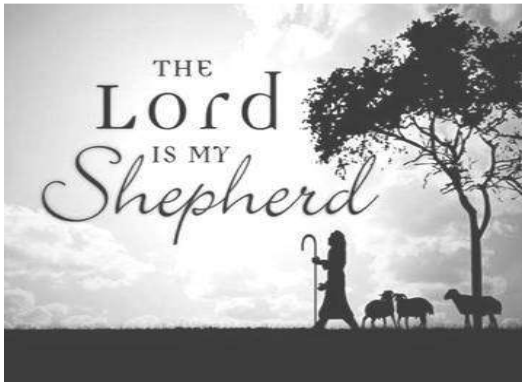
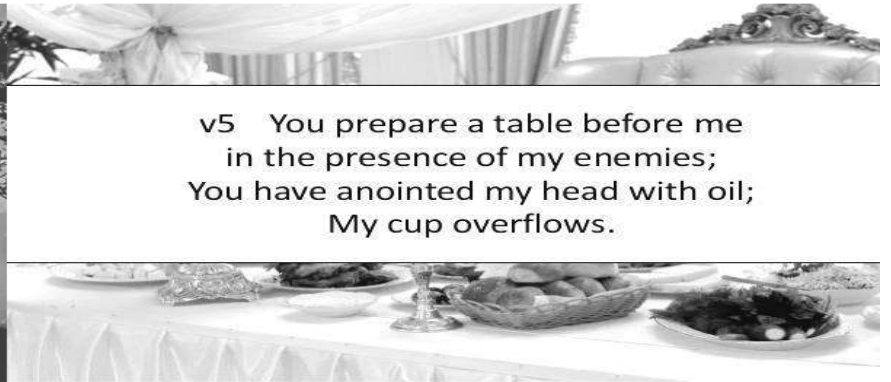


# Giffnock The Park Church

## A Time for Reflection



v5 You prepare a table before me  
in the presence of my enemies;  
You have anointed my head with oil;  
My cup overflows.



*Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2020*

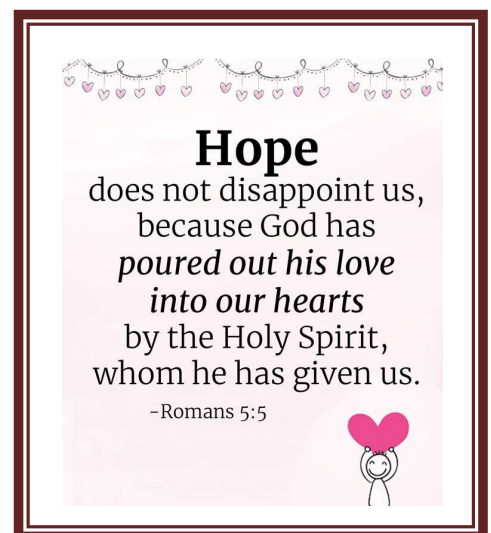
Good Morning Everyone,

Welcome to another Sunday morning's Reflection where we can take some time away from the business of all that is happening roundabout. We have almost come to the end of this series of reflections based on Psalm 23 which I know many of you have enjoyed. For me this Psalm remains one of the most poignant and beloved of all the psalms in the Old Testament. That such words had been written so long ago and yet have a resonance and application for life today tells me how relevant and applicable God's Word still remains.

The news this week has not been the most positive, our fears and worries of the dreaded second wave may well be coming to pass but I take comfort from the words of the Apostle Paul who had such a sense of optimism despite all around him going pair shaped. Here was a man who had endured beatings and imprisonment for his faith, who faced real struggle and threat to his own life at the hands of others as well as having survived being shipwrecked not once but twice. When he wrote his letter of introduction to the Church in Rome prior to his visit, he was able to say with confidence, "Hope does not disappoint us". As this week unfolds and new restrictions begin to kick in, please hold on to these words that like the Psalmist were written so long ago but still have an application today. I hope our reflection this morning serves to remind you of God's promise, that it challenges you about the times we live and how we continue to Serve Him Who loved us and Gave himself for us, Him "Whose we are and Him Whom we Serve.

