

Column

Georgia Governor Zell Miller was fond of saying that the sight of mountains up ahead as he made his way north after a busy week in Atlanta would cause him to sigh with relief. He was mindful that he was almost home to his native Young Harris.

Mindfulness of location can give one a sense of peace. North Georgia for the late governor was the ‘green, green grass of home’. No doubt you have such a place as well. Treasure that place. Keep it in your mind and heart and find its peace.

Mindfulness, however, is more than location. It includes presence, an awareness of God. Not too long ago, it was the custom of many upon entering a church – even at non-service times – to kneel and pray. The prayer-soaked walls (location) made them mindful of the awesome presence of the Almighty. In response, they would be quiet, look up, unburden their hearts before the throne of grace and give thanks. It is a beautiful custom and one reason churches (whenever possible) should be kept open during the week. I commend it to you.

Perhaps the time we hear the word ‘mindful’ most often is at mealtime, as many table blessings include the phrase “make us mindful of the needs of others.” Mindfulness here is expanded. Mindfulness of God, leads to mindfulness of the human family. In particular, those in need are remembered and lifted up to God. And in so doing, we offer ourselves to His service. His work, our hands.

In addition to mealtime, mindfulness, awareness of God’s presence, should be a part of the beginning of each new day. One of my first thoughts each morning is: “Lord, make me adequate for whatever challenges are thrown at me.”

The end of each day likewise prompts mindfulness of God. As the sun goes down and we lie down, we remember life is a gift. We thank Him for the blessings of the past day; we yield to Him its anxieties; we ask His forgiveness for sins of commission and omission; we surrender ourselves into His keeping.

Mindfulness -- no less than faith, love and hope -- is a gift from God and central to life. At all times and places, let us bless the Lord!

O LORD, support us all the day long, until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and

our work is done. Then in thy mercy grant us a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last. Amen. (The Book of Common Prayer)

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