

Based on Many Passages

Do You Give Thanks?



Wednesday, 11/27 at 7 PM

The Eve of our National Day of Thanksgiving – 2019

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: On this Thanksgiving Eve of 2019, let's think about ➡Some *Thanksgiving realities* and ➡the *topic of thanks* in tonight's Scripture readings.

1. **Some Thanksgiving Realities:**

- a. When did Thanksgiving officially begin? In 1863, that is, 156 years ago, Abraham Lincoln declared Thanksgiving to be a national holiday in America.
- b. What was going on in 1863? That was the middle of the Civil War (1861-1865), which was the deadliest conflict in the history of our nation – in all of our nation's wars, roughly 1.2 million America soldiers have died, *and HALF of them lost their lives in the Civil War!*
- c. What is now a typical Thanksgiving Day in America? It includes such things as ➡not working, ➡not going to

school, attending a parade, eating turkey, watching football, and going shopping. According to a student at St. Louis University, Thanksgiving is about ✓ family time, ✓ confronting our history, and ✓ thankfulness; however, sadly, *in her section about thankfulness*, she gave this advice: “reflect on the people, places, groups, and things that you are thankful for at some point during this holiday.”¹ That sounds nice, *but she made no mention of thanking God*, the Ultimate Giver of every good and perfect gift (James 1:17).

d. What is the meaning of the word, thanksgiving?

Google has two definitions:

- i. The expression of gratitude, especially to God.
- ii. An annual national holiday marked by religious observances and a traditional meal including turkey.

2. **The Topic of *Thanks* in Tonight’s Scripture Readings:**

- a. ^{ESV} Deuteronomy 8:1-10: ² ...the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness... ³ And he... fed you with manna... ⁴ Your clothing did not wear out... these forty years.... ⁷ ...the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land... ¹⁰ ...and you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land he has given you. // The LORD had given the descendants of Abraham so much; in response, they were called to “bless the LORD,” which means to “declare God the origin of power for success, prosperity, fertility” (Holladay). *Let us remember what God has done and is doing, and then let us give Him thanks!*

¹ <https://www.hercampus.com/school/slu/why-thanksgiving-important>

b. ^{NAU} Psalm 67:

- i. VV. 1-2: **We are blessed for a purpose: God be gracious to us and bless us, And cause His face to shine upon us—Selah** [*pause and think*]. ² **That Your way may be known on the earth, Your salvation among all nations.** // Those words are very similar to the common benediction; with those words we are asking God to love us – *even though we are undeserving* – by giving us what we need. Then, *having what we need*, we are promising to tell others what God has done: ✦ loving us, ✦ giving us what we need, and ✦ saving us from our sins!
- ii. VV. 3-4: **We praise God for His fairness:** ³ **Let the peoples praise You, O God; Let all the peoples praise You.** ⁴ **Let the nations be glad and sing for joy; For You will judge the peoples with uprightness And guide the nations on the earth. Selah** [*pause and think*]. // Let's put things in perspective: God has ALL power, we have NO power; therefore, He can do anything He wants and we cannot stop Him, we are completely at His mercy. Therefore, knowing of God's perfect fairness and uprightness, we praise Him – *especially knowing that in Christ we are forgiven!*
- iii. VV. 5-7: **We praise God for our food:** ⁵ **Let the peoples praise You, O God; Let all the peoples praise You.** ⁶ **The earth has yielded its produce; God, our God, blesses us.** ⁷ **God blesses us, That all the ends of the earth may fear Him.** // God has given us life in our bodies AND faithfully provides us with food to nourish our bodies; therefore, David

wrote these words about the LORD: “You open Your hand And satisfy the desire of every living thing” (Ps. 145:16 NAU). Therefore, at this time of Thanksgiving and at all times, *let us recognize His blessings and give Him our praise and thanks!*

- c. ^{ESV} [Philippians 4:6-20](#): ⁶ **Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.** // Notice the key parts: Anxiety, regular prayer, fervent prayer, and thanksgiving... *What an odd combination! But why?* When we are anxious about anything, God invites us to give all such things to Him in prayer AND, *as we are praying*, to remember our blessings and give Him thanks. By doing so, we give Him our anxieties and begin to focus on our blessings!
- d. ^{ESV} [Luke 17:11-19](#): ¹² **...ten lepers...** ¹³ **...“Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.”** ¹⁴ **...they were cleansed.** ¹⁵ **Then one of them...** ¹⁶ **...fell on his face at Jesus’ feet, giving him thanks.** // Think about that ratio... 10 to 1; maybe today’s world has a similar ratio? God gives everyone food, clothes, and shelter, *yet maybe only one out of every ten gives Him thanks.* May God help us this Thanksgiving and each day going forward to be the ONE out of the TEN!

Let Us Pray: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we are sinful and weak, yet You bless us with forgiveness, strength, and so much more! Help us to thank You now and always! Amen!

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