

The Eve of Our National Day of Thanksgiving – 2022

Wednesday, 11/23 at 7:00



What Is Your Response...

To the Giver and His Gifts?

Introduction: **Dear friends in Christ:** As we assess the present situation ▶in our nation and ▶around the world, we are living amid difficulties, divisions, and disappointments. **But** things were far worse back on October 3, 1863 – *when we were engaged in the deadliest war in our nation’s history [April 12, 1861 – April 9, 1865]*. It was AT THAT TIME and ON THAT DAY that President Lincoln declared a “Proclamation of Thanksgiving” – *officially making Thanksgiving a national holiday*.

1. **This Is Part of Lincoln’s Proclamation of Thanksgiving:**
“I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and... those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November..., as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our [generous] Father who dwelleth in the Heavens.

I recommend to them that, *while offering up the [acknowledgements] justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble [sorrow and faith] for our national... 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 [intervention] 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.”¹

2. **Some of Our Many Blessings:**

a. We each have:

- i. Clothes on our back.
- ii. Food in our kitchen.
- iii. A roof over our head.

We are blessed!

b. For those who know Jesus, they also have:

- i. The forgiveness of their sins.
- ii. Spiritual life.
- iii. The promise of eternity with God.

They are super-blessed!

¹ <https://americancornerstone.org/> American Cornerstone Newsletter | November 2022

3. **Distinguishing Between the Giver and His Gifts:**

a. Gifts: God gives gifts to everyone:

i. Jesus said: “[God] causes His sun to rise on *the evil and the good*, and sends rain on *the righteous and the unrighteous*” (Matt. 5:45 NAS-95).

ii. James wrote: “Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights...” (James 1:17 NAS-95).

b. What is typical?

i. We fail to recognize who gave the gifts.

ii. We fail to thank God for the gifts.

iii. We trust in the gifts, rather than the Giver.

c. What is best?

i. Recognize God as the Giver.

ii. Give thanks to God.

iii. Trust in God, rather than the gifts.

The Giver and His Gifts

God the Father – *The Giver*



Trust

Our Possessions – *His Gifts*



Thanks

Our Response – *Trust and Thanks*

4. **The Keys to Receiving with Thanksgiving:** This is Dr. Luther's explanation to the fourth petition of the Lord's Prayer: "God certainly gives daily bread to everyone without our prayers, even to all evil people, but we pray in this petition that God would lead us to realize this and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving."
- a. Realize: **Let us stop** thinking we have produced our wealth and purchased our possessions. Instead, **let us realize** that God has given us life, breath, abilities, strength, desire, jobs, good health, and more!
 - b. Receive: **Therefore,** let us gladly trust in God and give Him hearty thanks for His countless gifts!

Let Us Pray: Almighty God, merciful Father, You have given us life, family, and friends, provided our needs, and made us Your holy children through Jesus – *THANK YOU SO MUCH!*

As we remember our nation, *which You have established and sustain,* bless the United States of America with honest industry, truthful education, and an honorable way of life.

Save us from violence, discord, and confusion, from pride and arrogance, and from every evil course of action.

Support us in defending our liberties, and give those to whom we have entrusted the authority of government the spirit of wisdom, that there may be justice and peace in our land.

When times are prosperous, may our hearts be thankful, and in troubled times do not let our trust in You fail; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

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