



"Not what we say about our blessings, but how we use them, is the true measure of our thanksgiving."

—W.T. Purkiser

28-Nov-03

Thankful Forever

Distractions abound with all of the commercials enticing us to buy this TV or that video game for [Christmas](#). For the more affluent, even auto manufacturers promote their cars as gifts for the holidays. The promotions seem to be endless. Christmas and Hanukkah decorations are going up everywhere—even earlier than in past years. Now other religions are demanding equal time to promote their paganism. Football and basketball games aplenty are available for those who wish to watch. And, as if that is not enough, blockbuster movies came out this week preceded by in-your-face preview marketing techniques.

With all this disruptive bombardment, you may have missed it, but the U.S. national holiday of Thanksgiving was on Thursday. Is it not a shame that a day set apart for thanking the Almighty Creator and Sustainer of the Universe is barely given a cursory glance—if not entirely ignored?

Is it not a disgrace that so many are just plain unthankful, ungrateful, unappreciative? According to the apostle Paul's warning to Timothy, we at the end time should not consider people's thanklessness as a small thing:

But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ***unthankful***, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of [God](#), having a

form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! ([II Timothy 3:1-6](#))

Wow! Thanklessness is included in a nasty list of evil attitudes.

Why does it matter if we are unthankful? A thankless person shows a core character flaw—self-absorption. We see this attitude in many who perfunctorily observe Thanksgiving. American theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, best known for relating Christian principles to modern politics, observes:

The Thanksgiving proclamations of the American presidents for the last two decades have increasingly departed from the original rather purely religious spirit of Thanksgiving, and they have increasingly become congratulations to God for having such wonderful children in America.

With this attitude, Thanksgiving just gets lost in the hustle and bustle of an over-commercialized and entertainment-driven society that refuses to take a little time to give thanks to a benevolent God for the blessings He bestows. Granted, it is not a God-ordained holy day, but it was designed as this nation's (and Canada's) attempt to acknowledge God's generosity. As a nation, we have failed miserably in this effort—o lack thereof.

In stark contrast, thankful people not only deeply appreciate their benevolent Creator but also reflect His care for others' well-being. The thankful appreciate their efforts and let them know how much they are appreciated, not to gain advantage, but in a genuine show of gratitude.

Thankfulness to God for His [mercy](#) and abundant blessings, manifested in a bountiful Thanksgiving meal, goes beyond a basic recognition of special blessings received. It acknowledges with reverence the true source of true knowledge and wisdom—and [love](#), mercy, and a multitude of additional blessings. The tradition of Thanksgiving Day reminds us that thankfulness is not a onetime responsibility, but a life long commitment of virtuous character.

It would behoove us to follow the Israelite King David's promise to his Creator and Sustainer:

You have turned for me my [mourning](#) into dancing;

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You have put off my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness,
To the end that my glory may sing praise to You and not be silent.
O LORD my God, I will give thanks to You **forever**" ([Psalm 30:11-12](#)).

Thanksgiving is a tradition meant to promote wholesome values, beginning with thankfulness to God for abundant blessings. It is also an opportunity to serve others.

Thank You, God, for the abundant blessings You have bestowed upon us.

Thank you, ladies, for your hard work in preparing the Thanksgiving meal and all meals during the year.

Thank you, gentlemen, who prepared the house and carved the turkey.

Thank you, children, for helping your parents—your service is greatly appreciated.

- Martin G. Collins

From the Archives: Featured Sermon

[Be Thankful!](#)

by John O. Reid

Focusing on the opulence of Las Vegas, John Reid reflects that our people of modern Israel have become truly spoiled, surfeiting on the blessings given to Abraham's offspring. The danger of abundant blessings is that we tend to forget the source of these blessings and cease to become thankful. When people forget to be thankful, they forget God, causing their once pliable hearts to become hard and stiff like leather. If we properly meditated on the awesomeness of the universe, the plenitude of creation, or the marvelous complexity of our own physical bodies, we would be properly thankful. Even our trials, instruments to correct and to bring growth, should inspire gratitude for their ultimate effects. We show gratitude for our calling through continual prayer, offering each petition with thanksgiving. In this time of scattering, we need to be thankful for one another, showing patience and mercy for one another's shortcomings.

From the Archives: Featured Article

[Thanksgiving](#)

CGG Weekly: Thankful Forever (28-Nov-03)

by Staff

Americans and Canadians enjoy their Thanksgiving celebrations—maybetoo much in some cases! This article explores why we should be thankful, how much we have to be thankful for, and how we can give God our thanks.

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