

Interfaith Voices GT Column: Thank You Card to Jesus Christ

By Alice Henderson Rampton

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I recently attended a memorial service for Dr. Bill Paul, a respected dentist, humanitarian, and citizen in the Corvallis community. One of his sons shared that Bill had always emphasized the importance of writing a thank you card upon receiving a gift. So this son decided to read a thank you to his late father which he had written in appreciation for Bill's many gifts. It was a fitting tribute.

With the celebration of Christ's birth all around us at this time of year, I thought I would write my own personal thank you card, but this thank you would be to Jesus Christ for his many gifts to me, as an individual, and to the world. Here goes:

A Thank You Card to Jesus Christ:

"This thank you note is in essence a prayer of thanksgiving for all you have done. Although, I've never seen you, I have felt your presence and influence.

Thank you for your grace exemplified through your divine means of helping and strengthening. Often I try to handle life's challenges on my own and then I remember that you have extended an outstretched hand, a listening ear, and a reservoir of strength to me and to everyone. Subjecting the body to the will of the spirit is an art form and you are the master.

Thank you for your teachings. You taught that the greatest commandment of all was simply to love the Lord with all our heart, soul and mind and then to love our neighbor as our self. You reminded us to become like little children - humble and ever-learning. You instructed us to forgive others rather than exert revenge. You asked us to seek truth because that would give us freedom. You taught that all human kind is equal one to another and valued in God's heart. You asked that we not judge one another.

Thank you for coming to an imperfect earth packed full of people with our many weaknesses and flaws. Even with all these imperfections, you saw the divine in each one of us. You taught us about repentance and starting anew.

Thank you for making service a cornerstone of your life. You continually looked for opportunities to bless, to heal, to feed, to teach, and to lift through encouragement.

Thank you for enduring such pain and suffering throughout your short life and especially in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross. In doing so, you took on the sins of all humankind and freed us from this unimaginable burden.

Thank you for giving us eternal life through the power of the resurrection. You came at a time when hope was dimmed. You gave us hope that we will be reunited with loved ones who have died. You shared a message that goodness will triumph.

Thank you for your example. You led a life free of sin and exemplified charity, kindness, service, strength, determination, and a desire to do your father's will. Your example gave us a beacon of light to follow. Stumbling will be prevalent on our journey, but at least we have a pattern and a path to follow."

My thank you note is insufficient when I ponder these wondrous gifts. In fact, my limited mind can't yet even take in the immensity of Christ's gifts to all. He filled the earth with light. To celebrate his birth and life, here is a short video from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints with practical and simple ways we can be disciples of Jesus Christ during the Christmas season and beyond.

https://youtu.be/mJmAV0gTp_Q