



How Do You Live With Gratitude?

1 Thessalonians 5:18: (NASB) *in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*



Last week we talked about hope and its critical role in living a life of value. Hope seems to be the forgotten middle brother of faith and love. In the same way, this past Thursday we celebrated the forgotten middle brother of holidays - Thanksgiving. How do you compete with the costumes and candy of Halloween just a few weeks before and the gifts and glitter of Christmas a month later? So, what about the art of thanksgiving? How can we master the "attitude of gratitude" and live a transformed life?

What part does thanksgiving play in our daily lives?



"Thankfulness Song," Veggie Tales

A thankful heart is a happy heart!

Psalms 107:21-22: (KJV) ²¹*Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!* ²²*And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing.*

So, what are the sacrifices of thanksgiving?

Actual sacrifices of thanksgiving were offered in **Leviticus 7:11-14.**

Please see more detail on this in the **CQ Rewind Full Edition Bonus Material!**

Hebrews 13:15-17: (NASB) ¹⁵*Through him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.* ¹⁶*And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.* ¹⁷*Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.*

These things can be seen as sacrifices, as they are not all natural and easy reactions to the circumstances of our lives.



Which 20th Century president's Thanksgiving Proclamation began with

Psalms 92:1: "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord."



Today's gift, *Gratitude* (film) by Louie Schwartzberg

- It's not just another day. It's the one day that is given to you today. It's given to you. It's a gift. It's the only gift you have right now and the only appropriate response is gratefulness.*



We owe God! We ought to be willing to live our thankfulness outwardly and consistently, day by day. Living thankfully is a transformational experience.



Psalms 116:12-16: (KJV) ¹² What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me? ¹³ I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD. ¹⁴ I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people. ¹⁵ Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints. ¹⁶ O LORD, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds.

What about the origin of the holiday itself?



"I am so Blessed," Karen Drucker

Even before George Washington's proclamation, there was this:

(Source: www.pilgrimhall.org) The Very First Thanksgiving Proclamation made by the Continental Congress: IN CONGRESS November 1, 1777

FORASMUCH as it is the indispensable Duty of all Men to adore the superintending Providence of Almighty God; to acknowledge with Gratitude their Obligation to him for Benefits received, and to implore such farther Blessings as they stand in Need of: And it having pleased him in his abundant Mercy, not only to continue to us the innumerable Bounties of his common Providence; but also to smile upon us in the Prosecution of a just and necessary War, for the Defense and Establishment of our unalienable Rights and Liberties; particularly in that he hath been pleased, in so great a Measure, to prosper the Means used for the Support of our Troops, and to crown our Arms with most signal success:

It is therefore recommended to the legislative or executive Powers of these UNITED STATES to set apart THURSDAY, the eighteenth Day of December next, for SOLEMN THANKSGIVING and PRAISE: That at one Time and with one Voice, the good People may express the grateful Feelings of their Hearts, and consecrate themselves to the Service of their Divine Benefactor; and that, together with their sincere Acknowledgments and Offerings, they may join the penitent Confession of their manifold Sins, whereby they had forfeited every Favor; and their humble and earnest Supplication that it may please GOD through the Merits of JESUS CHRIST, mercifully to forgive and blot them out of Remembrance...

The last paragraph states:

And it is further recommended, That servile Labor, and such Recreation, as, though at other Times innocent, may be unbecoming the Purpose of this Appointment, be omitted on so solemn an Occasion.



First and last day, *Gratitude (film)* by Louie Schwartzberg

- If you do nothing else but to cultivate that response to the great gift that this unique day is; if you learn to respond as if it were the first day in your life and the very last day, then you will have spent this day very well.*

Notice this Psalm of thanksgiving begins with our acknowledgement of His greatness and our insignificance!

We should be conscious of the gift of "today."

Psalms 86:1-4: (NASB) ¹Incline Your ear, O LORD, and answer me; For I am afflicted and needy. ²Preserve my soul, for I am a godly man; O You my God, save Your servant who trusts in You. ³Be gracious to me, O Lord, For to You I cry all day long. Make glad the soul of Your servant, For to You, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

Even long before there was the Proclamation of the Continental Congress, there was this in 1623 - 3 years after the pilgrims landed!

