

Living Contentedly

Scripture: Proverbs 30:1-9 (NIV)

Date: February 24, 2021

Message:

... I am only a brute, not a man, ...

Two things I ask of you; don't keep them from me before I die: Fraud and lies—keep far from me! Don't give me either poverty or wealth; give me just the food I need. Or I'll be full and deny you, and say, 'Who is the LORD?' Or I'll be poor and steal and dishonor my God's name.

Psalm 30:2, 7-9

Whether we, like Agur or David (Psalm 73:2), abase ourselves to the level of brute (stupid) or, like Gale Sayers (the NFL record-holding Chicago Bears running back) live by the standard “I am third” which places God FIRST and others second, the season of Lent invites us to refresh our living humbly, as Jesus taught. (Matthew 18:4, 23:12; Luke 14:11).

A state of humility recognizes God's character and providence, as well as our own weaknesses and limitations. This frees us to pray to the Lord to provide all we need: (1) His all sufficient grace and (2) daily sustenance.

As part of what author Jeremy Bouma calls God's outrageous grace, God prevents our condition from being off-balance; that is, not of too much wealth, which might tempt us to sin by boasting of achieving the wealth ourselves, nor poverty-stricken, which might tempt us to sin by ignoring God, claiming He is of no help. In either of these scenarios, our spiritual ship is in danger of, at the least, veering off course; at the worst, sinking. We are heartened by Paul's reminder that God's grace is sufficient (II Corinthians 12:9) and are uplifted by the song “*Your Grace is Enough*.”

As we think with gratitude of God providing our daily sustenance, we remember the manna God provided the Israelites (Exodus 16:8 and Deuteronomy 8:3) and Jesus teaching His apostles and us how to pray, “Give us each day our daily bread,” which can be for our physical sustenance, as well as our spiritual sustenance by way of Jesus, the “bread of life” (Luke 11:3).

Note: There is no conclusive identification of who Agur was, though he was possibly a descendant of Massa, son of Ishmael (Genesis 25:14) and living in North Arabia where he was a teacher when he received and shared the divine wisdom recorded in Proverbs 30.

“*Your Grace is Enough*” written by Matt Maher, performed by Chris Tomblin, 2004 on [Arriving](#)

Prayer: *Father God, thank you for your outrageous grace and providence. Forgive me of my hubris and lead me to live in contentment, knowing your grace is sufficient. In the matchless Name of Jesus. Amen.*

Mary M. Thomas
United Methodist Temple
Southern District
mbmthomas@suddenlink.net
Lay Servant, President, UMW