



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

—W.T. Purkiser

29-Nov-02

## Thanksgiving and Entropy

For those of us who are not scientists, the Second Law of Thermodynamics can be a brain bruiser. Technically, it describes the fact that the amount of work produced from energy is constantly decreasing because of a universal tendency for energy to diffuse to reach equilibrium, resulting in increased entropy. However, it can be simplified to state, as [Isaac](#) Asimov once wrote, "The universe is constantly getting more disorderly!"

Although evolutionists [the world](#) over become rabid over the thought, this law refutes the theory of evolution in one fell blow. If everything in this universe is tending toward breakdown—no matter how long it takes—evolution, a progression of organisms becoming more complex, is simply not tenable. Proponents of evolution have yet to formulate an adequate answer to the problem of entropy in organized systems; they continue to say that some force or energy from outside the system spurred evolutionary progress. They refuse to accept that a Supreme Being created life in all its complexity, and it, too, is tending toward disorder.

The Second Law of Thermodynamics also has a social parallel. Unless institutions and relationships are constantly maintained by infusions of

energetic work, they tend to crumble and die. We can easily see this in the great empires of the past. The Roman Empire, for instance, rose to prominence on the foundation of the strong and conservative ethic of the Roman Republic. As the institutions of the Republic eroded, however, the power of the Roman Empire declined until barbarian tribes toppled it with little difficulty.

Entropy need not be seen in such grand examples; we have probably seen it at work in our own lives. For example, in college I had a fair number of friends that I considered close. However, once we graduated and split up to live all over the earth, we have rarely seen or spoken with each other. None of us has put much effort into keeping in touch. We are no longer close. A kind of entropy has entered our relationships, disintegrating our once close camaraderie.

Each year we celebrate Thanksgiving Day, and this once-noble occasion has also suffered the effects of this social principle. Thanksgiving has devolved from a feast day of solemn gratitude to [God](#) for His beneficence and blessing to our modern Turkey Day. Reflection on God's providence and thankfulness for His bounty upon us, our land, and our government has fallen to gluttony, football games, and planning one's strategy for the next day's [Christmas](#) shopping. In many people's minds, Thanksgiving has become just the opening day of the Christmas season!

We call it a holiday, but it has become a day of work. On Wednesday, a news report revealed that one-third of all working Americans will punch a time clock on Thanksgiving Day. Everything Americans do has become so commercialized that the nation cannot abide closing down stores and services for even one day. Yet, it was not all that long ago that finding anything open on this holiday was frequently a lost cause.

This question, then, must be asked: "If Americans will not take the time to reflect upon their blessings and express their gratitude on the one day of the year that we officially call 'Thanksgiving,' do they *ever* consider what they have and give thanks for it?" Call me cynical, but from here, it does not look very likely. We are too busy "running to and fro" over the face of the earth (

[Daniel 12:4](#)); we have no time! We are overwhelmed by "the cares of this world" ([Matthew 13:22](#)) and cannot afford to lose our momentum by acknowledging our blessings.

A Christian is warned never to allow entropy a place in our gratitude toward God. Paul tells us to be thankful for everything, "for this is the will of God in Christ [Jesus](#) for you" ([I Thessalonians 5:18](#)). Giving thanks is edifying and beneficial because it recognizes the truth of our lives and reestablishes proper perspective in our relationship with God. Finally, as Paul intimates in [Colossians 3:15](#), it paves the way for creating [peace](#) in our hearts. Are these not worth one day a year?

- Richard T. Ritenbaugh

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### [Grace Upon Grace](#)

by John W. Ritenbaugh

Forgiveness is only the beginning of the grace process, enabling us to grow or mature into the full stature of Christ. Grace eliminates the possibility of boasting or self-glory because all we have accomplished has been accomplished only because of what He gave. We are to follow the example of our Elder Brother, who although He did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, nevertheless made Himself of no reputation ([Philippians 2:6](#)), becoming, as it were, a child. Jesus is not against greatness, but He wants it to be given by God and God is going to give it to those who are in harmony with His law and His way of life. Everybody is to build on the same foundation, using those gifts which God empowered them. Paul insists that the very fact you are under grace is what nails you to the floor, that you have to obey the law.

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**God Our Provider**

by Charles Whitaker

The story of building the Tabernacle serves as an encouraging example for us today as we collaborate with God in building His church. God will provide what we need to finish the job to His specifications!

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