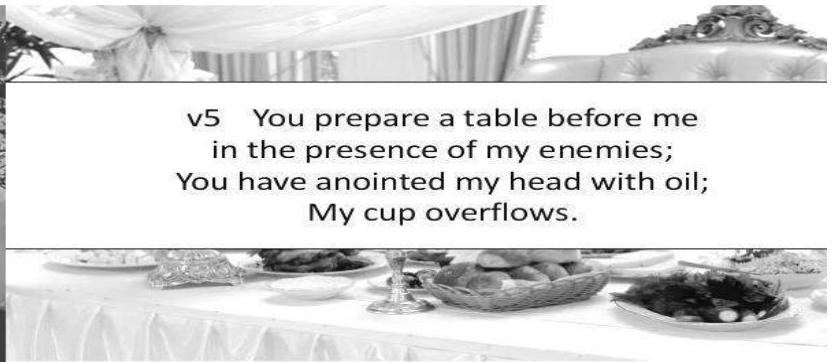
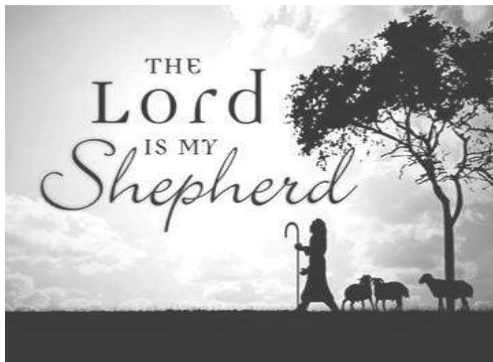
Have a great Week.

Calum D. Macdonald



# *Giffnock The Park Church*

## *A Time for Reflection*



*Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2020*

*“To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing.” - Martin Luther*

Let us Pray,

We come before our Father in Heaven in the quietness of our own homes and the solitude of our thoughts setting ourselves apart from the busy times we live, to dwell on Your Power and Goodness to us. We come to thank you for the way in which You have made us. You were there before we were even formed in the womb and your Word tells us that even then You knew us O Lord.

You have been with us from the beginning of life and from infancy till now we have grown in our understanding of the world we live and learned of Your great love for us.

We thank You that we live in a part of the world that sees our ability to learn as something that is important and something to be encouraged; to discover the wonder of the Creator and the Marvel of your Love. We can learn about ourselves and about others but most importantly we can learn about You, our Father in Heaven and your Son, Jesus, Our Lord and Saviour.

We thank you that we are not all the same and that we can see our difference as strength and not weakness; we can learn different ways and different things. We can learn to use the skill of our hands and the God-given might of our intellect to help and to care; to listen and to give of ourselves that others may see the our Faith in the Saviour as we seek to follow his example with simple child-like faith.

We thank You for the gift of the music which lifts the soul, for artistic talent that makes the canvas come alive. We thank You for the ability of those who can teach others; for those who help others to learn to live and to love

We thank you most of all for Jesus - for the teaching He gave, for what He has taught us about our Father in Heaven and His love for us ; his plan to Save us from ourselves and our sinful, self-destructive nature at times. Most of all, we thank You for his example to follow and His Sacrifice that brought about the Salvation of our Souls through our faith and trust in Him.

Forgive us gracious God when others learn from us that negative way that fosters selfishness and self-centredness. Forgive us as we are distracted from the Call of the Gospel and the life of following Jesus. Forgive our angry words and unforgiving thoughts and lead us in these days to come through the teaching of Your Word and the guidance of Your Holy Spirit - that we might live our lives in such a way that brings you Glory and Honour. This we pray in Jesus' name.

Amen

## Sunday Service Intimation

We continue to share a service of Prayer and Reflection on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September. Our service begins at 11am and all are most welcome to attend. For those wishing to attend, please be advised that current guidelines stipulate a limit of 50 people attending be set with appropriate Socially Distancing.

