

LESSON IN LIVING *GRATITUDE*

Elma Allen Milano

Cicero, a Roman orator, had this to say about gratitude: *“Gratitude is the greatest of all virtues and the parent of all other virtues.”* When my daughter, Mila, was in junior high school, she kept a notebook of sayings. Here is one of her favorites:

THE WORLD IS MINE

Today, upon a bus, I saw a lovely maid with golden hair.

I envied her, she seemed so gay, and I wished I were as fair.

When suddenly she rose to leave, I saw her hobble down the aisle.

She had one foot and wore a crutch, but as she passed...a smile.

Oh God, forgive me when I whine; I have two feet, the world is mine!

I stopped to buy some sweets

The lad who sold them had such charm

I talked with him, he seemed so glad.

If I were late, it would do no harm.

And as I left, he said to me, “Thank you, you’ve been so kind.

It’s nice to talk with folks like you. You see,” he said, “I’m blind.”

Oh God, forgive me when I whine, I have two eyes, the world is mine!

Later, while walking down the street, I saw a child with eyes of blue.

He stood and watched the others play; it seemed he knew not what to do.

I stopped for a moment and then I said, “Why don’t you join the others dear?”

He looked straight ahead, without a word, and then I knew---he could not hear.

Oh God, forgive me when I whine, I have two ears, the world is mine!

With feet to take me where I would go, with eyes to see the sunset’s glow,

With ears to hear what I would know,

Oh God, forgive me when I whine, I am blessed indeed, the world is mine! (Red Foley)

The dictionary says gratitude is being thankful. Having an “attitude of gratitude” is the subject of many fine sermons. How can we demonstrate our gratitude? How about saying, “Thank you” (with a smile)? How about doing random acts of kindness? How about spreading joy around? How about fasting until we remember to bless our food?

Ask ourselves what we would want to have with us if we were stranded on an island and could only have one book? (For me, it would be my Scriptures.) If we could only have one other person, with us, who would it be? (Our mates?) If we could eat only one food, what would we prefer? If we could wear only one outfit, which would it be? And how much gratitude do we show for these right now, today? Do we get on our knees every night and thank God for all He has given us? If not, why not?

The atonement of Jesus Christ is the gift we should be most grateful for. That supreme act of sacrifice makes all of our other blessings possible. *“Thank you God, the world is mine!”*

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