

Thanksgiving

I. Introduction.

- A. Why are people thankful?
- B. How do you raise thankful children?
- C. What is the focus of most of your Thanksgiving prayers?
- D. America's Historical Quotes (Thanksgiving is a Christian Holiday).

Celebrating Thanksgiving in America, by David Barton, [Wallbuilders](#);
Select US Thanksgiving Proclamations
(<http://nationaldayofprayer.org/thanksgiving/>)

America's first Thanksgiving Festival. Ninety Wampanoag Indians joined the fifty Pilgrims for three days of feasting. "The Pilgrims set sail for America on September 6, 1620, and for two months braved the harsh elements of a storm-tossed sea. Upon disembarking at Plymouth Rock, they held a prayer service and then hastily began building shelters...Samoset returned with a friend named Squanto, who lived with the Pilgrims and accepted their Christian faith. Squanto taught the Pilgrims much about how to live in the New World, and he and Samoset helped forge a long-lasting peace treaty between the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag Indians. Pilgrim Governor William Bradford described Squanto as "a special instrument sent of God for [our] good . . . and never left [us] till he died."⁷...Pilgrims, still persevering in prayer and assisted by helpful Indians,⁸ reaped a bountiful harvest.⁹ As Pilgrim Edward Winslow (later to become the Governor) affirmed, "God be praised, we had a good increase of corn"; "by the goodness of God, we are far from want."¹⁰ The grateful Pilgrims therefore declared a three-day feast in December 1621 to thank God and to celebrate with their Indian friends.¹¹"

"...Congress issued eight separate national Thanksgiving Proclamations. (Congress also issued seven separate proclamations for times of fasting and prayer, for a total of 15 official prayer proclamations during the American Revolution.¹⁴)"

"That congressional resolution was delivered to President George Washington, who heartily concurred with the request and issued the first federal Thanksgiving proclamation, declaring in part...it is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor. . . . Now, therefore, I do appoint Thursday, the 26th day of November 1789 . . . that we may all unite to render unto Him our sincere and humble thanks for His kind care and protection.¹⁶"

"...most official Thanksgiving observances occurred at the state level. In fact, by 1815, the various state governments had issued at least 1,400 official prayer proclamations, almost half for times of thanksgiving and prayer and the other half for times of fasting and prayer.¹⁹"

Continental Congress, 1777 – written by SIGNERS OF THE DECLARATION **SAMUEL ADAMS AND RICHARD HENRY LEE**: "[Congress] recommended [a day of] . . . thanksgiving and praise [so] that "the good people may express the grateful feelings of their hearts and join . . . their supplication that it may please God,

through the merits of Jesus Christ, to forgive [our sins] and . . . to enlarge [His] kingdom which consisteth in righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." ²⁴

GOVERNOR THOMAS JEFFERSON, 1779: "[I] appoint . . . a day of public Thanksgiving to Almighty God . . . to [ask] Him that He would . . . pour out His Holy Spirit on all ministers of the Gospel; that He would . . . spread the light of Christian knowledge through the remotest corners of the earth; . . . and that He would establish these United States upon the basis of religion and virtue. ²⁵"

GOVERNOR JOHN HANCOCK, 1790: "[I] appoint . . . a day of public thanksgiving and praise . . . to render to God the tribute of praise for His unmerited goodness towards us . . . [by giving to] us . . . the Holy Scriptures which are able to enlighten and make us wise to eternal salvation. And [to] present our supplications...that He would forgive our manifold sins and . . . cause the benign religion of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to be known, understood, and practiced among all the inhabitants of the earth. ²⁶"

Continental Congress November 1, 1777 national Thanksgiving Day Proclamation: "...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 solemn thanksgiving and praise; that with one heart and 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; that it may please him graciously to afford his blessings on the governments of these states respectively, and prosper the public council of the whole; to inspire our commanders both by land and sea, and all under them, with that wisdom and fortitude which may render them fit instruments, under the providence of Almighty God, to secure for these United States the greatest of all blessings, independence and peace; that it may please him to prosper the trade and manufactures of the people and the labor of the husbandman, that our land may yield its increase; to take schools and seminaries of education, so necessary for cultivating the principles of true liberty, virtue and piety, under his nurturing hand, and to prosper the means of religion for the promotion and enlargement of that kingdom which consisteth in righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."

President Abraham Lincoln's Proclamation of Thanksgiving Issued, October 3, 1863. "...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 cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever watchful providence of Almighty God....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."

