía. No podíamos contar tampoco con la policía puesto que ellos trabajan en colaboración con el crimen organizado. Una noche después ha esto recibí un mensaje de texto de una hermana de la Iglesia donde me preguntó cómo estaba. Le comenté la situación y ella me respondió que lo pondría en su lista de peticiones. Para la mañana siguiente mi sobrino ya estaba en casa. Doy gracias por La Iglesia de Jesucristo, por siempre apoyarme y por darme la oportunidad de pertenecer hasta gran familia.

2/12/12: El día de mi bautizo recuerdo que estaba haciendo frío y lloviendo lo cual es raro en Florida. Aún así, entramos al agua. Fue una experiencia única, con gozo y paz por mi primer encuentro con el Espíritu.

Ser agradecido, para mí, es mostrarlo, más que decirlo. Estoy agradecido por muchas cosas, entre ellas mi familia, mi iglesia y mi Dios que siempre me ha protegido a pesar de mis errores. En realidad lo que más me ha ayudado en la vida han sido los tiempos difíciles en los cuales he aprendido a ser fuerte. Cuando nadie estuvo ahí solo estuvo mi Señor.

## Victor's Testimony of Thanks

My name is Victor Leon. I am from the Lake Worth, FL branch. I was born in Monterrey N.L. Mexico in 1982. After my parents divorced, my grandmother raised me from the age of 6 months along with my brother. Nineteen years later, I came to Florida. Six years after this, I had an accident in which I suffered a fall from a height of 3 stories. I thought my life story would end there. However, 16 years after that



accident, I see how God protected me along the way. I am thankful that in difficult seasons, He made me strong.

A couple of weeks ago, I received a message from my half-sister telling me that my nephew was missing in Mexico. It was a very serious situation because, typically if they do not ask for ransom within 24 hours, the police say that it's likely that he is already dead. However, we didn't trust the police either, since they collaborate with organized crime. The following night, I received a text message from a Church sister asking how I was doing. I told her about the situation and she replied that she would put it on the prayer list. By the next morning, my nephew was home. I am grateful for The Church of Jesus Christ, for always supporting me and for giving me the opportunity to belong to a great family.

2/12/12 - The day of my baptism I remember it was cold and raining, which is rare in Florida. Still, we went to the water anyways. It was a unique experience, with joy and peace for my first encounter with the Spirit.

I am thankful for many things, including my family, my church, and my God who has always protected me despite my mistakes. Truthfully, I am most thankful for the difficult times which have taught me to be strong. When I felt like I was alone, God was always there for me.



## Difference *By Apostle Jerry Valenti*

**F**irst Timothy Chapter 6, written by the Apostle Paul to Timothy, contains excellent advice for servants of God regarding money. Here are 5 amazing facts from this chapter that describe proper attitudes and what to do (or what not to do) with money.

**1 Don't Love It** – Verse 10 states that “the love of money is the root of all evil.” The love of money and the desire to be wealthy can sometimes drive people to take actions that are unkind, unethical, and even illegal. Even if we don't succumb to any of these temptations, the desire for wealth can cause us to prioritize money-making efforts above serving God. Paul states that Church members who loved money “erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”

**2 Don't Trust in It** – Regardless of how wealthy we may become in this life, we should not “trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy” (verse 17). Although a large bank account may provide some level of comfort, it can potentially all disappear very quickly. It's comforting to know that even during

times of economic recession, even when unexpected expenses arise, even when we are unemployed – God is always there for us. We can always trust in Him to provide for us.

**3 Be Content with What God Provides** – According to one dictionary definition, being wealthy means “having more than enough to gratify normal needs or desires.” So, there are two ways to become more wealthy – either increase what we have or decrease what we desire. If we can truly manage our desires such that we are content with what God provides for us, we will realize that we are actually exceedingly rich. “Godliness with contentment is great gain” (verse 6).

