

Old Testament Reading: 1 Chronicles 16:1-11, 25-36
New Testament Reading: Galatians 5:14-26

Thanksgiving

"A Day of Public Reverence"

Psalm 100

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According to the diary of William Bradford, the English Puritan who sailed to North America aboard the Mayflower, the 56 surviving Pilgrims held a three-day feast in the fall of 1621 to celebrate their first harvest. They invited the Wampanoag Indians to join them and show their appreciation for teaching them how to grow and preserve food.

- In 1623, Governor Bradford declared December 13 a day of prayer to thank God for His many blessings.
- A century later, President George Washington proclaimed Thursday, November 26, 1789, "a day of thanksgiving and prayer."
- In 1863, President Lincoln established the last Thursday in November as a National Day of Thanksgiving.

- In 1941, Congress passed legislation, and President Roosevelt signed it into law, declaring the fourth Thursday of November as Thanksgiving Day— not a “holiday” but a “holy day.”
- **Thanksgiving is a day set aside for Americans to pause and give thanks unto God for His blessings.”**

FROM THE DIARY OF WILLIAM BRADFORD

- July 1620 – 102 passengers and 30 crewmembers boarded the merchant ship Mayflower and set sail from the port of Plymouth, England, to the New World on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean.
- Of the 102 passengers, 40 of them were Protestant Separatists called Pilgrims, whose desire was to worship God according to the dictates of their conscience and not the Church of England.
- Other passengers were searching for gold and ways to export their English businesses. However, without them, the Pilgrims could not have afforded the journey.
- The Puritans came later. While they also wanted freedom of worship like the Pilgrims, they still believed the Church of England was the one true Church, but wanted to improve it. The Puritans founded the Massachusetts Bay Colony, the Connecticut Colony, and the New Haven Colony.
- At some point during the 66-day journey, Bradford wrote a statement of agreement that all passengers were required to sign. The Mayflower Compact defined the rules of behavior required of every person once they reached their destination.
- When they first landed, they found nothing but unsettled wilderness, and since it was the first of winter, they quickly constructed their first lodges. Five of their family members and friends died while at sea. By the end of winter, sickness and hunger had claimed another 45 people.
- When spring came, the Wampanoag Indians welcomed them and taught them how to plant corn, preserve fish, and use animal skins for clothing.
- In 1621, the Pilgrims held a three-day feast to celebrate their first harvest and show their appreciation, inviting the Wampanoag tribe to join them.
- The Indians brought venison and turkey, and the Pilgrim men caught fish and clams and ground the corn into meal.
- The Pilgrim women gathered wild fruit and berries, baked cornbread, and cooked clam chowder.
- Of the 56 English people who were left, only four were women, and those four, along with one servant, prepared a feast for the whole settlement and 91 Indians.

For the last 60 years, Americans have increasingly disregarded the core values and moral virtues that defined Western Civilization and America.

- The Bible is the basic foundation of those values and virtues, and for the first 200 years, America was the most admired and envied nation in the world because of its success and generosity.
- However, a century ago, William Temple, the Archbishop of Canterbury, said **America's "Christian Tradition" was being undermined by secular humanists who sought to keep America's Christian values without the Christian faith.**
- With the support of the National Education Association and the Department of Public Education, secular humanists have totally detached America's foundation from its biblical roots.
- Christianity threatens the goal of a New World Order by 2030. Patriotism, meaning the love of God, family, and country, does not support the narrative of godless globalism: for globalism to work, people must trust the government, not God.
- Most American schools no longer teach the traditional subjects of world history and the progress of Western Civilization **because the founding of America includes God's Divine intervention.**
- According to the Global Education First Initiative, public schools are to **"help young people become responsible, caring, contributing global citizens."**

    - **Socialism** – the making of wealth is for the whole. community's benefit and not for the individual.
    - **Communism** – to avoid class warfare, each person contributes to society according to their ability and receives from society according to their need.

- The American culture, once based on Judeo-Christian values of respect for human life and the golden rule, has become an anti-God, anti-Christ culture with no respect for human life or the golden rule.
- If America is to survive as a sovereign nation**, parents must reaffirm the traditions of our Judeo-Christian heritage** and make sure their children and grandchildren know the truth about how God blessed America to be a channel of His blessings to other nations, including the proclamation of the gospel.

Suggested reading: "The Book of Prayers and Presidents Inspiring Faith" – by William Federer, "Miracles in American History" – by Susie Federer, "The Light and the Glory" – Peter Marshall and David Manuel

Psalm 100 is a "Call to Worship"
The Psalm outlines the seven preparations.
needed to worship God in spirit and truth.

