

Madison Heights Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)

 149 Main Street
Madison Heights, VA 24572

MADISON HEIGHTS MESSENGER

No. 19

November 17, 2022

George B. Harris, Minister
Email: bernerdharris@yahoo.com
mhcc16@yahoo.com
Church Telephone: (434) 845-3855
Minister's Telephone: (434) 215-4846

Pam Hubbard
Music Director

Brenda Harris
Administrative Assistant

Praise and Thanksgiving

One of the most frequent themes of the Bible is praise and thanksgiving because the praise goes to God due to the thankfulness of the biblical people. We have more reasons to praise and express thanks than we have reasons not to. From time to time we all have difficulties, heartaches, setbacks, worries, and stress. But in spite of all of our problems we have more reasons to express thanks to God than we have excuses not to express thanks.

The Bible is our guide and it tells us how to live a life of devotion as a believer. The Apostle Paul tells us to rejoice in the Lord always (Philippians 4:4). We all have worries and stress but when we rejoice in the Lord, it changes the mindset and our emotions. When we replace the focus from stress triggers to praise it gives us spiritual peace and tranquility. Rejoicing is not a cure; your problems are still going to be there, but the negative impact is diminished significantly as rejoicing enhances our peace and satisfaction.

Frequently I advise people to think about Jesus. If you have relationship problems, think about Jesus. If you have stress, think about Jesus. If you have financial worries, think about Jesus. If you have trouble sleeping, think about Jesus. Thinking of Jesus puts everything in a positive and peaceful light. Jesus carried the world on his shoulders and was never stressed out. He faced anxiety when he approached the cross of Calvary but he was not full of anxiety and worry. He was never in a hurry and he did more good than anyone else ever on this planet. He changed the world without an army or by using force. So, if Jesus is never stressed out and we are followers of Jesus then we can also follow in his footsteps in the realm of human emotions.

The apostle Paul wanted to make sure that people understood the significance of thanksgiving. He said "do not worry, do not worry about anything but in prayer and supplication and with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God (Philippians 4:6). Instead of worry, turn to God in prayer and be in thankful prayer. Humans are not exempt from worry or anxiety, but what we tend to do is think about our problems all day and then have trouble sleeping at night. In such a case, our worries overshadow our relationship with God.

When I was teenager a cousin told me that she was worried about my brother because he did not worry. It seemed strange to me that she was worried about his not worrying. Her worry did no good, did not fix anything, and prevented her from being at peace. However, the peace of God surpasses all understanding. The peace of God will guard your hearts and your minds. Our Savior brings us peace. Think about Jesus, take the time to reflect and think about what he did, what he said, and what it means to be in a relationship with him. Think about the things that are worthy of praise. Keep following biblical teachings and the God of peace will be with you.

When we read the Bible we find comfort and hope and we see that God is good. God is the sustainer and provider and gives the people positive direction. God is good even when we are mourning, struggling, hurting, or hit a string of bad luck. God is good when we are dazed and confused. When we need God, God is there, and God is good all the time. Focus on what is true, honorable, just, pure, pleasing, and commendable. Don't lose sight of what is praiseworthy. Commit your burdens to the Lord and you will fill your mind with good thoughts which will lead you to live a life free of worry and worthy of praise.

Thank you,

George