



THE IMPORTANCE OF GIVING THANKS

BY DALE KEFFER

VOL. 51 | NO. 11
A CMC PUBLICATION

November is the time of year when our society reminds us to give thanks. Stores put on Thanksgiving sales, card companies produce Thanksgiving cards and we celebrate the Thanksgiving season with family gatherings from near and far, and more food than anyone should eat. While the commercial world only focuses on the giving of thanks once a year, our Christian walk should be filled with the continual giving of thanks with an attitude of gratitude.

The Bible, especially the Book of Psalms, is replete with reminders to give thanks, especially to the Lord “for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever” (Ps. 106:1 KJV). Merrill Unger, in *Unger’s Bible Dictionary*, refers to thanksgiving as an “obligation of godliness.” He further refers to thanksgiving as “the grace of God in Christ, operating in the soul of the believer as a principle and going back to Him in gratitude.”

Our grateful expressions to [God] not only express our feelings of gratitude, but in so doing we are conveying *worship* to God.

“Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift” (2 Cor. 9:15 KJV) is an expression of gratitude that recognizes the position of God as related to the position of mankind. It clearly establishes God as being the benefactor, he who has something to give, and us as being those who are in need of his gift. Our expressions of gratefulness for what he has done for us, clearly convey the truth that it is we who need him and not he who needs us.

The giving of thanks is an important factor in our worship of God. The term worship comes from an old English word, *worship*. To bestow *worship* means that we have recognized the worth of someone in our lives. While we don’t worship each other, we do give recognition of others’ importance to us. We thank those around us for whatever it is that they have done for us. When I spent time in the hospital, I was determined

to be a good patient and made sure to thank the nurses for everything they did every time they did it. They were people of worth to me and I wanted them to know that.

When we refer to worship in the Christian world, we are speaking of an expression to God. Our grateful expressions to him not only express our feelings of gratitude, but in so doing we are conveying *worship* to God, giving him his rightful place and communicating to him how much we value his worth in our lives. A hymn says, “Without him I could do nothing, without him I’d surely fail; without him I would be drifting, like a ship without a sail.”¹

The gist of my prayers have changed over the years. I still ask God for his favor in my life, but now, much more than when I was younger, I am asking God for the benefit of others who are in need. I am thanking him more now for what he has done for me than I am asking him for anything.

Another song says, “Thou art worthy, thou are worthy, thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, glory and honor, glory and honor and pow’r.”² It was important to me that the nurses, who were taking care of me when I could not take care of myself, understood through my own testimony what they were worth to me. How much more so, do I want God to know how much he is worth to me in my life. Among all the other things that are a normal part of living for him, I will continue to bestow *worship* on him with the daily giving of thanks. I want him to hear it straight from me. Thank you, God! 🙏

¹“Without Him” words and music by Mylon LeFevre, © 1963 Angel Band Music (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing)

²“Thou Art Worthy” words and music by Pauline Michaels Mills, © 1975 Fred Bock Music Company
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Open the Wells!

BY DARREN PEACHEY

*“Open the wells of grace and salvation,
pour the rich streams deep into my heart.
Cleanse and refine my thought and affection,
seal me and make me pure as thou art.”*

Three deep-rooted CMC churches (Cherry Glade, Maple Glen, and Oak Dale), along with one Morgantown, West Virginia, church plant that is just beginning to germinate, gathered in Southwestern Pennsylvania on October 22-23 for CMC’s third Mature & Multiply Summit.

The CMC Summits are designed to help churches and individuals who are ready to engage more deeply with the Mature and Multiply vision. Clusters of churches gather for some input, interactive discussion, prayer, listening to the Lord and each other, and some next steps processing, with the intent of being purposeful in participating in the Great Commission Jesus entrusted to his Church.



Friday evening, as those gathered sang the words of the familiar hymn, “Lord, I Am Fondly, Earnestly Longing,” the richness of the call for the Lord to

“open the wells of grace and salvation” resulted in an unplanned theme song for the weekend. The group was challenged to reflect on several questions. What are we seeing as God’s people? Are we looking for God’s grace at work or is our focus elsewhere? Are we committed to proclaiming the gospel of Jesus to “call dry bones to life?” Are we listening to the voice of Jesus and obeying, putting into practice what he says?

