

# Down Home: Thank God for things I took for granted

November 20, 2015

This Thanksgiving, I'm grateful for stuff I normally take for granted.

As I write these words, that would be a working laptop computer. Mine died Nov. 8, on the eve of the Baptist General Convention of Texas annual meeting. The calamity didn't bother me for a couple of days, because the big gathering knocked me out of my routine. And also, I didn't have time to think about it.

But when I got back to the office and tried to get back to "normal" work, I felt like my right arm had been cut off.

Our (OK, my) dependence upon technology is staggering. My laptop contained enough memory to hold a roomful of file cabinets. I keep documents related to every aspect of operating this ministry—not only production of the *Baptist Standard* and *CommonCall*, but also our finances, administration, fund-raising, marketing, human resources. Everything.

I discovered my entire focus on work funneled through that laptop. With a replacement on backorder, I had to make-do with an old tablet, but without files, reminders, stored email, software and operational programs normally only a click away. I spent the better part of a day simply figuring out how to think about work without my fingers on a keyboard or mouse.

Not so many days ago, I took that laptop for granted. Now, a laptop is a tool I appreciate enormously.

But that's only a smidgeon of my gratitude this Thanksgiving. This year, our family has faced myriad challenges. Some are too mundane and others are

too personal to share in detail. Most involved aspects of our lives we took for granted, just because they always were “there.”

Their absence, however, provided a poignant reminder of what’s important—family, health, friendship, purpose, joy and laughter. For them (and a new laptop), I give thanks.