If intend to coming to Park Church that Sunday **YOU MUST** contact Mr Bert Dickov by phone ( **Tel No 07947611412**) or by E-Mail ([bertdickov@hotmail.com](mailto:bertdickov@hotmail.com)), to intimate that you wish to attend Church. This is to ensure we have contact details for all attendees if an outbreak occurs.

**The congregation will be subjected to the following questions, namely,** Have you been in contact with someone who has been diagnosed with Covid-19 within the last 14 days?

1. Have you experienced any of the following symptoms ?
2. Do you have a High Temperature?
3. Do you have a Dry persistent Cough?
4. Are having any Chest pain, Headache, Muscle pain, Shortness of Breath or Dizziness, Loss of Taste or Smell?

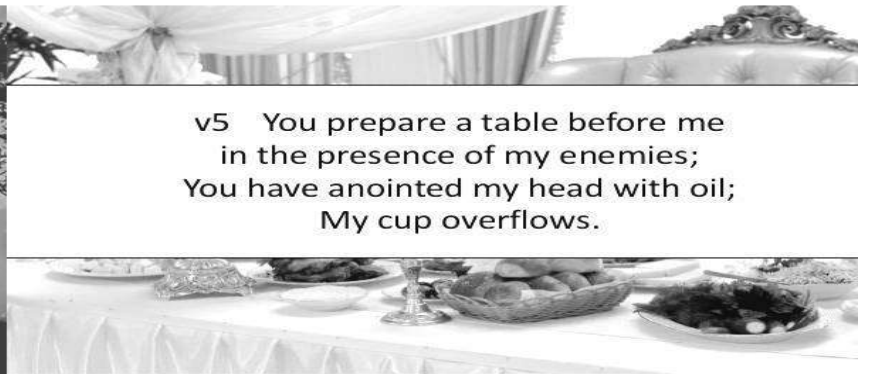
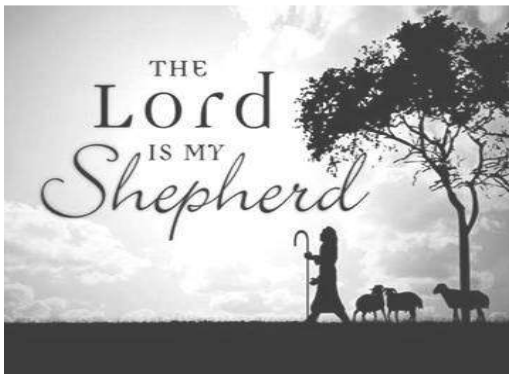
**If the answer to any of the above is Yes, we recommend that you do not attend the group, instead they should go home, self-isolate and contact your doctor or NHS for medical advice.**

If the answer is negative to all questions, then you will still have to follow certain protocols while using the Church premises. You will be required to:

- a) sanitise your hands, using the dispensers available on entry and leaving the building.
- b) wear a face covering, at all times
- c) maintain appropriate Social Distancing.

# *Giffnock The Park Church*

## *A Time for Reflection*



*Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2020*

*Acts 2: 14 - 47 (New International Version)*

### *Peter addresses the crowd*

*<sup>14</sup> Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: 'Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. <sup>15</sup> These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning!*

*<sup>16</sup> No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:*

*<sup>17</sup> "In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.*

*<sup>18</sup> Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.*

*<sup>19</sup> I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke.*

*<sup>20</sup> The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.*

*<sup>21</sup> And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."*

*<sup>22</sup> 'Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. <sup>23</sup> This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, <sup>[d]</sup> put him to death by nailing him to the cross. <sup>24</sup> But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. <sup>25</sup> David said about him:*

*"I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.*

*<sup>26</sup> Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest in hope,*

*<sup>27</sup> because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, you will not let your holy one see decay.*

