

## REMINDED OF MY BLESSINGS

On Monday morning I had to get back into my normal weekday routines with school starting again after a two week break for Christmas. My morning routine started with finding my daughter's lunch bag and filling it with healthy snacks. It continued with making sure breakfast was made on time for all three of us. My daughter slept in most days during the break, so I only had to think about making two breakfasts those mornings.

After breakfast, my normal school day routine continues by checking her school bag and making sure no books or items are missing. After all of this it is my routine to drive her to school each morning. I was glad to see that on this first day back we were three minutes ahead of schedule pulling out of our driveway.

Getting back into these normal routines on Monday allowed me to stop into the grocery store after I dropped my daughter off at school. Yes, this is sometimes part of my routine as well during the school year. I do this because I find it quicker and easier to pick up a few items at the grocery store when it is not busy. The other reason why I sometimes make groceries a part of my morning routine is sometimes I will find items reduced and can snatch them up before other shoppers beat me to them.

I decided to stop in at Sobeys on Monday and found some deals (No I am not getting paid to advertise for them). One item I found was \$2.00 off, another was \$3.00, and still another was reduced by \$4.00. I was quite proud of myself on Monday morning finding these savings. I went to the self checkout and showed the clerk on duty how much each item was reduced. I had to scan each reduced item first before she could apply the discount from her terminal. Because my cheap ways required a little extra work on her part, I made sure to thank this clerk for her assistance.

As I thanked her, I already felt blessed by the fact that I had found these three items and saved \$9.00 in the process. The best blessing of all was about to come. After I thanked her and wished her a good day, she said to me, "**God bless you.**" The tone of her voice conveyed it was very heartfelt and sincere. I turned and replied, "**May God bless you too!**"

As I walked out to my car, I began to reflect upon her words to me and began to think about the many things God had already blessed me with that morning:

- a roof over my head,
- my family to start the day with,
- good health to be able to do all my normal routines,
- a reliable car to drive my daughter to school in, stop at the store, and return home,
- the money to buy groceries and put food on our table,
- being at the right place at the right time to get them at affordable prices,
- having such a nice clerk to not only assist me at the check-out but to remind me of all the ways I am blessed by God.

There was one other blessing that I was reminded of at that moment. When I was making my daughter's lunch for school earlier that morning, I had prayed and asked God to give me inspiration for this week's message. It was while I reflected upon all of these blessings when I realized God had just blessed me again with an answer to prayer through the clerk's words.

Sometimes we need reminders like this of how blessed we truly are by God on a daily basis. A habit we can sometimes develop is to take for granted the many blessings we have from the hand of God each day. As these blessings pile up from God, it can make us become self reliant and gradually start forgetting about the One who has given them to us.

This was a frequent tendency on the part of the Israelites in Old Testament times. Just like He does for us, God showered many wonderful blessings upon the Israelites in those days. Gradually, the Israelites would forget about God and these blessings and rely on their wealth and possessions for security instead. The more they forgot about God, the more they started to turn away from living their lives by His ways and commandments.

We have so many blessings that God has bestowed upon every one of us. Do these blessings make us thankful to God, and draw us closer to Him, or do they result in us becoming self reliant, and forgetting about what He has done for us? I think this is a very important question for us to examine and

answer as we start off this new year of 2023. We have come through so many blessings during the season of Christmas. Let's not make the mistake of forgetting about these many blessings God has given as we get back to our normal routines in 2023. The Israelites learned the hard way that whenever they took God's blessings for granted and forgot about Him, their lives became much more difficult. Let's help ourselves in 2023 to start off the right way by looking at all the ways God is blessing us, and using these reminders to show Him how thankful we are by drawing even closer to Him.

As I returned to my normal routines on Monday, I was given a wonderful reminder of how blessed I am by the words spoken to me by the clerk. May her words become ones that we share with others. May we also speak to ourselves these words each day: "**God blesses me each day, and I will never forget this nor Him!**"

Keep Safe and God Bless

Pastor Dean