

# TRIBUTES

Volume 21, No. 52, 3 Sections THURSDAY, December 30-January 5, 2011

\$1.00

## Preparing to Receive God's Blessings in the New Year

I've provided pastoral care and counseling for many years as the Dean of the Chapel at Fisk University and as a pastor in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Most of my sessions with individuals, couples and families were centered around helping people to overcome a loss; a loss of a job, a loss of a loved-one or a loss of an opportunity. However, some of my sessions concerned helping people to understand, accept or "manage" God's blessings. For example, God blessed an individual with a new and great relationship, but he or she was reluctant to embrace the other person because of all of the failed relationships in the past. God blessed a new couple with a child, but they were not sure how they were going to take care of the child with few, financial resources. God blessed the family with a house and good health, but family members were preoccupied with arguing and refusing to forgive one another.

Yes, God was in the process of blessing people, but they were not always spiritually prepared to receive their blessings from the Lord. My role as pastoral counselor was to help these individuals see (discern), accept, "manage" and/or give thanks for these blessings before they were mismanaged, wasted or not bestowed upon them any more.

It is possible for God's blessings to exceed our expectations. In Malachi 3:10, the prophet writes: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Paul writes in Ephesians 4:20: "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power

that worketh in us...." God's blessing may be small or tremendous in scope, but we may always be assured that God will continue to bless God's people now, henceforth and forever more.

God is good (Mark 10:18), and God is love (1 John 4:16). When God showers blessings upon us in 2011, let us be thankful for receiving them and prayerful about how to use them. Let us use a portion of that blessing to glorify God, and let us use the fullness of that blessing to be all that God has intended for us to be. God's blessing may even seem unbelievable, that is why we must walk by faith and not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7). As the New Year approaches, let us make spiritual preparations to receive the blessings that God is sure to bestow upon us.



The Reverend Dr. Jason Richard Curry is Dean of the Fisk Memorial Chapel at Fisk University. He can be reached at [jcurry@fisk.edu](mailto:jcurry@fisk.edu) or [www.fiskmemorialchapel.com](http://www.fiskmemorialchapel.com).