Much of the day on Saturday was spent praying and listening and discerning what the Lord may be calling the congregations to focus on in the months and years to come. As each church began to share with the larger group, similar themes began to emerge. A call to committed personal and corporate prayer, creating opportunity for the sharing of testimony, intentional discipleship and mentoring, and creating space for

intergenerational interaction in smaller groups was consistent with each congregation represented.

Saturday afternoon Scott and Crystal Miller shared some of their story and vision for “City On a Hill Church,” a church plant in Morgantown, West Virginia. Scott and Crystal have spent the past three and a half



years living in Morgantown. Life there has been a mix of making good friends, seeing several people commit their lives to following Jesus, and also experiencing times of struggle and loneliness.

In January, Scott and Crystal participated in the first intensive CMC Church Planting Assessment, led by Ron Embleton and a team of assessors. The Millers were encouraged to take some sabbatical time, work at some specific areas of personal and ministry life, and do some revisioning of the budding church in Morgantown.

The CMC Church Planting Team is fully committed to supporting City On a Hill as one of the fifty church plants that we are praying for in CMC by 2030. Scott and Crystal would be thankful for an opportunity to communicate with any individuals or churches who would have a sense of call to partner with them in the vision of “increasing the worship of God and proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ in both word and deed.”

Do you or your church have a fresh desire for the Lord to “open the wells of grace and salvation and pour the rich streams deep into hearts?” We would be glad to talk about church planting or planning a Mature & Multiply Summit in your area. Please contact CMC Church Planting Catalyst Jerry Sauder at jerry@rosedaleinternational.org or me at darren@cmcrossedale.org. 



Darren serves as conference pastor of CMC. He is married to Caryn and lives in Belleville, Pennsylvania. Darren and Caryn have two married children and six grandchildren.



And God Saw That It Was Good

BY DAVID PERKINS

Look around you. Look out your window. Look at the trees and the flowers. How many different colors do you see? Look at all the leaves and the movement of each blade of grass. How long do you think it would take to count them all? Look at your hands and their every little detail. Open and close them. Watch how they move.

Do you see the amazing creations that are all around us? All of the intricacies. All of the nuances. All that is seemingly beyond our comprehension. It's no wonder that God designed it all, took a step back, and saw that it was good.

“Even God didn’t say it was perfect, but he also didn’t say it was just okay.”

As an artist and designer at Rosedale Bible College, I often take a step back from my laptop and ask myself that same question. Is my creation good? I mean, it doesn't have to be perfect, right? Even God didn't say it was perfect, but he also didn't say it was just okay.

Much of my inspiration comes from God's design. I often look at the shapes and the colors of my environment. I ponder how they make me feel. More importantly, I wonder how they make you feel. Even now, I am looking at the fonts on this page and the negative spaces between each letter. I'm carefully selecting words and considering their readability to evoke an emotion in you. There is such power within design, and most of the time we are not even thinking about it.

Recently, as I was reading through Exodus, the process of building the tabernacle stuck out at me. God told Moses that he had chosen skilled artisans and craftsmen, bestowing them with great wisdom and knowledge in artistic designs (Exodus 31:1-5). He filled them with the abilities to craft in a variety of different mediums: metals, woods, stones, and fabric. These were individuals blessed with a specific gift and task from God.

I'd like to think that God has blessed me with similar gifts of wisdom and knowledge in order to produce projects here at RBC. My desire is to create content for the college that moves

the kingdom of God forward. Now, I can't imagine anybody being immediately saved by the proper placement of an RBC logo here and there, but it could be that first visual cue that leads them on the start of that journey. They may not ever pinpoint the roots of their future experiences to my artwork, and I may not ever know who was moved enough by my free t-shirt designs to come to Rosedale. I'm just a single gear in the machine of amazing people that I work together with to hopefully bring people from all over to experience the uniqueness of the college and move the Kingdom forward.