"Inasmuch as the great Father has given us this year an abundant harvest of Indian corn, wheat, peas, beans, squashes, and garden vegetables, and has made the forests to abound with game and the sea with fish and clams, and inasmuch as he has protected us from the ravages of the savages, has spared us from pestilence and disease, has granted us freedom to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience.

Now I, your magistrate, do proclaim that all ye Pilgrims, with your wives and ye little ones, do gather at ye meeting house, on ye hill, between the hours of 9 and 12 in the day time, on Thursday, November 29th, of the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred and twenty-three and the third year since ye Pilgrims landed on ye Pilgrim Rock, there to listen to ye pastor and render thanksgiving to ye Almighty God for all His blessings."



--William Bradford, Ye Governor of Ye Colony

Excerpts from President Barack Obama's 2012 Thanksgiving Proclamation:
Please see full text in the CQ Rewind Full Edition Bonus Material!



"On Thanksgiving Day, Americans everywhere gather with family and friends to recount the joys and blessings of the past year. This day is a time to take stock of the fortune we have known and the kindnesses we have shared, grateful for the God-given bounty that enriches our lives. As many pause to lend a hand to those in need, we are also reminded of the indelible spirit of compassion and mutual responsibility that has distinguished our Nation since its earliest days.

Many Thanksgivings have offered opportunities to celebrate community during times of hardship. When the Pilgrims at Plymouth Colony gave thanks for a bountiful harvest nearly four centuries ago, they enjoyed the fruits of their labor with the Wampanoag tribe -- a people who had shared vital knowledge of the land in the difficult months before. When



President George Washington marked our democracy's first Thanksgiving, he prayed to our Creator for peace, union, and plenty through the trials that would surely come. And when our Nation was torn by bitterness and civil war, President Abraham Lincoln reminded us that we were, at heart, one Nation, sharing a bond as Americans that could bend but would not break. Those expressions of unity still echo today, whether in the contributions that generations of Native Americans have made to our country, the Union our forebears fought so hard to preserve, or the providence that draws our families together this season....

On Thanksgiving Day, individuals from all walks of life come together to celebrate this most American tradition, grateful for the blessings of family, community, and country. Let us spend this day by lifting up those we love, mindful of the grace bestowed upon us by God and by all who have made our lives richer with their presence."

Psalm 86:5-8: (NASB) ⁵For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in lovingkindness to all who call upon You. ⁶Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer; And give heed to the voice of my supplications! ⁷In the day of my trouble I shall call upon You, for You will answer me. ⁸There is no one like You among the gods, O Lord, nor are there any works like Yours.

Notice that this Psalm of thanksgiving continues in faith and praise.

Our nation started out trying to have this attitude - how are we doing now?



Can gratitude really change your life?

Open your eyes, *Gratitude* (film) by Louie Schwartzberg

- *Begin by opening your eyes and be surprised that you have eyes you can open! That incredible array of colors that is constantly offered to us for our pure enjoyment...look at the sky. We so rarely look at the sky. We so rarely note how different it is from moment to moment with clouds coming and going.*



A smile can be the first step to being thankful.

Finding something to smile about makes remembering to be thankful easier.

Finally, this Psalm of thanksgiving marvels at the magnitude of His plan for all as well as His attention to one lowly soul!

Psalms 86:9-12: (NASB) ⁹All nations whom You have made shall come and worship before You, O Lord, and they shall glorify Your name. ¹⁰For You are great and do wondrous deeds; You alone are God. ¹¹Teach me Your way, O LORD; I will walk in Your truth; Unite my heart to fear Your name. ¹²I will give thanks to You, O Lord my God, with all my heart, and will glorify Your name forever.

Unite my heart to fear (reverence) Your name: Our hearts are torn in many directions. This prayer is to direct our focus to reverence for God.

Here we see an unmistakable link between hope and gratitude:

- **Hope** is the expectation of future events;
- **Hope** is built on **faith**;
- **Gratitude** is the embracing of past, present, future events and lessons;
- Gratitude is also built on **faith**;
- The greater your **faith**, the greater your **hope** and **gratitude**!

True gratitude changes the way we look at life. We cannot take our blessings for granted.