*<sup>28</sup> You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.”*

*<sup>29</sup> ‘Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. <sup>30</sup> But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. <sup>31</sup> Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay. <sup>32</sup> God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. <sup>33</sup> Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. <sup>34</sup> For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said,*

*<sup>35</sup> “The Lord said to my Lord: “‘Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.’”*

*<sup>36</sup> ‘Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.’*

*<sup>37</sup> When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’*

*<sup>38</sup> Peter replied, ‘Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. <sup>39</sup> The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call.’*

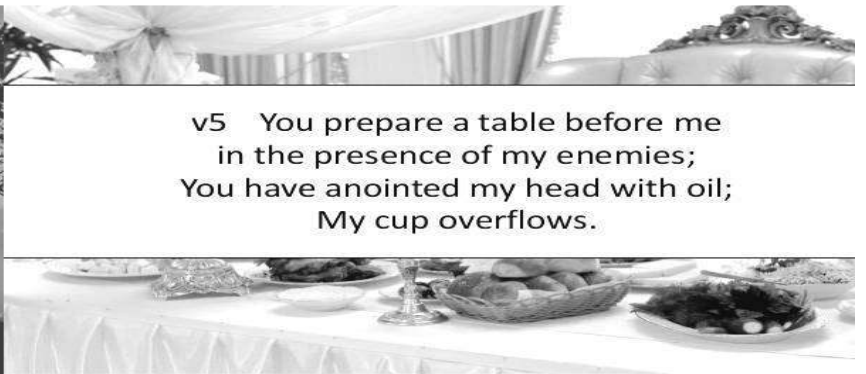
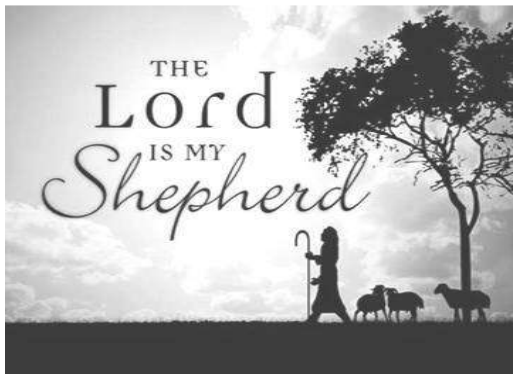
*<sup>40</sup> With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, ‘Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.’ <sup>41</sup> Those who accepted his message were baptised, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.*

### ***The fellowship of the believers***

*<sup>42</sup> They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. <sup>43</sup> Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. <sup>44</sup> All the believers were together and had everything in common. <sup>45</sup> They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. <sup>46</sup> Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, <sup>47</sup> praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

# *Giffnock The Park Church*

## *A Time for Reflection*



*Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2020*

When was the last time you had people over for a meal? When did you get an invite to come and share in a meal with family or friends? I know that is a sore point at the moment because the current restrictions really do not allow us to travel to someone else's home or that we might be able to host a meal and others attend just now. I wonder if you feel under pressure to make sure that things are just right when you know others are coming to dinner. The cutlery is clean, the dishes are spotless. There are no cracks in the glassware. In a State Banquet where her Majesty, the Queen, might be host to the leader of a foreign Power, the preparations undertaken are such that every minor detail is looked at and the table is set with such precision that no wine glass is smudged, the Cutlery are laid out in a certain fashion and the table decoration has flowers that were freshly picked that day and chosen for the occasion. The Buffet Meal often sold in restaurants or seen in Cruise ships would often come across as a lavish and plentiful occasion although it has become something of a pariah at the moment.

Our penultimate verse of Psalm 23: 5 sees the whole focus of the Psalm change from the image of the shepherd in the field to that of a lavish meal being prepared. Who was the meal for? Was it for David or the people of Israel or was it for the enemies of David and Israel to watch jealously on knowing they could not be part of it? There are two major moments in History where things changed, and a meal sat at the centre of everything people did. One took place around 33AD while the other took place around 70AD.