**4 Share with Others** – To whatever extent God has blessed us financially, we need to be willing to share some of it with others – with the poor and needy, with worthy

charities, with the Church. If your bills are so high that nothing is left to share with others, consider a desire adjustment per #3 above. If worries about an uncertain future make it difficult for you to share with others, see #2 above. If you truly have no desire to share with anybody else, see #1 above or #5 below.

**5 You Can't Take It with You** – “For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out” (verse 7). I once heard a story (fictional of course) of a man who somehow managed to smuggle a suitcase into heaven. When he opened it and the angels saw it was filled with gold bars, they said, “Why did you go to so much trouble to bring pavement with you?”. We can trust God to provide for us for the few years we are on earth, knowing that we'll leave it all behind and reap the indescribable rewards that He will provide in heaven – riches that last for all eternity!



## Ladies' Uplift Circle News

*By Sister LuAnn Carson*

**T**hanksgiving season is a time to focus on gratitude. At many dinner tables, the question is asked, ‘What are you most thankful for?’ Answers usually include the obvious like Church, God, health, Jesus, or family.

But today I feel especially grateful for water. Did you know that almost one third of the world's population has no access to clean drinking water? Contaminated water supplies lead to sickness and possible death. I love a nice cool glass of water! But soon after a drink, I'm thirsty again. It's difficult for me to go even fifteen or twenty minutes without water.

In John chapter 4 verse 13, Jesus refers to the water from Jacob's well: “Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again.” But then



He speaks of another water in verse 14: “But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I

(Continued on page 11)



## Thankfulness

**W**riting about this time of year when we celebrate the Thanksgiving holiday gave me a wonderful reason to look up being thankful in the scriptures and see what the great men of God have to teach us. All of them tell us to give thanks to God for all that He does for us! And I started thinking about things that I am thankful for.

The first one is how much God loves us and protects us. Think. Have you ever been in a car and almost had an accident, or slid on dangerous ice, on a bad road? What about your health? There have been so many times when I was afraid and asked God for help in the name of Jesus and got better when I was ill. He cares.

What about you? Have you ever whispered a prayer when you were scared things were going wrong? Then did you say thanks to God? Did you tell others about how good God is to you?

What about the times when things are not going good? Maybe something you truly hoped for is not going to happen. It could be small like you didn't make a team or win a friend you wanted to. It could be life changing—huge, like someone you deeply love is getting ready to die and leave this earth and you will have sorrow and changes.

Sometimes when we are hurt or afraid and feel helpless we also feel angry that we are going through something so painful and confusing. We wonder—does anyone care? Or will I ever feel happy again? In the Bible, the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Church people in the city of Thessalonica told us "In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." So, we are not alone. God does know what is going on. It actually is His will that we go through

this tough spot.

When I wonder why something bad is happening, I realize that I am also learning. I can't stay a little baby, watched over by my family all my life! I want to grow and keep on growing all my life! After I go through this I will have a bigger heart towards other suffering people.

I will also know how to listen and help them.

So, here's your challenge today! Take a piece of paper or go on your phone and write down ten things you are thankful for. What are you grateful to God for?

From small to big, list them. Of course food, shelter and safety are basics. But what about knowing there is a true and living Savior, Jesus, who is talking to the creator of the Universe, God, for us! Many people don't even know the power and peace of praying!

I asked my friend who'd lived in another country what he was thankful for and he told me, "I'm thankful for simple things, like turning on a water faucet and getting hot and cold safe water." I hadn't thought of that for a long

