

GREATLY BLESSED, HIGHLY FAVORED

John 1:16 Rev. Brian W. Secor
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Page 2 of 4

Thanksgiving is time to count our blessings. For the Christian who has been born again by the _____ of God, we are the greatly blessed, highly favored, imperfect but forgiven children of God.

John 1:16 **From the fullness of his grace we have all received blessing upon blessing.**

I. _____

A. Providence is the fact _____ rules all for our good.

1. **Westminster Shorter Catechism:** "God's works of providence are, his most holy, wise, & powerful preserving & governing of all his creatures, & all their activities."
2. **Heidelberg Catechism:** "The almighty & everywhere present power of God; whereby, as it were by his hand, he upholds & governs heaven, earth, & all creatures; so that herbs & grass, rain & drought, fruitful & barren years, meat & drink, health & sickness, riches & poverty, yea, & all things come, not by chance, but be his fatherly hand."
3. In short, nothing happens, nothing comes about, nothing exists, nothing will be unless first it passes through our Father's _____ & has his _____.

B. This _____ view of providence is one of our blessings.

1. Some will argue it militates against man's free will, that God would have such almighty, determinative power. If God is not the almighty one, just _____ do you think is?
2. Our God _____ & that means come what may we give him thanks because we know everything in our lives & world is working out so that _____ will is done, _____ kingdom will come. We are blessed, highly favored by the providence of God.

II. _____

A. From the moment of conception, _____ gives us life.

1. Psalm 139:13-16. In our mother's womb, our God knew who we were & what we are. His design for us as human beings — physical & emotional—was carried out before we had any power of choice.
2. The _____ person believes they exist by chance or by their own power. They have no God to thank, no sense of

being on a divinely ordained path in life. Today is all that matters. Not so with us.

- a. Our _____ is a gift from God. Col. 1:15-17.
- b. Who we _____ is a gift from God.
- c. What we _____ is our gift to God.

B. Life is God's gift to us.

1. Bad things happen to _____. Because we are highly bless-ed & greatly favored that we do not lose heart & all kill our-selves. God has a purpose for us.

III. _____

A. Lost in darkness, doomed to hell, God sent his Son to _____ us & whosoever will that may come to him.

1. He didn't have to. He could have just ignored us & brushed us off as nobodies worth caring about. He didn't.
2. The _____ became flesh & dwelt among us. We saw God in human form & we know God is for us, not against us. He came to his own & while they rejected him, all those, who believed in his name from that day he ascended into heaven to the day he returns have been given divine, holy power to become what we only dreamed of being — the very children of God.

B. Thanks be to God that we are & can be _____!

1. When we were hopeless, dead in our trespasses & sins, lost & doomed, God's Spirit awakened us & enabled us to believe the Gospel.
2. Of all truths that exist, truest is we can be _____.
3. We know that all sin—past, present & future—is covered by the blood of the crucified one. We are _____.

IV. _____

A. By his _____, God has put us into families.

1. Those closest to us often _____ us the most by their actions, their words, even by their love.
2. How greatly blessed we are to live in families.
 - a. We have people we _____ to greet us in the morning when we are generally at our worst.
 - b. We have people who truly _____ about us & our life.
 - c. We have people who are _____ to us.
 - d. We have a _____ setting for raising children.

e. We have a functioning _____ right in our home as we worship the Lord through daily life.

B. I _____ God for my family & hope you will.

1. We hear much about dysfunctional families today.
2. God gave us two permanent institutions: the Church & family.
3. In the providence of God, he has set us in families & we are highly blessed, greatly favored.

V. _____

A. The Church is of God & will endure until the end of time.

1. This _____ to which we belong — local & universal — is God's most precious gift to us.
2. From many ways, we have come _____ to follow the way.
3. Spanning time & space, composed of the redeemed people of God, we love the Church & thank God for it.
 - a. We love & thank God for those we have _____ seen.
 - b. We love & thank God for those we _____.

B. Truly I thank God for you, _____ church.

1. In his providence, he has brought us together—strangers made brothers & sisters growing in love & in appreciation for one another.
2. High point of my week is when I get to spend time with you. I feel the bond of love between us & look forward to just being together with _____.

VI. _____

A. We cannot see what awaits us but we know _____ will be there when it arrives.

1. It is good to know the earth is not about to collapse in global warming, global cooling or climate change. It is good to know that when chaos settles upon our economy or ruins our government or brings our job to an end, God still is _____ & the future, our future, is in his hands.
2. We live by _____, not by sight. Keith & Krystin Getty "By Faith".

**By faith we see the hand of God
In the light of creation's grand design
In the lives of those who prove His faithfulness
Who walk by faith and not by sight**

**By faith our fathers roamed the earth
With the power of His promise in their hearts
Of a holy city built by God's own hand
A place where peace and justice reign**

**We will stand as children of the promise
We will fix our eyes on Him our soul's reward
Till the race is finished and the work is done
We'll walk by faith and not by sight.**

B. The future is the gift of God to us.

1. When despair would flood our souls, when doubts arise, when we wonder if we can make it another day, when troubles & fears come calling, we have an anchor for the soul for we live by faith in the God of all tomorrows. His hand is not shortened nor is his power weakened by what happens today or any today. He is the God of past, present & future & we walk by faith in him who will never let us go. We walk by faith & not by sight because we are greatly blessed, highly favored.

*From the fullness
of his grace,
we have all
received
one blessing
after another.
Let us give thanks!*

