

“What Do You Give Someone Who Has Everything?”

Psalm 116:12

Preached by Dr. Robert F. Browning, Pastor

Smoke Rise Baptist Church

November 18, 2001

What do you give someone who has everything? You may be asking that very question if you have someone on your Christmas list that appears to have everything. It is frustrating, isn't it? You want to express love and appreciation, but are not sure how to do it.

If this is true for you, then you can understand David's dilemma. Out of gratitude, but also frustration, he penned the question, **“How can I repay the Lord for all His goodness to me?” Psalm 116:12.** I really do sense both emotions competing strongly for attention in David's words.

There was no doubt that God had been good to David. His writings reveal that David was overwhelmed with the generosity of God. He was grateful for the gifts of life, a purpose for living, resources to achieve that purpose, companions who could help him achieve that purpose, the forgiveness of sin and the presence of God's power providing strength for the difficult times.

Evidently, David had been near the point of death due to an illness or an oppressor and God delivered him. The Lord replaced death with life and sorrow with joy. Certainly, his joy was overflowing.

David's dilemma, though, was in responding to God's goodness. How could he repay God for His immeasurable generosity? What could he give someone who had everything? Do you sense David's frustration? I do.

I must tell you, however, that I like the question. It exposed David's heart. It revealed an attitude of gratitude that I find healthy and wholesome.

I love to be around grateful people. For the most part, they are humble, kind, gracious, generous and thoughtful. Gratitude has a way of bringing the best out of us and lifting us to a higher level of living. I agree with Rudyard Kipling who when asked, “What is the best word in the English language?” simply replied, “Thanks.” How true.

How did David answer his own question? He realized that he could not repay God for all His goodness but neither did he have to do so. To repay God was both unnecessary and impossible. It was unnecessary because grace was a gift and it was impossible because God really did have everything.

However, he realized that he needed to respond to God's goodness, not to repay God but to express appreciation. So, he decided to respond to God's goodness in two ways. He would express thanksgiving through **worship and obedience**. He would publicly praise God in the temple and live a life of obedience to His will.

We need to follow David's lead, so I challenge you to do two things this week of Thanksgiving. **Take an inventory of your blessings.** As the old hymn says, “Count them one by one and it will surprise you what the Lord has done.” Then, make the same commitment that David did. **Promise Him that you will be faithful to worship Him and live for Him.** I assure you there is no gift He would rather receive from you and no gift you could offer that would also mean more to you.

Stephen Sigmon is going to sing “My Tribute” by Andrae Crouch before we sing the invitation hymn. I can think of no more fitting way to end the sermon.

My Tribute

How can I say thanks for the things you have done for me?
Things so undeserved yet you give to prove your love for me.
The voices of a million angels could not express my gratitude;
All that I am and ever hope to be, I owe it all to Thee.

To God be the glory; to God be the glory, to God be the glory,
For the things He has done.
With His blood He has saved me, with His power He has raised me,
To God be the glory for the things He has done.

Just let me live my life, let it be pleasing Lord to Thee,
And should I gain any praise, let it go to Cavalry.
With His blood, He has saved me. With His power, He has raised me.
To God be the glory for the things He has done.