

"LIFE THROUGH THE LENS"



GOD! YOU'VE DONE GOOD! THANKS!

Christian churches, especially those in rural areas, traditionally at the end of the harvest period, would hold a "Harvest Thanksgiving Worship Service". It was a time to come together, recognise God had blessed the bounty of the harvest and give him thanks and praise.

Today, they are called "Thanksgiving Services", and people are encouraged to bring tokens to demonstrate how they see the blessings of God have impacted their life in this year past.

Consequently, mixed with the display representing produce associated with agriculture and horticulture, there are often toys, tools of trade, books (the blessing of education), old religious books (the blessings of having a historical basis and support of teachings and faith that have withstood the test and trials of time).

In creating this collage, I included a Bible in the centre. Unless God, his word, his love, and his blessings are at the centre, it could quickly become simply a display of "stuff".

While I'm sure God accepts gifts given with a thankful heart and attitude, I wonder how often we stop and think about the intangible thanks – the "Thanks" expressed solely between you and God?

When we accept and help others accept the forgiving love of God as part of their lives. A special love shown through life, a death hanging on a cross and the return to life of his son Jesus, so even those who think no one can care about them come to know God loves them. That is "giving thanks". **Psalm 9 verse 1** tells us, "*I will give thanks to you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds.*"

Giving thanks is always joyfully talking to God about everything, no matter the circumstances, accepting what he wants for us and accepting help from Jesus when we would rather do our own thing. **(1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)** When we let Jesus place peace into our hearts, thankfulness will overflow, even in the darkest times. **(Psalm 145:18).**

After the worship service, the produce, jars, tins and packets are distributed to a couple of charitable organisations in the local town as a reminder that part of the action of thanksgiving is also caring for those less fortunate.

I pray that more and more, you find your heart and life actions focusing on thanking God for his many blessings, great love and opportunities for service to him and others.

Kevin.