Around 70AD there was a rebellion in Israel against the Roman Empire looking to try and oust the Empire from their lands. Being the dominant superpower of the day, Rome's Legions responded by crushing the rebellion,

placing Jerusalem under siege. The city was eventually captured and the Romans raised the city to the ground including that of the Temple of Jerusalem where the only part left standing today is what we know as the Wailing Wall. For the people of Israel, life in religious terms would never be the same. They could no longer do what their forefathers did, making a pilgrimage to the Temple each year. When the nation of Israel became somewhat dispersed from their homeland, religious life centred on the Home and, in particular, around a meal and this remains a feature of religious life for the Jewish of today.

Forty Years earlier a carpenter's son from Nazareth had quickly earned a reputation for being a radical upstart in the eyes of the religious leaders in Israel. He had made a considerable following and eventually as we know, this Jesus of Nazareth was arrested, tried and executed by crucifixion. The night before his arrest, a meal was set in an upper room for him and his twelve associates. It was a simple affair involving some bread and some wine, but in the moment of that meal arose something that would be celebrated every Sunday that followed Resurrection Sunday (what we call Easter Sunday). Two Thousand years on since that day, the Christian Church which now exists in almost every corner of the globe celebrates what some call the Sacrament of the Eucharist and what we in the Presbyterian Church would call A Celebration of the Lord's Supper or we simply call it Communion.

In Acts Chapter 2, we read there of Peter's great sermon to the people of Jerusalem in the very temple courts where Jesus was tried. He reminded them of what happened and made some extraordinary claims when in verse 36, Luke, the companion of Paul and author of the Book of Acts records what Peter said. "*God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah*". The people who heard this responded in an unexpected way. We read "*they were cut to the heart*" and over 3000 placed their faith in the Risen Jesus of Nazareth. For our purposes this morning, it is what follows in Acts 2 that is significant. The people met in the Temple continually but also met in each other's homes, praying together and breaking bread with one another. From the night before Jesus was arrested came a symbolic meal that reminded all who believed of a body that was broken and blood that was shed for a sinful world that was lost but now had been redeemed through this Jesus who is "Lord and the Messiah". Ever since these two dates in history, the importance of meeting together, in our homes and churches or synagogues has a central part to play in what we believe and why we believe it.

Psalm 23: 5 reminds us of three things for many in the church today.

- a) *You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. **Speaks of the Hope of the Gospel through Jesus Sacrifice and Victory over sin and death - the Hope that our sins are forgiven and that death is truly something we no longer need to fear***
- b) *You anoint my head with oil; speaks of the Healing Power of God restoring both soul and life. The symbol of Oil often signifies the very presence of God's Spirit, the same Spirit dwells within us, walks beside us before us and behind us.*
- c) *my cup overflows. Speaks of the Abundance of God's Love and Grace.*

All of which could be a sermon theme in their own right. Someone once summarised the Gospel Call as the Hope of Sinners and the Joy of Saints. I hope we will look upon the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm as a Ray of Hope for those who are uncertain about what the future holds, A source of strength for those who need someone to turn to and a realisation of the enormity of God's Love for us. Perhaps the hymn writer paraphrasing the 23 psalm summarises this moment best when he said,

*The King of Love my Shepherd is,  
whose goodness faileth never;  
I nothing lack if I am his,  
and he is mine for ever.*

Have a great week Folks!

## Change of Church Office Hours

Please Note that our Church Secretary Elvira Sanza will be changing her office Hours from Mornings to afternoons and therefore the New Office Hours will be:

Tuesday Wednesday & Thursday Afternoon  
2pm - 4pm.

If you need updates or intimations to go onto our website, Facebook page or making a Hall Let Application please get in touch. The Contact information otherwise remains unchanged.






# Park Church Harvest Appeal Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> Oct 2020

## Our Harvest Service this year will be a Prayer and Reflection Event at 11am

This Year the Lodging House Mission will not be receiving any foods by donation because of the Covid 19 crisis and also because of maintenance work to the buildings causing a storage issue. They will still happily receive any financial contributions that might be made at this time and if you feel led to give to this, Our treasurer can pass this on, on behalf of Park Church.

