



Divinely Blessed & Restored

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Thanksgiving Day ©

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Submitted by Sis. Doris B Ryans

Psalms 9:1-2 (NASB) I will give thanks to the Lord with all my heart; I will tell of all Your wonders. I will be glad and exult in You: I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High



The month of November is one of my favorite times of the year. For the past eight years I have had the pleasure of making an annual trip up to Northern Michigan in the fall. As I drive, I look at the changing landscape and see trees changing from green to yellow, gold, orange, rust and red and as I breathe the air that now has a crispness to it, I am moved to acknowledge the Creator of such beauty, God. No matter how many times I make that drive, I am in awe of the power and greatness of God and moved to thank Him for this gift.

Many, many years ago, a gentleman, similarly felt a need to acknowledge and give reverence for the gifts and blessings enjoyed. So moved, in 1789 George Washington issued the following Proclamation:

“**W**HEREAS it is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefit, and humbly implore His protection, aid and favors...

Now, **T**HEREFORE, 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, and for all the great and various favors which He has been pleased to confer upon us.”

This Proclamation established the first “Thanksgiving Day” in America

When I read this I had to stop and review my concept of Thanksgiving Day. From my early days in kindergarten, Thanksgiving was about Columbus discovering America, Pilgrims, Indians, a large harvest from days of toiling in the fields, and everyone gathering together (Pilgrims and Indians) for a huge dinner with turkey as the main course! As an adult there are no Pilgrims and Indians - its family and friends, the Thanksgiving Day Parade, gathering for a huge dinner (*of course turkey is still the main course*) and then football.



Somewhere along the way, the purpose and focus of Thanksgiving Day is far from the original intent. Our forefathers believed we were blessed (*divinely or supremely favored*) to such a degree that a time should be set aside to “*acknowledge and celebrate*” our blessings – thus the birth of Thanksgiving Day. I ask, what are you acknowledging and celebrating on Thanksgiving Day?

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Webster defines thanksgiving as the act of giving thanks; grateful acknowledgement of benefits or favors, *especially to God*. As we gather this Thanksgiving Day, November 23, 2006 - 217 years after George Washington's Proclamation, will you be celebrating the "great and glorious Being, who is the Beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be"?

As you gather on Thanksgiving Day, look around you. Look at your family, each is a gift from God! Look at the material comforts you enjoy daily; your home, your car, food to eat, and clothes to wear. Think about the physical and emotional blessings your family enjoy; health, strength, sound mind, and freedom. Whether we experience all or just some of the above, we are blessed and should have a thankful heart. Most importantly, think about the gift of salvation we each have been given. God gave His son, Jesus to die upon the cross to atone our sins that we might have eternal life. As Christians, let us not celebrate another Thanksgiving Day focused upon turkey and dressing. Let us "acknowledge and celebrate" the "great and glorious Being" - God for the many blessings He has bestowed upon us!!!

As you focus upon the true purpose of this day, you will realize that unlike the secular world that celebrates "Thanksgiving Day" as a once a year holiday, for Christians, everyday is "Thanksgiving Day". I Thessalonians 5:18 tells us: In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. So, no matter what we are going through, even in the midst of tough times, we will still celebrate His greatness, His faithfulness, His righteousness, His goodness, and His holiness. When we do, *The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.* (Psalms 34:17 KJV).



As we experience the changing of the seasons and behold God's marvelous workmanship, let us pause and reflect upon God's goodness and mercy in our lives. Let us go back to the principles upon which "Thanksgiving Day" was established – giving God glory and honor for the blessings each and every one of us receives daily. Psalms 100:4-5 expresses it best. It reads:

Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations. KJV

I don't know about you, but I want to live the words of the Psalmist – for it is a privilege for us to be able to offer thanks to God for His goodness, and to enjoy His steadfast love, and faithfulness. As we do, we shall experience the joy of "Thanksgiving Day" daily!!



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Praise:

Reverently remembering and thanking Him for all He has done and will do on our behalf.



Twenty-Five Reasons For Praising God

We praise God for.....

his splendor and majesty.....	Psalm 104:1
giving us salvation.....	Psalm 96:2; Luke 1:68, I Peter 1:3-6
bearing our burdens.....	Psalms 68:19
hearing our prayers.....	Psalms 66:20
giving us his strength.....	Psalm 59:17; 68:35
his marvelous deeds.....	Psalm 9:1; 26:7; 52:9, 72:18
his guidance.....	Psalm 16:7
his compassion.....	Psalm 28:6; 2 Corinthians 1:3
his righteousness.....	Psalm 48:10
his enduring love.....	Psalm 106:1
his enduring faithfulness.....	Psalm 117:1-2; Isaiah 25:1
his comfort.....	Isaiah 12:1; 2 Corinthians 1:3
his wisdom.....	Daniel 2:20
his spiritual blessings.....	Ephesians 1:3-6
forgiving our sins.....	Hosea 14:2, Ephesians 1:7



We praise God because.....

he made us.....	Psalm 139:14
he is worthy of praise.....	2 Samuel 22:4, 1 Chronicles 16:25; Psalm 48:1
he keeps his promises.....	I Kings 8:15, 56
he is in control.....	Ezra 7:27
he is eternal.....	Nehemiah 9:5
he is powerful and mighty.....	Psalm 21:13
he is sovereign.....	Psalm 47:7, 66:4
he is trustworthy.....	Psalm 56:4
he is holy.....	Psalm 99:3
he is preparing a glorious future for us.....	Isaiah 61:11; 62:7-9, Revelation 21-22



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