On this Thanksgiving I won't have any trouble having a clear perspective on the many things I have to be thankful for.

In many ways 2010 has been a year that I'd like to forget. After the April 24 tornado, there are plenty of things that a lot of Yazooans would probably like to forget. Despite the many difficulties this year, my family also experienced more than our share of blessings.

Thanksgiving is a time when we should reflect on life's blessings. Unlike the Pilgrims who inspired the holiday, most of us don't have to worry about our very survival, wondering if we'll have enough food to eat or whether we will be able to withstand the elements. We usually take the comforts of our lives for granted, although that changed for a lot of Yazooans this year. The April tornado reminded us all how fragile human life can be and how easily everything can be taken away.

But we also experienced many blessings. Seeing how many people have helped in the recovery is something I'll never forget.

Taking stock of our blessings in life is something that each of us should probably do every once in a while. It's especially important in tough times like these, because so much of the news we hear is bad. The bad news is very real, but there are also so many good things happening. If you're not careful, it's easy to get so caught up with the negative stuff that you overlook the good things that are right in front of you.

Here are just a few of the things I'm thankful for this Thanksgiving:

n The older I get the more I appreciate my parents and how loving and unselfish they were as they raised my brother and me. They set a high standard for me to live up to now that I'm a father.

n I'm thankful that so many of our friends and neighbors who were affected by the tornado are getting back on their feet. I'm also thrilled to see all of the damaged Yazoo businesses back in operation. You can be sure that they would be extremely thankful for your support.

n I'm thankful for the fact that despite all the hardships our country is currently experiencing, we still have it much better than most places in the world. Just being born in this country is a tremendous blessing. We shouldn't take that for granted.

n I'm thankful that the county is finally going to do something about the deplorable condition of Fletcher's Chapel Road. When I started this job nearly five years ago, one of the first topics I wrote about on this page was that road's condition. An overlay project is supposed to begin before the end of the year.

n I'm thankful that the Yazoo Historical Society and the Yazoo Convention and Visitors Bureau took the initiative to start an effort to restore Crump Fountain in Yazoo City. They got a lot of support, especially from some of our local artists.

That fountain is a landmark in our community, and everyone who helped bring it back to its original condition is to be commended. We'll have more on that project in Saturday's edition.

n I'm thankful that God blessed me with the ability to learn from my mistakes, even thought that means that I'm constantly learning.

I've probably learned more from doing things the wrong way than from being shown how to do something right. That's not the way I would have chosen to come by what precious little wisdom I have, but it's helped make me a better man.

n In today's economy I'm thankful just to have a job, but I'm truly blessed to have one that I love doing.

There are so many troubling reports from the state of the newspaper industry. Just down the road in Jackson, The Clarion Ledger recently had to lay off another round of employees.

Here at The Yazoo Herald things are still going well for us. That wouldn't be possible without our readers, and I am thankful for each and every one of you.

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Jason Patterson is the managing editor of The Yazoo Herald.