Being thankful is put in perspective with the other "most important things":

1 Thessalonians 5:16-20: (KJV) ¹⁶Rejoice evermore. ¹⁷Pray without ceasing. ¹⁸In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. ¹⁹Quench not the Spirit. ²⁰Despise not prophesyings. ²¹Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. ²²Abstain from all appearance of evil.

Doing all of the above is much easier with an attitude of gratitude!

We can reap the priceless benefits of faith and sanctification:

1 Thessalonians 5:23-25: (KJV) ²³And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. ²⁵Brethren, pray for us.



"I Am So Blessed," (chorus) Karen Drucker

Realize that God doesn't need our "things" or our lip service - He wants our sincerity!

Psalms 50:7-14: (NRSV) ⁷Hear, O my people, and I will speak, O Israel, I will testify against you. I am God, your God. ⁸Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you; your burnt offerings are continually before me. ⁹I will not accept a bull from your house, or goats from your folds. ¹⁰For every wild animal of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. ¹¹I know all the birds of the air, and all that moves in the field is mine. ¹²If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world and all that is in it is mine. ¹³Do I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? ¹⁴Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving and pay your vows to the Most High.

True gratitude is a heartfelt expression that is specific in detailing the object of one's gratitude to the giver of that object, or to others, to stimulate their gratitude.

True heartfelt gratitude is specific (what am I thankful for?) and directed (to God or to others).



Which 20th Century president's Thanksgiving Proclamation began with

Psalms 92:1: "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord."

Answer: President John F. Kennedy, Thanksgiving Proclamation (1961) - See the text in the CQ Rewind Full Edition Bonus Material!

What are some practical examples of gratitude?



People's faces, *Gratitude (film)* by Louie Schwartzberg

- Look at the faces of people you meet. Each one has an incredible story behind their face. A story that you could never fully fathom. Not only their own story, but the story of their ancestors. We all go back so far. In this present moment, on this day, all the people you meet, all that life from generations from so many places flows together and meets you like a life-giving water, if you only open your heart and drink.



Having an approach of gratitude helps prevent us from jumping to conclusions and helps us deal with others in a more effective way.



A caller suggested: Being peaceful, loving, giving and gentle are the "symptoms" of a life lived in gratitude.



My Heart is Filled with Thankfulness (verse 1), words and music by Keith Getty and Stuart Townsend

*My heart is filled with thankfulness
To Him who bore my pain;
Who plumbed the depths of my disgrace
And gave me life again;
Who crushed my curse of sinfulness
And clothed me in His light
And wrote His law of righteousness
With pow'r upon my heart.*

As a great Old Testament example, Daniel's life path was a paved road of gratitude, even from his youth!

Daniel 2:19-23: (NRSV) ¹⁹Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night, and Daniel blessed the God of heaven. ²⁰Daniel said: Blessed be the name of God from age to age, for wisdom and power are his. ²¹He changes times and seasons, deposes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding. ²²He reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what is in the darkness, and light dwells with him. ²³To you, O God of my ancestors, I give thanks and praise, for you have given me wisdom and power, and have now revealed to me what we asked of you, for you have revealed to us what the king ordered.

Sometimes the path to gratitude is protracted - early in King Nebuchadnezzar's life he appreciated God, specifically after the dream interpretation. But as time went on, the King lost any godly perspective and became a god in his own eyes.

So God set him low for seven years:

Daniel 4:34-37: (KJV) ³⁴And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: ³⁵And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? ³⁶At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. ³⁷Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.



Let's take a closer look at the context of the first line of the 1961 Thanksgiving Proclamation:

Psalms 92:1-4: (NASB) ¹*It is good to give thanks to the LORD and to sing praises to Your name, O Most High;* ²*To declare Your lovingkindness in the morning and Your faithfulness by night,* ³*With the ten-stringed lute and with the harp, with resounding music upon the lyre.* ⁴*For You, O LORD, have made me glad by what You have done, I will sing for joy at the works of Your hands.*

Gratitude can be:

- Day and night,
- Creatively expressed through instruments, or even
- Sung right out loud!

It is a life changing experience, so it can come through many different aspects.

How do we put thanksgiving into the center of our lives?

