

The Abiding Word

Back To The Bible & Let The Bible Speak

November 27, 2019

Reflections No. 2

WHEN WE ALL GET TO HEAVEN

Sing the wondrous love of Jesus,
Sing His mercy and His grace:
In the mansions bright and blessed,
He'll prepare for us a place.

While we walk the pilgrim pathway.
Clouds will over spread the sky;
But when traveling days are over,
Not a shadow, not a sigh.

Let us then be true and faithful,
Trusting, serving every day;
Just one glimpse of Him in glory
Will the toils of life repay.

When we all get to heaven,
What a day of rejoicing that will be!

When we all see Jesus,
We'll sing and shout the victory.

John 14:1-6

1 "Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.

2 "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.

3 "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

4 "And you know the way where I am going."

5 Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?"

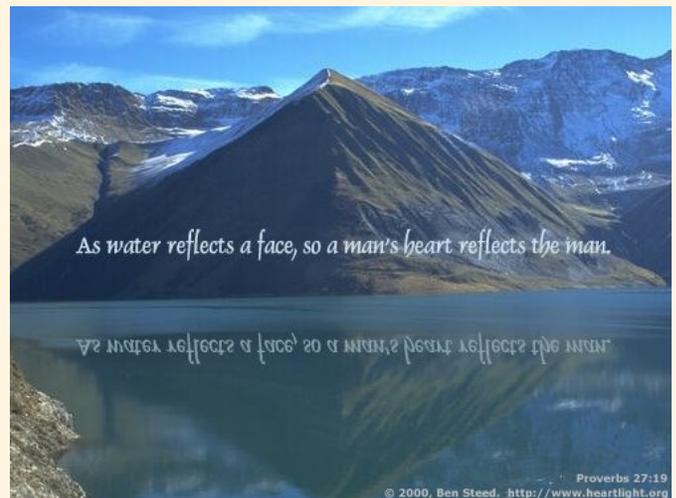
6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me. (NASB)

PROVERB FOR THE DAY

One of the key methods I have learned over the years for dealing with the everyday challenges that living throws my way is to meditate on the Word of God each day as I walk with God.

I have found that reading the Proverb for the day in the morning and reflecting on that Proverb and seeing how I can put it to action in my life as I go through the day has become a great faith builder and strength when trials and conflicts come my way.

Each day has its own Proverb and in one month I have applied all 31 Proverbs ready to do it again the next month. It really works, try it.



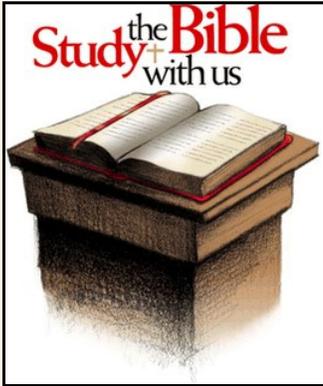
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Each Wednesday evening we host a Bible Study in our home.
We are currently in the Book of Hebrews.
Starting January 8, 2020 we will begin a series on the
Letters of Paul starting with Galatians.
If you are near and able,
Joy and I invite you to join our study group.

THANKSGIVING

Reflection

Thanksgiving is not a “Bible” holy day or anywhere set apart as a special religious day for observance in the Scriptures. At the end of this article I have included a few items as Historical Documentation.

The annual festival of Thanksgiving in the United States was derived from the thanksgiving day set aside by the Mayflower pilgrims after their first harvest in 1621 and was later adopted by the various colonies and states. Thanksgiving has become an established custom in this country, although the devotional aspect of the early days has given way largely to sports, recreation, family reunions and feasting.

Perhaps to a large as a nation and as individuals we have begun to attribute our success in material achievements to our own powers and to feel that we have less need of God and His power in our life. Perhaps this has led us to be thankful for things of a temporary nature. Consider the possessions you have today that you are proud of and perhaps feel secure in—clothes that will be out of style next year; cars that wear out and break down daily; the treasures that moth and rust corrupts. Often the possession of these things will bring no real satisfaction because you realize that soon they will be used up and gone. Even if you are perfectly satisfied with these possessions today, you will be dissatisfied with them tomorrow.

How much better would it be to possess something that will last. One of the wisest men of all ages, the Apostle Paul, said in *[I Corinthians 13:13]*, **“But now abide faith, hope, love, these three, but the greatest of these is love.”** These are possessions that abide, and without them material goods have little comfort. Consider faith, for without it we are not sure of ourselves; it is hard for us to make decisions. We are afraid to launch out and try to build. When we lose our faith, we lose our dreams and our purpose in life. Without faith we become possessed with a “what’s the use” attitude.

