

12 Reasons to Let Gratitude Overflow and Activate Your Spiritual Growth

The Bureau of Economic Analysis released the second of three estimates for second quarter real (inflation adjusted) GDP. Real GDP grew at an annual rate of 4.2 percent compared to pre-report forecasts of 4.0 percent, its previous estimate of 4.1 percent and last quarter's 2.2 percent rate. This was the fastest rate of growth since the third quarter of 2014. GDP, not adjusted for inflation, grew at an annual rate of 7.6 percent—the highest rate in four years.

Contributions to the 4.2 percent annual rate of growth include personal consumption (percent), gross private domestic investment (percent), net exports (percent), and government consumption and investment (percent). The net export contribution was the highest in nearly five years. Corporate profits grew 7.7 percent (the highest since 2014) from the previous year, and after-tax corporate profits grew at 16.1 percent (the highest since 2012). The GDP price index grew at an annual rate of 3.0 percent as expected.

In other news, the four-week average of new jobless claims, at 212,250, was the lowest level since December of 1969. Same-store retail sales grew 5.1 percent for the week. Consumer sentiment is the highest in nearly 18 years. The U. S. and Mexico have reached agreement on trade. Canada, Europe and China are still undecided. Home-mortgage applications and pending home sales fell. Personal income grew but slowed.

As much of the world struggles economically, the U. S. economy is strong and growing. There are always potential economic and geopolitical clouds, which in a worst-case scenario could grow into an economic thunderstorm. But at least currently, the

stock market, the labor market, profits and the economy are strong. Inflation is under control. Interest rates are low. Small-business confidence is at record levels. We should be grateful for the current economy and hope for an even better future.

As Christians, we should be overflowing with gratitude for what Jesus has done for us. We were lost and destined to spend eternity separated from God. But still in our sins, God loved us enough to send His only begotten Son to save us and reconcile us to Him. Although the blessings of Christ are too numerous to cover in this article, a reminder of some of them may stir up our gratitude into an overflow which He so richly deserve.

“As you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, and abounding with thanksgiving” (Col. 2:6-7).

“For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, how much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by His life” (Rom. 5:10).

1. We were cleansed, sanctified and justified.

“Such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, and you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus by the Spirit of our God” (1 Cor. 6:11).

2. We were reborn and became children of God.

“Yet to all who received Him, He gave the power to become sons of God, to those who believed in His name, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:12-13).

3. We are healed.

“He Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness. “By His wounds you were healed” (1 Pet. 2:24).

4. He supplies all of our needs.

“But my God shall supply your every need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:19).

5. We are established, anointed, sealed and given the Holy Spirit.

“Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, who also sealed us and established the guarantee with the Spirit in our hearts” (2 Cor. 1:21-22).

6. We have been given power, love and discipline.

“For God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and love, and self-control” (2 Tim. 1:7).

7. We can have victory over sin.

“For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law, but under grace” (Rom. 6:14).

8. We are the righteousness of God through Christ.

“God made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Cor. 5:21).

9. We can do all things.

“I can do all things because of Christ who strengthens me” (Phil. 4:13).

10. All things work together for good.

“We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose” (Rom. 8:28).

11. Our destination is heaven and we will get a glorified body.

“But our citizenship is in heaven, from where also we await for our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our body of humiliation, so that it may be conformed to His glorious body” (Phil. 3:20-21a).

12. The Holy Spirit will dwell with us forever.

“I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Counselor, that He may be with you forever” (John 14:16).

The blessings, for this life and the next, of following Jesus are too numerous to list. But the 12 above underline the necessity of believers overflowing with gratitude. We should show our gratitude with acceptable service to God.

“Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be moved, let us be gracious, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear” (Heb. 12:28).

Let us overflow with gratitude in good times and bad times, in times of abundance and scarcity, in times of victory and temptation and in times certainty and times of doubt. He is worthy of our gratitude. We should do nothing less. {eoa}

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