"The deepest craving of human nature is the need to be appreciated."
- William James





We are going to illustrate those three "P's" with Psalms 147, a Psalm of praise and thanksgiving.

First we pause to stop and read the Psalm. It then takes us through the application of steps 2 and 3 over and over again. The perceptions and praise here bounce between the smallest human things and the largest heavenly things.

Pause: Just STOP a moment!

Setting the context of praise and thanksgiving:

¹*Praise the Lord! For it is good to sing praises to our God; For it is pleasant, and praise is beautiful.*



Praise is a way of showing gratitude.

Perceive: Notice God's goodness in things great and small!

²*The Lord builds up Jerusalem; He gathers together the outcasts of Israel. ³He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds. ⁴He counts the number of the stars; He calls them all by name.*

God pays attention to the big things and the little things. When we give God gratitude, that power of thankfulness changes our lives. We see things through the eyes of light rather than the eyes of darkness.

Praise: Tell God in words and actions of your appreciation!

⁵*Great is our Lord, and mighty in power; His understanding is infinite.*

Perceive: Notice God's goodness in things great and small!

⁶*The Lord lifts up the humble; He casts the wicked down to the ground.*

Praise: Tell God in words and actions of your appreciation!

⁷*Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving; Sing praises on the harp to our God,*

Perceive: Notice God's goodness in things great and small!

⁸*who covers the heavens with clouds, who prepares rain for the earth, who makes grass to grow on the mountains.*



My Heart is Filled with Thankfulness (verse 2), words and music by Keith Getty and Stuart Townsend

*My heart is filled with thankfulness
To Him who walks beside;
Who floods my weaknesses with strength
And causes fears to fly;
Whose ev'ry promise is enough
For ev'ry step I take,
Sustaining me with arms of love
And crowning me with grace.*

Perceive: Notice God's
goodness in things
great and small!

⁹He gives to the beast its food, and to the young ravens that cry. ¹⁰He does not delight in the strength of the horse; He takes no pleasure in the legs of a man. ¹¹The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him, in those who hope in His mercy.

Praise: Tell God in words
and actions of your
appreciation!

¹²Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem! Praise your God, O Zion!

When we see "praise," in the Scriptures, we should think "gratitude." We need to pause and consider.

Is every experience in life worthy of thanks?

"Because all things have contributed to your advancement, you should include all things in your gratitude."
- Wallace D. Wattles

 **Civilization's Gifts, Gratitude (film) by Louie Schwartzberg**

- *Open your heart to the incredible gifts that civilization gives to us. You flip the switch and there is electric light. You turn a faucet and have warm water and cold water, drinkable water - the gifts that millions in this world have never experienced. So these are just a few of an enormous number of gifts to which we can open our heart. So I wish you would open your heart to all these blessings and let them flow through you, that everyone whom you will meet on the street will be blessed by you.*

Perceive: Notice God's
goodness in things
great and small!

¹³For He has strengthened the bars of your gates; He has blessed your children within you. ¹⁴He makes peace in your borders, and fills you with the finest wheat. ¹⁵He sends out His command to the earth; His word runs very swiftly. ¹⁶He gives snow like wool; He scatters the frost like ashes; ¹⁷He casts out His hail like morsels;



Praise: Tell God in words
and actions of your
appreciation!

Who can stand before His cold? ¹⁸He sends out His word and melts them; He causes His wind to blow, and the waters flow. ¹⁹He declares His word to Jacob, His statutes and His judgments to Israel. ²⁰He has not dealt thus with any nation; And as for His judgments, they have not known them. Praise the LORD!



**My Heart is Filled with Thankfulness (verse 3), words and music by
Keith Getty and Stuart Townsend**

*My heart is filled with thankfulness
To him who reigns above,
Whose wisdom is my perfect peace,
Whose ev'ry thought is love.
For ev'ry day I have on earth
Is given by the King;
So I will give my life, my all,
To love and follow Him.*

We have all of these gifts from God through Jesus, so what is our response? We love and follow Him with a response of gratitude.

Gratitude is perspective. We choose to see life through the eyes of thankfulness, rather than the eyes of frustration, or depression, or grief, or sorrow, or pain.

Should we give thanks for everything?