Psalm 122 is one of the fifteen psalms the Jewish Pilgrims sang on their way up to the City of Jerusalem for their annual festival.

"I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces."

However, once they reached the mountains surrounding Jerusalem, they began to worship…

1. Raise Your Voice to God – Vs. 1 – *"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands."*

- Psalm 98:4-8 is the background for this statement.
- ***"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth: make a loud noise, rejoice, and sing. Sing unto the Lord with the harp; with the voice of a psalm; with trumpets and coronets. Make a joyful noise before the Lord, the King. Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; Let the mountains rejoice, and the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together!"***
- When the Jewish pilgrims approached the Temple, they would **"shout for joy"** – not to draw attention to themselves, but to the One they had come to worship.

2. Render Honor to God – Vs. 2 – "*Serve the Lord with gladness."*

- "Serve" means to dedicate oneself to God with joy, signifying that our worship of God should be joyful, not burdensome; that it should be done with a cheerful heart and full commitment.
- **Serve** – ***"rendering to God the honor that is due Him."*** Stephen Charnock
- **Serve –** ***"honor and adoration directed to God."*** John MacArthur
- **Serve** – ***"to be astonished at the inconceivable magnitude and splendor of Almighty God."*** A.W. Tozer
- God wants those who worship Him to worship joyfully; to respect His holiness and His majesty.

3. Draw Near to God with Singing – Vs. 2 – "*Come before His presence with singing."*

- Notice the **"shout"** in verse 1 turns to **"singing"** in verse 2.

- Music is the medium God has given His people to express their joy and praise to Him.
- The Bible contains 575 references to praise, singing, and music. At the center of our Bible is a hymn book of 150 songs known as the Psalms.
- During the 19th and 20th centuries, many churches replaced the Psalter with hymns and gospel songs, which appealed more to the singers than to their desire to worship God.
- Music is the "sacrifice of praise" that we give to God, but neither music nor praise is a synonym for worship.
- According to Isaiah 6, true worship:
    - **Begins with an upward look** – Isaiah 6:1-4 – until we have this vision of the holiness of God, we have not, and we cannot worship Him in spirit and in truth.
    - **Leads to an inward look** – Isaiah 6:5-7 – until we see God for who He is, we will never see ourselves for who we really are; until we reach that point of conviction and confession, we have not, and we cannot worship Him in spirit and in truth.
    - **Leads to an outward look** – Isaiah 6:8-9 – genuine worship results in our willingness to yield our bodies as instruments of His righteousness.

4. Acknowledges God – Vs. 3 – *"Know ye that the Lord, He is God."*

- By their obedience to the Torah and their observance of the sacred feasts, the Jews showed the pagan nations that Yahweh was worthy of all worship and adoration, that:
    - Vs. 3 – He is the only true and living God –
    - Vs. 3 – He made us in His image and for His glory –
    - Vs. 3 – He made us for His purpose –
    - Vs. 3 – He made us for His benefit –
    - Vs. 3 – He is responsible for our care –
    - Vs. 5 – He is a God of infinite good and mercy –
    - Vs. 5 – He is a God of sacred and eternal truth –

5. Open the Door to God – Vs. 4 – *"Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise."*

- When this psalm was written, eight large gates stood in the wall surrounding the Old City of Jerusalem.
- Once the Jewish pilgrim was inside the walls of the City of Jerusalem, he was nearer to the Temple and to the presence of God, and he paused to give thanks.
- Once the Jewish pilgrim was inside the outer court of the Temple, his heart burst forth in praise to God.
- Psalm 95:1-2 – ***"Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation."***

6. Give Thanks to God – Vs. 4 – *"Be thankful unto Him."*

- Notice that **"giving thanks"** is repeated twice in one verse.
- As Christians, we should live in an attitude of gratitude, regardless of the circumstances of our lives.
- When we assemble for worship, we are to enter these doors with thanksgiving, bringing His tithes and our offerings unto Him; i.e., giving Him thanks for His protection and provision.
- In 1 Thessalonians 5:18, the Apostle Paul said, ***"In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."***

7. Bless the Name of God – Vs. 4 – *"And bless His name."*

- The word **"bless," or "praise,"** in this context means to kneel, to bow, and to prostrate oneself before the Lord to show homage to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.
- True worship always involves falling at the feet of the One we recognize as our God.
- Psalm 95:6 – ***"Come, let us bow down in worship; let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker."***
- The call to worship is a divine invitation: ***"Enter His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise, and bless His name."***
- Our attitude of gratitude is based on God's goodness, mercy, grace, and love in sending His Son to be our Savior.