So, take the time today to reflect on the fact that God created each of us with specific skills and abilities that not only make us unique but which can also be used to bring glory to him – as an artist, a craftsman, a musician, a public speaker, a writer. Even if you don't think it possible, it is! I mean, I never thought much about my art bringing glory to God, but I believe God put me at Rosedale to do just that.

God is looking at how we use our gifts and creations. Hopefully, as he steps back, he is moved to say, “It was good!” 



David has a bachelor's degree in advertising and graphic design from Columbus College of Art & Design and serves as the visual communications specialist at Rosedale Bible College. He lives in Rosedale, Ohio, with his wife Brenda and their daughter.



Boldly Into His Call

BY MADALYN



In August of 2018, a young REACHer stepped through the doors of the Rosedale International Center (RIC). As a new high school graduate ready to explore the world, Lavinia could not have imagined the story prepared for her as she took her first small step into missions.

“I would love to say that REACH was something I felt God leading me to,” she shared candidly in a recent conversation. “But I didn’t want to go to college right away, and I wanted to leave my hometown. So I went on the longest-term mission program that I could find.” Fortunately, God makes a habit of meeting his children where they are. As Lavinia spent time in Thailand on outreach, he began to work in her.

“Initially, I had wondered if God might call me to Thailand for years of my life. But while I was there, he redirected my heart towards gospel outreach to Muslims.” A close friendship with a believing family who fled Pakistan to escape persecution opened Lavinia’s eyes to a new corner of the world. A visit to a Thai detention center filled with Middle Eastern refugees deepened her compassion for a people group desperate for hope.

“I see the ways that God has been preparing me for this assignment for the past three years.” ~Lavinia

God also revealed Lavinia’s giftings as she spent time as an English teacher for young Thai students. “Many of our students displayed classic signs of autism and other exceptionalities. I could distinguish them more easily than my teammates, and also intuitively knew, to some extent, how to teach them.” Lavinia’s own exceptionality, dyslexia, gave her a greater depth of understanding as she related to these students.

Upon return from Thailand, Lavinia followed God’s leading to Rosedale Bible College. Through a class on the exceptional student, her passion for people with exceptionalities truly blossomed—and after finishing her year of RBC, she began working at an autism clinic. “I became a Registered Behavior Technician, and have been providing applied behavior analysis therapy for children ages three through sixteen.”

As she developed this gifting that God had given her, Lavinia noticed his work in other areas of her life. “God increased my ability to connect with and care for children both on and off the autism spectrum. He cultivated my ability to lead others toward himself.”

He also taught Lavinia to better hear and respond to his direction. When she began discerning his call to return to overseas missions, she contacted Rosedale International’s Director of Human Resources. “I reached out to Colleen and told her that if there was ever a need for a childcare position, especially for a child with exceptionalities, I would be open to it.”

Now, a few short months after this step of faith, Lavinia has arrived in the Mediterranean. As she serves two of RI’s long-term families in a yearlong assignment, she will combine her passions for Muslims and exceptional children. Her location gives her the opportunity to build relationships with an unreached people group as she learns their language and culture. Her assignment—to provide childcare for these workers’ children—allows her to engage with a young boy with autism and Down syndrome.

Reflecting on her journey since she first stepped through the doors of the RIC, Lavinia shared, “I see the ways that God has been preparing me for this assignment for the past three years.” Her story is a reminder that as we listen to God’s voice and step boldly into his call, he will prepare and equip us for what lies ahead.

As Lavinia adjusts to a new culture, please lift her up in prayer. Pray that she would experience ease of language learning—an already difficult task made more overwhelming by her dyslexia. Pray that she would be protected from spiritual attack, and that her family would receive peace and comfort. Pray that God would bless her work, and would continue to prepare new workers for the harvest. 🙏

Names changed or omitted for security.



Madalyn lives in Rosedale, Ohio. She recently graduated from Grace College & Seminary and serves as Media Coordinator at Rosedale International.