2 Corinthians 12:9-10: (NASB) ⁹*And He has said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. ¹⁰Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.*

If we believe that God's power is perfected in our weakness, then gratitude for even our weaknesses is in order!

1 Peter 4:12-16: (NASB) ¹²*Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; ¹³but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation. ¹⁴If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. ¹⁵Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; ¹⁶but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name.*

To the degree you share in the sufferings of Christ, rejoice! We need to focus on being God-honoring in all details of our life.

Final keys to gratitude:

- True gratitude is a heartfelt expression that is specific in detailing the object of one's gratitude to the giver of that object, or to others, to stimulate their gratitude.
- Gratitude is built on faith.



- It is appropriately expressed creatively, and often to others and to one's self.
- Pause - perceive - praise!



*So how do you live with gratitude...?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*



*And now even more to think about...
only in the **Full Edition** of CQ Rewind!*

The Old Testament sacrifice of thanksgiving was given as a part of the sacrifice of peace:

Leviticus 7:11-14: (NASB) ¹¹Now this is the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings which shall be presented to the LORD. ¹²If he offers it by way of thanksgiving, then along with the sacrifice of thanksgiving he shall offer unleavened cakes mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers spread with oil, and cakes of well stirred fine flour mixed with oil. ¹³With the sacrifice of his peace offerings for thanksgiving, he shall present his offering with cakes of leavened bread. ¹⁴Of this he shall present one of every offering as a contribution to the LORD; it shall belong to the priest who sprinkles the blood of the peace offerings.

Excerpts from Matthew Henry's Commentary:

(Source: Biblical commentary from Matthew Henry) Verses 11-34

1. In thankfulness for some special mercy received, such as recovery from sickness, preservation in a journey, deliverance at sea, redemption out of captivity, all which are specified in Psalm 107, and for them men are called upon to offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving, #Le 7:22. Or,
2. In performance of some vow which a man made when he was in distress (#Le 7:16), and this was less honourable than the former, though the omission of it would have been more culpable. Or,
3. In supplication for some special mercy which a man was in the pursuit and expectation of, here called a voluntary offering. This accompanied a man's prayers, as the former did his praises. We do not find that men were bound by the law, unless they had bound themselves by vow, to offer these peace-offerings upon such occasions, as they were to bring their sacrifices of atonement in case of sin committed.

Not but that prayer and praise are as much our duty as repentance is; but here, in the expressions of their sense of mercy, God left them more to their liberty than in the expressions of their sense of sin—to try the generosity of their devotion, and that their sacrifices, being free-will offerings, might be the more laudable and acceptable; and, by obliging them to bring the sacrifices of atonement, God would show the necessity of the great propitiation.



Another biblical example of thanksgiving: Jonah - after running and hiding from God, he is now facing death and comes back to his center - he prays while in the belly of the fish this prayer of thanksgiving:

Jonah 2:1-9: (KJV) ¹Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly, ²And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice. ³For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me. ⁴Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple. ⁵The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head. ⁶I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God. ⁷When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple. ⁸They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy. ⁹But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD.

Various Thanksgiving Day Presidential Proclamations: Notice the difference in focus from Obama to Kennedy to Lincoln:

THANKSGIVING DAY, 2012

**BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
A PROCLAMATION**

On Thanksgiving Day, Americans everywhere gather with family and friends to recount the joys and blessings of the past year. This day is a time to take stock of the fortune we have known and the kindnesses we have shared, grateful for the God-given bounty that enriches our lives. As many pause to lend a hand to those in need, we are also reminded of the indelible spirit of compassion and mutual responsibility that has distinguished our Nation since its earliest days.

Many Thanksgivings have offered opportunities to celebrate community during times of hardship. When the Pilgrims at Plymouth Colony gave thanks for a bountiful harvest nearly four centuries ago, they enjoyed the fruits of their labor with the Wampanoag tribe -- a people who had shared vital knowledge of the land in the difficult months before. When President George Washington marked our democracy's first Thanksgiving, he prayed to our Creator for peace, union, and plenty through the trials that would surely come. And when our Nation was torn by bitterness and civil war, President Abraham Lincoln reminded us that we were, at heart, one Nation, sharing a bond as Americans that could bend but would not break. Those expressions of unity still echo today, whether in the contributions that generations of Native Americans have made to our country, the Union our forebears fought so hard to preserve, or the providence that draws our families together this season.

