



The Good News

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Praise and Thanksgiving

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For many people in our country, the Thanksgiving holiday is all about stuffing themselves full of turkey, dressing, and pumpkin pie and then settling in to watch football. For others, the day is about having the family get together to enjoy a meal and watch the parades. For most, it's probably some combination of these activities. For many who consider themselves to be religious, or spiritual, it takes on an extra meaning...it becomes a holiday to remember that God is deserving of thanks and praise for all the wonderful things He has done. Typically, individuals of this persuasion become kinder, more patient, and more generous with others as they consider this a time to give back and treat others with compassion. It's certainly never a bad thing for people to put effort into exhibiting more godly characteristics and our society certainly needs more people of this persuasion. However, one day a year is not sufficient to praise and thank God for being a merciful and loving God. As Christians, we know that we are to do this every day. As we praise and thank God today and throughout this week, let us consider some important concepts that the Bible teaches concerning how and why we are to thank God.

Why is it important? This would seem like a no-brainer because, after all, God has seen fit to send His Son to die for us and present us the opportunity to be saved. This alone should be sufficient reason for us to praise and thank God. However, there are other aspects that we should consider as well. In **Heb. 13:15** we learn that praising God is a sacrifice, giving Him the "*fruit of our lips*". Offering a sacrifice carries with it the understanding that we owe God something that we can never repay. We also find in **I Thess. 5:18** that giving thanks to God is pleasing to Him as it fulfills His will for us.

For what are we to praise God and give thanks? We often sing the hymn "Count Your Blessings" which reminds us that, if we actually take the time to count all of the ways that God blesses us, we can truly find God's hand in everything. God is deserving of praise for the food He provides (**I Tim. 4:4**), for giving us a second chance at living a pleasing life to Him (**I Tim. 1:12**), for the church that He has created to help us get to Heaven (**II Cor. 9:15**), and most importantly for the avenue of salvation itself (**Col. 1:12**). In every aspect of our lives, both physically and spiritually, God has provided a reason to praise and thank Him.

When are we to praise God and give thanks? In a word, always! We find that giving of thanks should be done while worshipping God (**Eph. 5:20**), while in prayer (**Phil. 4:6**), while among others (**Acts 2:47**), and while we conduct ourselves at all times (**Col. 2:17**).

It is certainly a commendable thing to have a day on our calendar that is completely devoted to remembering how blessed we are, especially when that remembrance promotes God in our society's collective conscious. However, after considering the Scriptures, we find that the holiday of Thanksgiving should not be necessary to remind us to give thanks; rather it is just one day out of three hundred sixty-five in which we should remember that God is worthy of every bit of praise and thanks that we can muster. Let's be sure to give God thanks and praise today, tomorrow, and every day that He gives us to live.