Hope is the power of life that motivates us to build a successful life. Love is the possession that never fails. God our Father never fails. **“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life” [John 3:16]**

This Thanksgiving consider being thankful for the opportunity to be with friends and loved ones, to share bread together, to have another opportunity to express love for one another. Yes, Thanksgiving is not a “Bible” holy day or anywhere set apart as a special religious day for observance in the Scriptures. However, what a wonderful time it is to inventory all the blessings we have received from God our Heavenly Father during the past months and years. And we should not be unaware of the spiritual blessings in Jesus the Christ, for they far outweigh the fleeting tables of good food and the lighthearted visiting together with loved ones.



“Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession.” [Hebrews 3:1-2]

As followers, disciples of Jesus the Christ, the called out of God, the body of Christ, we are thankful we have God as our Father, Jesus Christ as our Savior, and a comforter in the Holy Spirit. May we also pause to give thanks for our fellowship among brethren of like conviction and especially do we appreciate the fellowship in our local congregation. May we remember the many kindnesses and acts of love expressed during the past year. Think also of the blessings of health, peace and talents to work and the meaning this has brought into your living and service.

Better yet, perhaps we should consider a daily attitude of Thanksgiving within our character as we walk with Jesus in our heavenly calling. We remember Jesus as we partake of the body and blood in our communion together on the Lords' Day. We have much to be thankful for but most of all for our relationship to our Heavenly Father.



***“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, which He lavished upon us. In all wisdom and insight He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth. In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation — having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.*”**

For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you, and your love for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. [Ephesians 1:3-23]

Historical Documentation

The First Thanksgiving Proclamation (June 20, 1676)

On June 20, 1676, the governing council of Charlestown, Massachusetts, held a meeting to determine how best to express thanks for the good fortune that had seen their community securely established. By unanimous vote they instructed Edward Rawson, the clerk, to proclaim June 29 as a day of thanksgiving, our first. That proclamation is reproduced here in the same language and spelling as the original.

THE FIRST THANKSGIVING PROCLAMATION - JUNE 20, 1676:

"The Holy God having by a long and Continual Series of his Afflictive dispensations in and by the present Warr with the Heathen Natives of this land, written and brought to pass bitter things against his own Covenant people in this wilderness, yet so that we evidently discern that in the midst of his judgements he hath remembered mercy, having remembered his Footstool in the day of his sore displeasure against us for our sins, with many singular Intimations of his Fatherly Compassion, and regard; reserving many of our Towns from Desolation Threatened, and attempted by the Enemy, and giving us especially of late with many of our Confederates many signal Advantages

against them, without such Disadvantage to ourselves as formerly we have been sensible of, if it be the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed, It certainly bespeaks our positive Thankfulness, when our Enemies are in any measure disappointed or destroyed; and fearing the Lord should take notice under so many Intimations of his returning mercy, we should be found an Insensible people, as not standing before Him with Thanksgiving, as well as lading him with our Complaints in the time of pressing Afflictions:

The Council has thought meet to appoint and set apart the 29th day of this instant June, as a day of Solemn Thanksgiving and praise to God for such his Goodness and Favour, many Particulars of which mercy might be Instanced, but we doubt not those who are sensible of God's Afflictions, have been as diligent to espy him returning to us; and that the Lord may behold us as a People offering Praise and thereby glorifying Him; the Council doth commend it to the Respective Ministers, Elders and people of this Jurisdiction; Solemnly and seriously to keep the same Beseeching that being perswaded by the mercies of God we may all, even this whole people offer up our bodies and soulds as a living and acceptable Service unto God by Jesus Christ."

Prepared by Gerald Murphy (The Cleveland Free-Net - aa300)

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George Washington - 1789 - By the President of the United States of America, a Proclamation.

Whereas it is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey his will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly to implore his protection and favor-- and whereas both Houses of Congress have by their joint Committee requested me to recommend to the People of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many signal favors of Almighty God especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness.