As we reflect on our proud heritage, let us also give thanks to those who honor it by giving back. This Thanksgiving, thousands of our men and women in uniform will sit down for a meal far from their loved ones and the comforts of home. We honor their service and sacrifice. We also show our appreciation to Americans who are serving in their communities, ensuring their neighbors have a hot meal and a place to stay. Their actions reflect our age-old belief that we are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, and they affirm once more that we are a



people who draw our deepest strength not from might or wealth, but from our bonds to each other.

On Thanksgiving Day, individuals from all walks of life come together to celebrate this most American tradition, grateful for the blessings of family, community, and country. Let us spend this day by lifting up those we love, mindful of the grace bestowed upon us by God and by all who have made our lives richer with their presence.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 22, 2012, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage the people of the United States to join together -- whether in our homes, places of worship, community centers, or any place of fellowship for friends and neighbors -- and give thanks for all we have received in the past year, express appreciation to those whose lives enrich our own, and share our bounty with others.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand twelve, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-seventh.

BARACK OBAMA

OCTOBER 27, 1961
BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
A PROCLAMATION:

"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord."

More than three centuries ago, the Pilgrims, after a year of hardship and peril, humbly and reverently set aside a special day upon which to give thanks to God for their preservation and for the good harvest from the virgin soil upon which they had labored. Grave and unknown dangers remained. Yet by their faith and by their toil they had survived the rigors of the harsh New England winter. Hence they paused in their labors to give thanks for the blessings that had been bestowed upon them by Divine Providence.

This year, as the harvest draws near its close and the year approaches its end, awesome perils again remain to be faced. Yet we have, as in the past, ample reason to be thankful for the abundance of our blessings. We are grateful for the blessings of faith and health and strength and for the imperishable spiritual gifts of love and hope. We give thanks, too, for our freedom as a nation; for the strength of our arms and the faith of our friends; for the beliefs and confidence we share; for our determination to stand firmly for what we believe to be right and to resist mightily what we believe to be base; and for the heritage of liberty bequeathed by our ancestors which we are privileged to preserve for our children and our children's children.

It is right that we should be grateful for the plenty amidst which we live; the productivity of our farms, the output of our factories, the skill of our artisans,



and the ingenuity of our investors. But in the midst of our thanksgiving, let us not be unmindful of the plight of those in many parts of the world to whom hunger is no stranger and the plight of those millions more who live without the blessings of liberty and freedom. With some we are able to share our material abundance through our Food-for-Peace Program and through our support of the United Nations Freedom-from-Hunger Campaign. To all we can offer the sustenance of hope that we shall not fail in our unceasing efforts to make this a peaceful and prosperous world for all mankind.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOHN F. KENNEDY, President of the United States of America, in consonance with the joint resolution of Congress approved December 26, 1941, which designates the fourth Thursday in November of each year as Thanksgiving Day, do hereby proclaim Thursday, the twenty-third day of November of this year, as a day of national thanksgiving.

I urge all citizens to make this Thanksgiving not merely a holiday from their labors, but rather a day of contemplation. I ask the head of each family to recount to his children the story of the first New England thanksgiving, thus to impress upon future generations the heritage of this nation born in toil, in danger, in purpose, and in the conviction that right and justice and freedom can through man's efforts persevere and come to fruition with the blessing of God.

Let us observe this day with reverence and with prayer that will rekindle in us the will and show us the way not only to preserve our blessings, but also to extend them to the four corners of the earth. Let us by our example, as well as by our material aid, assist all peoples of all nations who are striving to achieve a better life in freedom.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the United States of America to be affixed.

DONE at the City of Washington this twenty-seventh day of October in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and sixty-one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and eighty-sixth.

JOHN F. KENNEDY

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA A PROCLAMATION

The year that is drawing toward 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 can not 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 theater of military conflict, while that theater 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 plow, the shuttle, or the ship; the ax 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 battlefield, 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 if, as soon as may be consistent with the divine purpose, to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquillity, 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 3d day of October A.D. 1863, and of the Independence of the United States the eighty-eighth.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN