TAKE TIME TO BE THANKFUL

The brethren …came to meet us…whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage.

Acts 28:15

I am writing this devotion today because it is so easy to lose Thanksgiving amidst all the commercialism of Christmas. We have so much to be thankful for. Just think of the physical things such as life, liberty, family, church and friends. Good health is certainly something to be thankful for. Isn’t it amazing that we spend much of the time that we have good health abusing our healthy bodies? It is not until we have lost our healthiness that we start really appreciating it.

In order to be truly thankful for something one must first truly recognize that it is a blessing from God. “Count your blessings name them one by one. Count your blessings see what God has done.” To be thankful takes some time. It takes time to count our blessings. If you are like me your blessings are many therefore it takes time to be thankful for my many blessings.

I would like to mention one group of blessings that I could never fully enumerate and that is those who have encouraged me. If you notice Paul in our text was a prisoner being taken to Rome? He had suffered shipwreck along with being marooned on an island but now was on the last part of the trip to Rome. As they drew closer to Rome he was met by some fellow believers. We do not know exactly who they were but we know what they were. They were encouragers for when he saw them he thanked God and took courage. My encouragers have been many but chief among them has been and still is my wife. Kathie has always seen much more potential in me than probably really existed but she has encouraged me to go beyond what I ever would think possible. My mom is a great encourager. Every time she hears me preach it somehow is the best message she has ever heard. My children and grandchildren just have to show up and I am encouraged. Fellow preachers, former teachers from elementary and high school as well as former coaches are such encouragers in my life. Many of you too whom I am writing encourage me with your words, your works and your faith every time I see you. In other words, when I see you I thank God and take courage. You have encouraged me when I know I was not a good pastor. You have encouraged me when I was a sick pastor. You continue to encourage me as I am becoming an older pastor. I thank my God upon every remembrance of you.

Yours in Christ,

Brother Randy Burtram