

Counting my Blessings...

This December has definitely been one of the most difficult times in my adult life. It's one of those times where one is tempted to feel "I just can't get a break. Why am I being picked on?"

However, that makes it extra important for me to count some of my many blessings.

1. My Amazing Family

I can't say enough about my family. I have a loving and supportive wife who is always there to share in my joy and accomplishments and lift me up when my chin is down. She also keeps me grounded and focused when I start to feel sorry for myself or am tempted to make a decision that is poorly thought out or based on selfish ambition. And a wife who has also helped raise with me 4 delightful kids. Kids who are every bit the troublemakers they need to be to keep me from getting complacent and to keep our family from over-swelling with pride. But who are also very loving, affectionate, caring, generous, thoughtful, and adorable. God has placed the perfect family in my life to help round me out as a person and to fill my life with joy.

2. My Supportive Friends

I have friends who don't just fill my life with empty flattery and mindless conversation. They also don't only show their faces when I have something to offer. They are there when I need someone to listen, when we (our family) needs assistance, when I need a kick in the pants, and when I need to laugh and forget about the stress in life... God has gifted me with friendships that warm my heart and keep me moving forward. Between my family and friends alone I have been given so much to be thankful for – no matter what my circumstances.

3. Our Success and Opportunity

Even though I hit a rough patch every now and then, my life has been filled with nothing but opportunity and reward. Lisa and I often marvel at how much we have been **given** in terms of success. The ability to work from home for so many years and to rarely hunger. To be born into a country where we are free to peruse our desires, dreams, and passions. To be able to have an influence in our community and to be able to use the creative gifts God has entrusted in us... The list goes on and on.

I have counted three blessings which I just feel I need to share. However, the list of blessings only start there... It is mind blowing to me how much I have been given especially compared to how much I have given back. One Bible passage that always sticks in my head is from Luke 12:48:

From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.

I have been given so, so much. So when times are tough, like they are this December, it is not time for me to get down and demand more out of my Creator. It is time to **give praise** and ask the Almighty God *what more I can do? What more can I give? What more is to be demanded of me? How can I submit and offer my body up as a living sacrifice?*

Because there can be no doubt; I have been given much. Much will be demanded. And, I welcome it... Just as any loving son would welcome the demands of his loving, supporting, and life-giving Father.