

Why You Should Count Your Blessings Backward

“If God is blessing me, He sure has a funny way of showing it!” quipped a lady next to me at church. “I know the feeling,” I thought. “But then, what do you expect? His ways, after all are not our ways.”

I learned the hard way that God doesn't always orchestrate circumstances to suit us. But at a particularly low point in my life, He gave me a key to rising above those circumstances, no matter how devastating.

At the time, I was eking out an existence as a telemarketer. I had barely enough to eat and didn't have the money to pay the rent or the bills. I was single and alone in the big city, and I looked it, sitting around in my nubby-pink bathrobe with rollers in my hair crying out to God, “Are you there?”

What happened in the next few seconds jolted me! God did not answer, “Yes, my child, what is it?” But he did answer. All around me—and in me—I heard a resonating voice that said: COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS—BACKWARD!

Say what? It's hard enough to count your blessings in the middle of a pity party, but to count them backward? What was that?

In the next moment I found myself recalling a blessing that had happened the previous year. I had been hired to be a part of a film team that was going to England. The assignment had come about from a seemingly “chance” encounter with a former neighbor at the grocery store. She mentioned that she and her husband were hiring a production crew to go to England and asked me if I would consider joining their team.

“This is an answer to prayer!” I had replied enthusiastically.

Often I had told God how much I would like to go to England, and finally He was fulfilling my desire!

Odd—if it hadn't been for the noisy apartment that had “driven” me to move to the apartment where I met this couple, I might not have experienced the trip to England!

As I thought about this, I realized what God wanted me to understand: that he had been at work all along, setting up circumstances to bring His will to pass in my life. Recalling previous blessings and answered prayers reminded me of this truth. It is what David meant by “encouraging himself in the Lord.”

Tracing our blessings backward shows us the “pattern” of God's involvement in our lives. It allows us to see that the very obstacles we face today could be the things that set us up for His blessings tomorrow.

So if a prayer of yours hadn't been answered yet, hold on! The answer could very well be in progress in ways you'd least suspect.

God, being supernatural, is also wise: He often uses our natural settings and the people in them to move us along the path He has chosen for us. The path may be winding and steep, but it's never a path of defeat—only victory.

It took Ruth's moving to a new land with Naomi to “bring” Boaz into her life. It took a lost donkey to “cause” Saul to be sent forth, which led to an encounter with the prophet Samuel, who anointed him king.

Today's blessings are the result of the Father's masterful orchestration of people and events. So if you are in difficult circumstances, take heart. The answers you are believing for tomorrow are actively at work in God's hand today!