

Count Your Blessings Devotional

Page 1 in **Hymns of Our Redeemer**
Johnson Oatman, Jr. 1856-1922

Greetings! My name is _____. Today we are going to take a fresh look at this wonderful old favorite hymn, "Count Your Blessings" by Johnson Oatman, Jr. We are going to share some reflections on scriptures that we think relate to the message in the song. Let us join together in singing this classic hymn of thanksgiving... "Count Your Blessings!"

1. When upon life's billows you are tempest tossed,
When you are discouraged, thinking all is lost,
Count your many blessings, name them one by one,
And it will surprise you what the Lord has done.
2. Are you ever burdened with a load of care?
Does the cross seem heavy you are called to bear?
Count your many blessings, ev'ry doubt will fly,
And you will be singing as the days go bye.

Chorus:

Count your blessings,
Name them one by one;
Count your blessings,
See what God has done.
Count your blessings,
Name them one by one;
Count your many blessings,
See what God has done.

Thoughts on the Scriptures:

In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 1 Thessalonians 5:18

This hymn is pressing each of us to take stock of the many ways God has blessed us. One way to "Count Your Blessings" is to begin reflecting on the many practical ways God has intervened in your life for your good. The circumstances may not always be pleasant, but looking back, we can see God's protecting, providing, correcting hand in everything. We just need to begin counting. Looking at all the turns and twists of our life through the lens of God's good will helps us begin to see many of the ways He has sustained us. In happy times and sad times, in victory and in difficulty, if we look, as His children, the evidence of His loving hand comes into focus. He has supported us. He has strengthened us. Even when we were insensitive to His love and care, He was there caring for us. And, when we have a thankful heart, what joy and gratitude blossoms as we consider the profound message of the gospel of Jesus Christ. What an immense blessing salvation is that our Savior bought for us! Certainly we want to do our Father's will. Let us consider His many blessings and give Him thanks.

Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon His name, make known His deeds among the people. 1 Chronicles 16:8

As we reflect on God's blessings in our lives, this verse in 1 Chronicles points out three ways that our gratitude for these blessings can inspire us.

The first thing is **thankfulness**. This is not just positive feelings about the nice things we can think of. But we are here called to GIVE to the LORD open expressions of our heart-felt appreciation for His loving care...even in specific terms. For example, "Thank You Heavenly Father for this food!"

The second thing this verse is reminding us of is that **God is the source of all our real blessings**. We honor Him when we recognize this fact. We must recognize this fact to the point that we are willing to appeal to Him directly as our Heavenly Father for the blessings we so desperately need. There are many, many things we need that we cannot do for ourselves. We are very dependent on Him for His sustaining grace, His watch over our lives, His care for our loved ones, His provision of peace and joy and love in our hearts, our ability to be a blessing to others. All of these things and so much more beckon us to talk to Him, to "call on His Name!"

The third thing this verse is reminding us of is that ***others need to hear our testimony of God's blessings***. We have the responsibility to bear witness to the love and care of God in our lives...to show to others the thankfulness that wells up from our hearts for the blessings of God that we are consciously compiling as we count our blessings!

Sing unto Him, sing psalms unto Him, talk ye of all His wondrous works. 1 Chronicles 16:9

Yes! Our passage in 1 Chronicles continues on: SING! That's right, sing. Sing out loud if you can. Certainly sing in your heart with a melody of gratitude. And intentionally, actually sing to God. He is listening. He sees your heart. You honor Him with your praise and thanksgiving. And, again, let your gratitude spill over into your daily lives. Let your thankful heart be seen by the souls that God places around you. Let them see your joy. Let them hear of your love for your Heavenly Father.

Remember His marvelous works that He hath done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth. 1 Chronicles 16:12

And when pain or loss or disappointment crowds our minds with feelings that distract us – REMEMBER. By actually looking back to days gone by, we can recall to our minds the blessings from the past. We can start with Christ's sacrifice for us on the cross of Calvary. May God quicken our memories, that we never forget this great gift of eternal life that He offers all who believe in Jesus! When life is full of trials and troubles, we can remind ourselves of the absolute truths of the verses we are quoting here. Indeed, our God is full of kindness and love and compassion, and long-suffering. Our Heavenly Father shows us GREAT mercy everyday! Let us bless God with our lips, with our attitudes, and with our deeds! Let us bless Him for all His wondrous blessings in our lives. In the worst of circumstances, let us remember the solid hope of eternal life. No matter how we feel in the moment, each step is one step closer to seeing the **LORD** face to face.

The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy. 9 The LORD is good to all: and His tender mercies are over all His works. 10 All Thy works shall praise Thee, O LORD; and Thy saints shall bless Thee. Psalm 145: 8-10

A Closing Prayer:

Let us Pray. – *Oh, Heavenly Father, we do seek to bless You with our thanksgiving. Let our gratitude flow over into our daily lives. Help us to see beyond our struggles and the trials that You allow into our day. May we understand the opportunity we all share as we begin to count the blessings You pour out upon us today and the blessings You have promised us when our pilgrimage here on Earth is over. Thank You for the promise of eternal life to all who believe in Your only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. We praise You, we bless You, Heavenly Father. AMEN.*