

#7 The Goodness of God

MARY BETHELL was a godly woman who lived in difficult circumstances spawned by the Civil War, yet she still rejoiced in God's blessings. She reflected on the past two years in the diary saying:

January 1, 1861. Ground white with snow. This new years day, the old year is gone forever with all its sorrows and joys. When I look back to the events of last year, I am led to say that the Lord has been good to me. I had more of joy last year than sorrow, my family was blessed with health, and I had no serious trouble (except when my husband went to Memphis, and Emeline and Dick died last year, and Cinda's twin babies).

January 1, 1862. I am entering upon another new year, I am determined and resolved to live nearer to God, to deny myself, take up my cross and follow the Saviour. I hope that I may be built up the year in the most holy faith that I may advance in the divine life.

Often in our difficulties, we fail to see God's goodness. Like Mary who stood outside the garden tomb weeping, tears blur our vision of a risen Christ. If we will think over the past year we can rejoice like Mary Bethell who found God's blessings in spite of life's unexpected calamities. We are reminded in Psalm 30:5 that "...weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." When Mary Magdalene stopped weeping and refocused her eyes, she saw the risen Christ right in front of her. Sometimes tears blur our vision. But if we look through the eyes of faith, we will find that Jesus is there all the time.



John 20: 13-16

13: And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

14: And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

15: Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

16: Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.

PRAYER

"Lord, please help me take my eyes off myself, off my problems and trials and put them back on you. Thank you for the way you have taken care of me and blessed me. Please help me to dwell on the positive, not the negative. Help me Lord to count my blessing, which are new every day."

Taken from the devotional "Battlefields & Blessings Stories of Faith and Courage from the Civil War"