Proclamation for a Day of Thanksgiving and Prayer issued by Grover Cleveland, President, 1887. "...let all secular work and employment be suspended; and let our people assemble in their accustomed places of worship and with prayer and songs of praise, give thanks to our Heavenly Father for all that He has done for us while we implore the forgiveness of our sins and a continuance of His mercy."

"Over the seventy-five years following Lincoln's Thanksgiving Proclamation, presidents faithfully followed Lincoln's precedent, annually declaring a national Thanksgiving Day...In 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt began celebrating Thanksgiving on the fourth Thursday of each November, and in 1941, Congress permanently established that day as the national Thanksgiving holiday. ²³"

II. Scripture.

- A. **"Thanks"** (71 times—2Sa. 22:50; 1Ch. 16:8, 34-35, 41; 25:3; 2Ch. 31:2; Esra 3:11; Neh. 12:24, 31, 38, 40; Psa. 6:5; 18:49; 30:4, 12; 35:18; 75:1; 79:13; 92:1; 97:12; 105:1; 106:1, 4; 107:1; 118:1, 29; 119:62; 122:4; 136:1-3, 26; 140:13; Dan. 6:10; Mat. 15:36; 26:27; Mark 8:6; 14:23; Luk. 2:38; 17:16; 22:17, 19; Joh. 6:11, 23; Acts 27:35; Rom. 14:6; 16:4; 1Co. 10:30; 11:24; 14:16-17; 15:57; 2Co. 1:11; 2:14; 8:16; 9:15; Eph. 1:16; 5:4, 20; Col. 1:3, 12; 3:17; 1Th. 1:2; 3:9; 1Th. 5:18; 2Th. 2:13; 1Ti. 2:1; Heb. 13:15; Rev. 4:9; 11:17).
1. **2Sa. 22:50—"Therefore I will give thanks unto Thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and I will sing praises unto Thy name."**
 2. **1Ch. 16:8—"Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, make known His deeds among the people."**
 3. **1Co. 15:57—"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."**
 4. **2 Co. 9:15—"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."**
 5. **Eph. 1:16—"Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers."**
 6. **Eph. 5:20—"Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."**
 7. **1Th. 5:18—"In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."**
 8. **Heb. 13:15—"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name."**
- B. **"Thanksgiving"** (27 times—Lev. 7:12, 13, 15, 23:29; Neh. 11:17; 12:8, 46; Psa. 26:7; 50:14; 69:30; 95:2; 100:4; 107:22; 116:17; 147:7; Isa. 51:3; Jer. 30:19; Amos 4:5; Jonah 2:9; 2Co. 4:15; 9:11; Php. 4:6; Col. 2:7; 4:2; 1Ti. 4:3, 4; Rev. 7:12).
1. **2Co. 4:15—"For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God."**
 2. **Php. 4:6—"Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."**

3. **Col. 2:7**-*"Rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving."*
{As you mature, you abound in thanksgiving.}
 4. **Col. 4:2**-*"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving."* {Again, thanking God (while continuing to pray) for the answers you are trusting God to come & watching for them.}
- C. **"Thank"** (26 times-**1Ch. 16:4, 7; 23:30; 29:13; 2Ch. 29:31; 33:16; Dan. 2:23; Mat. 11:25; Luke 6:32, 33, 34; 10:21; 17:9; 18:11; John 11:41; Rom. 1:8; Rom. 7:25; 1Co. 1:4, 14; 14:18; 1Th. 2:13; 2Th. 1:3; 1Ti. 1:12; 2Ti. 1:3; Phm. 1:4**).
1. **1Ch. 23:30**-*"And to stand every morning to thank and praise the LORD, and likewise at even."*
 2. **Rom. 1:8**-*"First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world."*
 3. **Php. 1:3**-*"I thank my God upon every remembrance of you."*
 4. **1Th. 2:13**-*"For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."*
 5. **Phm. 1:4**-*"I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers."*
- D. **"Thankful"** (3 times—**Psa. 100:4; Rom. 1:21; Col. 3:15**).
1. **Rom. 1:21**—*"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened."*
- E. **"Thanked"** (3 times—**2Sa. 14:22; Acts 28:15; Rom. 6:17**).
1. **Rom. 6:17**—*"But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."*

III. Application.

- A. How has thanksgiving become like a tradition or secular holiday for you?
- B. Will Thanksgiving Day be a day of thanksgiving for you and your family (or just about eating, being together), why?
- C. Do you want it to be a time of Thanksgiving to God?
- D. How can it be?
- E. What are some things you are thankful for?