

A Word From Your Pastor

"After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: 'Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.' All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying: 'Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and THANKS and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!'"

Revelation 7:9-12 NIV

Thankful Hearts – that is what our God and Father desires from His children. All of creation, whether on earth or in heaven give continuous praise unto our God and unto the Lamb! Is there any question as to whether this should be a regular part of our every day lives? We are told to give thanks to the Lord four different times in Psalm 107:8,15,21,31 – ***"Let them give thanks to the LORD for His unfailing love and His wonderful deeds for men."*** We also need to be reminded again and again to give thanks unto the Lord!

We are truly a blessed people and we must be careful not to take these blessings for granted. Please take a few minutes with me as we look back to the founding of our nation, lest we forget where we came from.

On September 6, 1620, the Mayflower set sail from England with 102 passengers crowded on board, including 33 children. Most of the Pilgrims on board were in their 20's and 30's. Fifteen of the passengers were over 40 yrs. of age. After 65 days at sea, the Mayflower landed at what we know as Plymouth, MA.

Please note what William Bradford, Governor of the Plymouth Colony, had to write about that day. ***"I cannot but stand half amazed at this poor people's present condition, . . . being thus past the vast ocean and a sea of troubles . . . they had no friends to welcome them nor inns to entertain or refresh their weather beaten bodies; . . . What could now***

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sustain them but the Spirit of God and His grace?" Bradford also noted the custom of the Pilgrims to honor God and give thanks in all things: ***"They fell upon their knees and blessed the God of heaven who had brought them over the vast and furious ocean, and delivered them from all the perils and miseries thereof, again to set their feet on the firm and stable earth, their proper element."***

During their first winter in America, an influenza outbreak killed almost half of those that arrived on the Mayflower! But they pressed forward in establishing their first colony, believing that God, in His Divine Providence had let them to this place. In October of 1621, they celebrated their first Thanksgiving in America. Their fields had yielded large crops, and the peoples' hearts were full of gratitude. William Bradford declared that the Plymouth Colony should hold a Thanksgiving Festival and invite the settlement's Indian friends as special guests. They went to work gathering wild turkeys, geese, lobster, shellfish, partridge and so much more. When Chief Massasoit arrived with 90 hungry braves, the Pilgrims became worried about having enough. Fortunately the Indians along the Atlantic coast were accustomed to celebrating the harvest also and they soon went into the woods and to the seashore to gather food. Before long, they returned with five deer and more fish and seafood for roasting. There was plenty for everyone!

As we celebrate Thanksgiving later this month, let's take time to sincerely give thanks to our Heavenly Father. Please take some time to read through **Psalm 106 & 107**. In these chapters you will notice the psalmist recounting many of the blessings God had poured out upon the Children of Israel. But, the most disheartening verse of all is found in **Psalm 106:13** –

"But they soon forgot what God had done and did not wait for His counsel." We might think, after all God had done for them, how could they so soon forget? Yet how many times do we act the very same way? Let's make our worship of God a very high priority both at home and at church!

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

In Christ Alone,

Pastor Mike