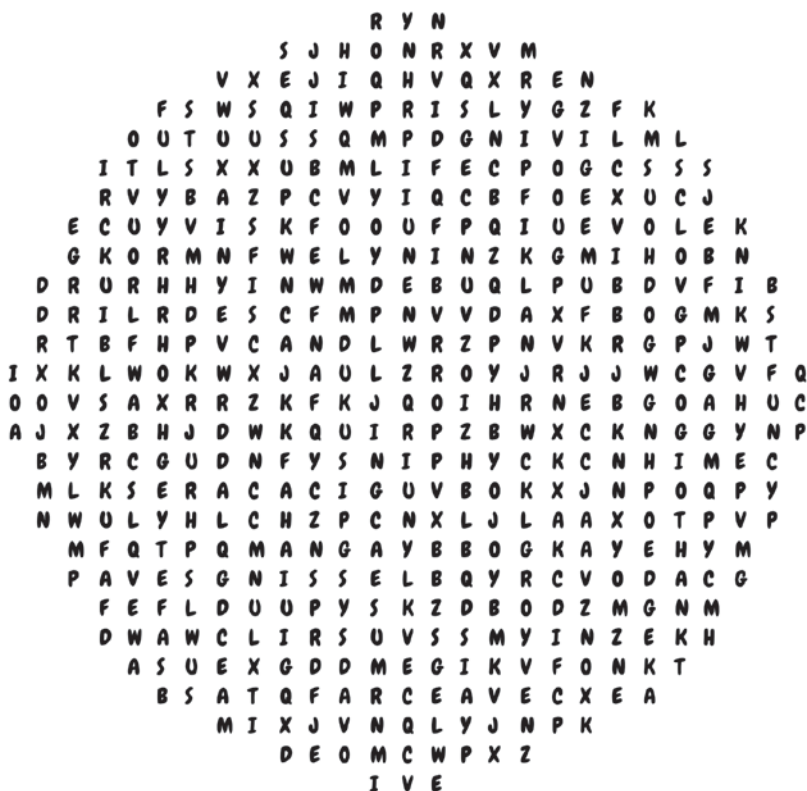
time. I am very thankful I was educated to be able to read! I never need to wonder about things that I can just look up so easily.

I am also grateful my Mother raised me to know how to pray, say I am sorry, admit when I am wrong, and forgive others. It's hard sometimes, but this gives me such a more peaceful and joyful life.

On a different angle, my Mother also sent me to years of swimming lessons and now I've been swimming every day this week in a very chilly Michigan lake that makes me so happy! The trees are getting leaves of red, little kids are digging buckets of sand, I hunt for warm spots in the water and I feel so grateful and joyful to be alive.

Make your list. And as you look at things you are thankful for, tell our Lord. Thank Jesus. Tell others of God's goodness! Thank our great God, and pray for His will to be done in your life. Pray you can bring love and kindness to others in this lonely world. Ask God to keep guiding and protecting you! Have a blessed and thankful life!

With love, your friend, *Sister Jan*



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LOVE  
SAFETY

# Three things you are THANKFUL for

Continued from back

"I'm thankful for the church, answered prayers, and my family."  
– Brother Michael Zaino, Edison, NJ Branch.

"My family, my health, and my church family."  
– Brother Chuck Maddox Jr., Lake Worth, FL Branch.

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## Church's Purpose-Mission-Vision Updated

The Quorum of Twelve Apostles recently updated the Purpose, Mission, and Vision statements of The Church of Jesus Christ. (See Page 3, top.) Our Church President and Counselors wish the entire Church, ministers and members alike, to be aware of and live the Church's Purpose, Mission, and Vision as our overriding focus in this day and time.

The latter-day events and promises are unfolding before us as a people today, and we have an obligation, even a commandment, to be obedient to the tasks committed into our hands—our Church—by the Lord.

*Brother Joel Gehly, President*  
*Brother Peter Scolaro, First Counselor*  
*Brother Frank Natoli, Second Counselor*

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## MOVING?

Please email your  
change of address to

[thegospelnews@thechurchofjesuschrist.org](mailto:thegospelnews@thechurchofjesuschrist.org)



## Ladies' Uplift Circle News

Continued from page 9

shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Later in John we learn that the living water Jesus offers is His Holy Spirit. "Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me . . . out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive." (John 7:37-39). As we read in I Nephi 11: 25, living water also is a representation of the love of God. "I beheld that the rod of iron, which my father had seen, was the word of God, which led to the fountain of living waters, or to the tree of life; which waters are a representation of the love of God." If we are filled with God's love and His spirit, we never need to thirst again!