We will still happily receive any gifts of non perishable foods and these will be given instead to a local Foodbank. Donations can be Left at the church from Tuesdays onward.

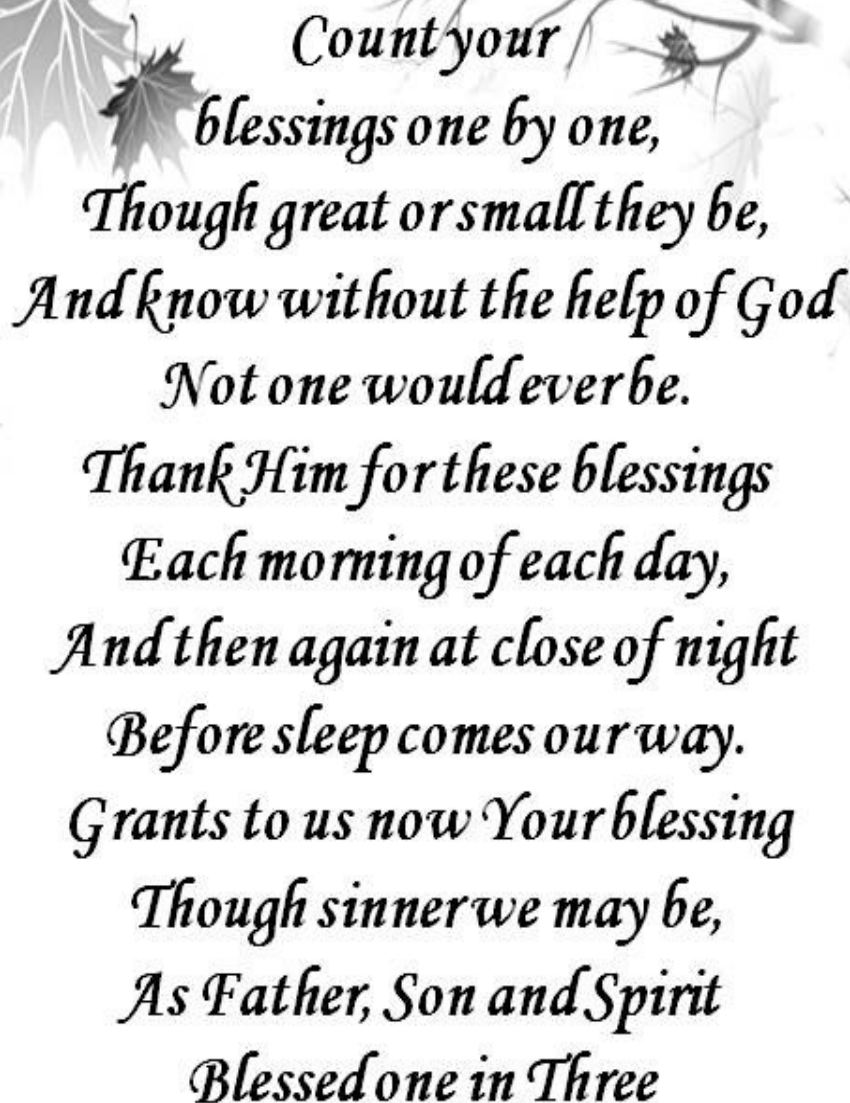




To everything there is a season,  
and a time to every purpose  
under the heaven:

Ecclesiastes 3:1

## *Autumn Blessings*



*Count your  
blessings one by one,  
Though great or small they be,  
And know without the help of God  
Not one would ever be.  
Thank Him for these blessings  
Each morning of each day,  
And then again at close of night  
Before sleep comes our way.  
Grants to us now Your blessing  
Though sinner we may be,  
As Father, Son and Spirit  
Blessed one in Three*