Now therefore I do recommend and assign Thursday the 26th day of November next to be devoted by the People of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being, who is the beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be-- That we may then all unite in rendering unto him our sincere and humble thanks-- for his kind care and protection of the People of this Country previous to their becoming a Nation--for the signal and manifold mercies, and the favorable interpositions of his Providence which we experienced in the course and conclusion of the late war--for the great degree of tranquility, union, and plenty, which we have since enjoyed--for the peaceable and rational manner, in which we have been enabled to establish constitutions of government for our safety and happiness, and particularly the national One now lately instituted--for the civil and religious liberty with which we are blessed; and the means we have of acquiring and diffusing useful knowledge; and in general for all the great and various favors which he hath been pleased to confer upon us.

And also that we may then unite in most humbly offering our prayers and supplications to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations and beseech him to pardon our national and other transgressions-- to enable us all, whether in public or private stations, to perform our several and relative duties properly and punctually--to render our national government a blessing to all the people, by constantly being a Government of wise, just, and constitutional laws, discreetly and faithfully executed and obeyed--to protect and guide all Sovereigns and Nations (especially such as have shewn kindness unto us) and to bless them with good government, peace, and concord--To promote the knowledge and practice of true religion and virtue, and the increase of science among them and us--and generally to grant unto all Mankind such a degree of temporal prosperity as he alone knows to be best.

Given under my hand at the City of New York the third day of October in the year of our Lord 1789.

Go: Washington

Washington issued a proclamation on October 3, 1789, designating Thursday, November 26 as a national day of thanks. In his proclamation, Washington declared that the necessity for such a day sprung from the Almighty's care of Americans prior to the Revolution, assistance to them in achieving independence, and help in establishing the constitutional government.

George Washington's Mount Vernon

www.mountvernon.org

Abraham Lincoln - 1863 - Proclamation of Thanksgiving

This is the proclamation which set the precedent for America's national day of Thanksgiving. During his administration, President Lincoln issued many orders similar to this. For example, on November 28, 1861, he ordered government departments closed for a local day of thanksgiving.

Sarah Josepha Hale, a 74-year-old magazine editor, wrote a letter to Lincoln on September 28, 1863, urging him to have the "day of our annual Thanksgiving made a National and fixed Union Festival." She explained, "You may have observed that, for some years past, there has been an increasing interest felt in our land to have the Thanksgiving held on the same day, in all the States; it now needs National recognition and authoritative fixation, only, to become permanently, an American custom and institution."

Prior to this, each state scheduled its own Thanksgiving holiday at different times, mainly in New England and other Northern states. President Lincoln responded to Mrs. Hale's request immediately, unlike several of his predecessors, who ignored her petitions altogether. In her letter to Lincoln she mentioned that she had been advocating a national thanksgiving date for 15 years as the editor of Godey's Lady's Book. George Washington was the first president to proclaim a day of thanksgiving, issuing his request on October 3, 1789, exactly 74 years before Lincoln's.

The document below sets apart the last Thursday of November "as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise." According to an April 1, 1864, letter from John Nicolay, one of President Lincoln's secretaries, this document was written by Secretary of State William Seward, and the original was in his handwriting. On October 3, 1863, fellow Cabinet member Gideon Welles recorded in his diary how he complimented Seward on his work. A year later the manuscript was sold to benefit Union troops.

Washington, D.C.

October 3, 1863

By the President of the United States of America.

A Proclamation.

The year that is drawing towards its close, has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature, that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever watchful providence of Almighty God. In the midst of a civil war of unequalled magnitude and severity, which has sometimes seemed to foreign States to invite and to provoke their aggression, peace has been preserved with all nations, order has been maintained, the laws have been respected and obeyed, and harmony has prevailed everywhere except in the theatre of military conflict; while that theatre has been greatly contracted by the advancing armies and navies of the Union. Needful diversions of wealth and of strength from the fields of peaceful industry to the national defense, have not arrested the plough, the shuttle or the ship; the axe has enlarged the borders of our settlements, and the mines, as well of iron and coal as of the precious metals, have yielded even more abundantly than heretofore. Population has steadily increased, notwithstanding the waste that has been made in the camp, the siege and the battle-field; and the country, rejoicing in the consciousness of augmented strength and vigor, is permitted to expect continuance of years with large increase of freedom. No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God, who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy. It has seemed to me fit and proper that they should be solemnly, reverently and gratefully acknowledged as with one heart and one voice by the whole American People. I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens. And I recommend to them that while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility and Union.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington, this Third day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the Independence of the United States the Eighty-eighth.

By the President: Abraham Lincoln

William H. Seward, Secretary of State