

Volume 06, Issue 01: Begin with Thanks

It's only a few days into 2016, a time when many people are preoccupied with New Year resolutions: setting goals and targets, making lists of things to accomplish this year.

How about starting on a note of thanksgiving? While making my gratitude list for 2015 several weeks ago, I was amazed at how incredibly the Lord had blessed me. Get your list out if you haven't already. I bet you would be just as blown away as I was. Break it down into the categories of the wheel of life like you do with your goals. You will be amazed how blessed you were in each wheel.

We make plans, set targets, but God is never limited by our targets. Reflect upon the blessings you walked into that were not even on your list of achievements for 2015. Things your mind had not even fathomed, beyond your wildest dreams.

Count your blessings, name them one by one. We have thousands of reasons to bless the Lord. Command your soul to bless God. Let's bless Him with all that is within us at the start of the year and beyond. Thank God for his goodness. Ponder over all the good things that happened, started or continued in your life in 2015. Thank God for his favour, for his mercies and kindness towards you, for his wonders and for his grace. Thank God for Christmas, for life, for his provision and protection, for his guidance and direction. Thank God for surpassing your expectations, for going before you and ordering your steps, for making a way for you, for opening doors you never imagined possible, for qualifying you for things beyond your reach, for taking you places you never dreamed.

All the benefits of life are because of the goodness of God. Imagine what would have happened if the Lord had not been on your side in 2015. Because of his goodness towards you, you were not a victim of a fatal accident, terror attack, health emergency, bankruptcy, divorce, eviction, grave bereavement from premature death of a close loved one, hopeless retrenchment, etc.

You could be thinking, "Some of these terrible things happened to me. I got sick, I lost my job, I was dumped, or worse." Beyond the tears, give thanks to the Lord. Disappointed as you might

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be, thank God, because He has better things in store for you. In spite of the challenges you faced in 2015, God saw you through them, and He is still looking out for you. Praise your way through the storms of life. Lift up your worship through every trial, every situation.

Three times in a year the children of Israel were to appear before God corporately: the Passover, the feast of Pentecost and the feast of Tabernacle. During the last two feasts, they were to appear in celebration before the Lord, giving thanks for His goodness. As long as they honoured God with thanksgiving, He was going to continue blessing them.

We are commanded to give thanks. Don't be preoccupied with targets. Pause and give thanks to God. Do not be blinded by your needs and lists. Learn to celebrate and thank God. Live a life of gratitude. Don't take God's blessings for granted. Give thanks continually. Let thanksgiving be your way of life.

Lillian Chebosi