

THREE PARTS OF BEING THANKFUL

Rt. Rev. Louis B. King

When we give thanks, something wonderful happens. We stop and think about the person who has given us something. Thinking about others turns our thought away from self. When we think about people who have given us presents, we feel their love for us. Do you see why the Lord wants us to give and receive things? It is so that we may use these things to express our love for each other. If we never bother to say thank you, if we never stop and think about the people who have given us some things we value, then the love which is in the gift never touches our hearts. When we miss seeing the love that is within a gift, we lose an opportunity to use the gift wisely by showing our appreciation and thus returning our love to the one who has given us the gift.

Do you see the three things that are involved in the giving and receiving of a gift? First, there is the recognition or acknowledgment of the person who gives. Second, there is thought about the love from which the person has made the gift. Third, there is a feeling of gratitude in us which makes us want to return that person's love and so use the gift wisely.

The Word of the Lord tells us that there are three wonderful truths about you also. You have a body, you have a spirit and you have a life going forth. You need all three of these things to be you. These three essentials are in everything the Lord creates. If we don't stop and take time to think and say thank you to the Lord, and try to see the wonderful things that are within all the blessings that He gives us, we will never recognize His love—never be able to cooperate with it—never come into the happiness He wants us to have.

Can you see a grapefruit in your imagination? Pretend I have a grapefruit in my hand right now. It's a big, yellow one. It has something inside it, doesn't it? The deeper we go into it, the more wonderful things we find. First we take off the peel. That represents the first of the three things mentioned—recognizing something—and as soon as we stop to notice it, we can think about it even more deeply. Inside the peel we find the fruit. It's delicious; it's sweet; it's nourishing. The fruit is more precious than the peel, even though the peel is very beautiful to look at. And when we get within the fruit itself, we find the seed. The seed is the most wonderful thing of all, because it holds within it the promise that there will be other grapefruit trees, and other grapefruits, and other people thinking about the Lord, and giving thanks to Him and using His gifts wisely.

It is good to thank the Lord for all the blessings He gives us. So King David sang, "O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; and His mercy is forever."

Amen.