It's been a very hot summer and I've spent a great deal of time outdoors. What could be more refreshing and rejuvenating than a cool shower or a warm bath?! Even better, a dive into the pool! But soon after I was feeling clean and fresh, the heat would kick in and soon I wasn't feeling so spotless anymore.

In the scripture we read of Naaman:

"Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean" (2 Kings 5: 14).

Naaman was physically cleansed of leprosy. But much greater is a spiritual cleansing. In September we were blessed at our branch to witness two souls being washed clean. The river water wasn't pure, but they were cleansed of sin through the blood of Jesus. Their cleanness isn't temporary, like the washing by water in a shower. Jesus died on the cross so that we may be clean and forgiven and receive salvation. The waters of baptism are open to all who sincerely repent. And those waters don't just produce a temporary cleansing. Galatians 3: 27 reads, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." The old man is cleansed and becomes new and clean through Christ.

Although I love a cool glass of water and the refreshing feeling of a jump into the pool, neither can compare to the living water Jesus offers.



Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him... Psalm 100:4

# Blessing Bits

**BB** When I was in kindergarten, my mom was obtaining her citizenship. My mom is a very humble woman and had asked me if I would help her learn the Pledge of Allegiance. Every morning before school we would recite it and my mom remembered one more word. It didn't stop there; my mom went on to learn English and obtained her GED. She taught me many things that I will carry for the rest of my life, but this experience is something I remember every time I say the Pledge of Allegiance especially "under God, indivisible". Under God because my mom always gives God the credit for her success and indivisible because this memory is forever etched into my heart. I'm blessed to have experienced such a powerful moment. One that reminds me that God has blessed my family beyond measure as I pledge to my God and my country. – *Sister Ana Arreola-Benyola, Treasure Coast, FL Branch*

**BB** In July, I planned a trip to go help my mom pack up her house. My uncle Dennis Calabrese had just been hospitalized with COVID-19. He was doing better over the weekend. The day I arrived, he took a turn for the worse and my cousins called and said

they were on their way. He passed away that Wednesday. I had planned to help my mom pack, instead, my brother and I helped my cousins with the passing of their dad. We cooked, sanitized, and loved them for that week. I hadn't been up to Tse Bonito in 8 months, and it just so happened I was there that week. That wasn't a coincidence. That was the Lord's gift to us to help our family during a difficult time. God is gracious to provide love and support to carry us through it. Praise God. – *Sister Wendy Greenland, Mesa, AZ Branch*

**BB** Every 3 weeks, we are required to get COVID-19 tested at work and every 3 weeks, all my coworkers dread it. They all complain about how painful and uncomfortable it feels. Some of my coworkers even leave the area in tears while others leave furious from what they consider to be a heavy-handed nurse. After seeing my coworker's reactions, I immediately took it to the Lord. I asked Him to be with me or to send an angel to be with me that I would not feel any pain. Since July, we have been tested a handful of times and every time I get tested, I have never felt it! Praise God! – *Sister Rosa Mosqueda, Mesa, AZ Branch*

Send us your Blessing Bits by contacting Sister Zarella Scolaro at [zarellamosqueda@gmail.com](mailto:zarellamosqueda@gmail.com) [in approximately 150 words].  
Answers to Question of the Month to [gospelnews@thechurchofjesuschrist.org](mailto:gospelnews@thechurchofjesuschrist.org).



**Question for this month:** To all teachers, medical professionals, and essential workers- what gives you joy in your job as you work to support your communities during this challenging time?



**Answer from last month:** Thanksgiving is coming soon. Share three things you are THANKFUL for. "Jesus (pure love), my family (natural love), and the family of God (spiritual love)." – *Brother Frank Natoli, Detroit, MI Branch #1*

Turn back to page 11 for answers to this question.



Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him... Psalm 100:4