



Date 11/21/2021

Happy Thanksgiving!
Give Thanks!

1st Thanksgiving Proclamation

"To all ye Pilgrims: In as much as the great Father has given us this year an abundant harvest of Indian corn, wheat peas, beans, squashes, and garden vegetable, and has made the forest to abound with game and the sea with fish and clams, and inasmuch as he has protected us ..., has spared us from pestilence and disease, has granted us freedom to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience; Now I, your magistrate, do proclaim that all ye Pilgrims, with your wives and ye little ones, do gather at ye meeting house ..., on Thursday, November 29th, of the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred and twenty-three, and the third year since ye Pilgrims landed on Pilgrim Rock, there to listen to ye pastor and render thanksgiving to ye Almighty God for all His blessings." - William Bradford, 1632

The Pilgrims **Found** reasons to give God thanks. They thanked God **For** circumstances and **In** circumstances.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

Giving Thanks is life-giving!

- Mental & Emotional health
 - More positive, joy, optimism, alert, patient

- Reduce stress
- Improves recovery from mental and emotional distress.
- Physical health
 - improves immune system, aches, BP, sleep.
- Relational Health
 - More forgiving, outgoing
 - Less lonely and isolated (important today)

➔ **Gratitude Journal** (Effects can last for months.)

Giving Thanks has many benefits, and *No Negative Side Effects!*

Give thanks by imagining Good things.

Romans 8:28-29

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who are called according to His purposes. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

Imagine possible Good outcomes → give thanks.

Ephesians 3:20

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we can ask or imagine, according to his power at work within us...

Let's Give Thanks!

“Every time God does something for someone else, it’s an invitation for that same thing to happen to you.” – Seth Dahl

Give Thanks!

Opening

Happy Thanksgiving WOCC

Story: Broke my tooth.

(Pray)

Transition

Notes

Body

I like Thanksgiving

I like it as a holiday and a celebration.

I also like it because it is an annual reminder to turn my eyes on the Goodness of God. It's when we can have the spirit of gratitude we can and should have toward our Creator and Sustainer God.

I also like Thanksgiving because the story of our American Thanksgiving is set in the context of Hope, Suffering, Blessing, and a focus on God.

If there is one thing the first Thanksgiving showed us is that we can give thanks despite terrible grief.

The pilgrims experienced terrible loss of life and health. These losses could never be made up for. They came the new land expecting to start afresh in a new context free from religious persecution. Half of them died before getting to enjoy any of it. I doubt any of them were in denial.

I'm sure that the Pilgrims did not give thanks that their friends died and did not get to realize their dreams.

Yet the Pilgrims found things to give thanks for.

1632 Governor **William Bradford** recorded these words for posterity.

"To all ye Pilgrims: In as much as the great Father has given us this year an abundant harvest of Indian corn, wheat peas, beans, squashes, and garden vegetable, and has made the forest to abound with game and the sea with fish and clams, and inasmuch as he has protected us ..., has spared us from pestilence and disease, has granted us freedom to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience; Now I, your magistrate, do proclaim that all ye Pilgrims, with your wives and ye little ones, do gather at ye meeting house ..., on Thursday, November 29th, of the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred and twenty-three, and the third year since ye Pilgrims landed on Pilgrim Rock, there to listen to ye pastor and render thanksgiving to ye Almighty God for all His blessings." - William Bradford, 1632

The Pilgrims **Found** reasons to give God thanks.
They can be a **model** for us.

They gave God thanks **For** circumstances and **In** circumstances.
The Pilgrims gave thanks for

- Abundant harvest
- God's protection
- Freedom to Worship God.

The Pilgrims also Gave Thanks **In** their circumstances.

- No doubt the grief of losing their loved ones was fresh on their minds.

Thanksgiving is a time for Giving Thanks, both **For** things, and **In** things.

We can give thanks in **Every** circumstance!

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

Note how Paul instruction emphasizes the **ongoing** practice of these things.

This emphasis is crucial when we face trials, and pains, and losses.

Giving Thanks is like a periscope that enables one to see above the waterline.

Giving Thanks is like a snorkel that reaches above the waterline of circumstances and provides life-giving air to a life submerged in the world of stress, pain, and hardships in which we live.

In fact, **Giving Thanks** is life-giving in more ways than one...

- Mental & Emotional health
 - More positive, joy, optimism, alert, patient
 - Reduce stress
 - Improves recovery from mental and emotional distress.
 - Changes your brain, rewires your brain. Brain Plasticity
 - Reinforces certain circuits, starves other circuits.
- Physical health
 - improves immune system, aches, BP, sleep.
- Relational Health
 - More forgiving, outgoing
 - Less lonely and isolated (important today)

Gratitude Journal → Effects can last for months.

- My application – record daily things I'm thankful for.
- Brain plasticity

Okay, we who regularly attend Church go over this every year, maybe several times a year.

Spaced Repetition. Works gratitude into our minds and hearts, and it has an effect!

I'm wondering if that's why church people live longer lives, happier lives, healthier lives.

What do you folks think?

Giving Thanks has **No Negative Side Effects!**

How can we give God Thanks?

Give thanks by imagining Good things.

Romans 8:28-29

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who are called according to His purposes. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

Some people imagine the worst outcomes. I've done that.
I'm not saying to be naïve.

Imagine possible Good outcomes

→ give thanks He is working for your good. Toward your good.

In what ways might God be working for good?

Stripping you of worldly dependencies.

Refining you and your faith, which are the most valuable things.

You will probably not be able to conceive how Go's is working, but that's okay.

Ephesians 3:20

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we can ask or imagine, according to his power at work within us...

You cannot even imagine how God will answer your prayer! Ask away!

Will God heal you? You don't know. So ask for healing.

Will God make you financially stable again? You don't know. Ask!

James - You do not have because you do not ask.

What's happening?

You are praying! Prayer draws you near to God!

Where else but in Christ can a person go through hellish circumstances, maintain a grateful heart, and come out the other side becoming more like Christ than ever before?

Let's Give Thanks!

“Every time God does something for someone else, it's an invitation for that same thing to happen to you.” – Seth Dahl

Jesus

- *Then He took the seven loaves and the fish, **thanked God** for them, and broke them into pieces. He gave them to the disciples, who distributed the food to the crowd. - Matthew 15:36*
- *...Jesus prayed this prayer: “O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, **thank you** for hiding these things from those who think themselves wise and clever, and for revealing them to the childlike.” - Matthew 11:25*
- *... and when he had **given thanks**, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.” -1 Corinthians 11:24*

Me

I give thanks **For**:

- Nancy, Jenny, Kirk, Charlie, all of you...
 - I Just look at you → gratitude to God.
 - I'm going to live longer, happier and healthier! 😊
- Barbara Tom, Gregg Uchishiba – Waipahu Safe Haven
- Recovery from physical, emotional, mental, relational damage.
- Story of my shoulder.

I Give Thanks **IN**:

- **Story** of my broken tooth.
 - Do I thank God for my tooth breaking?

- No, I didn't give thanks for my tooth breaking, but there are a hundred million other things to thank God for!
- One of them is my dentist!
 - not sure if I ever thanked God for him before.
- How many of you have a dentist? Let's thank God for our dentist!

Ruby Miura wanted to give God thanks publicly.
Being Thankful Through Difficult Times

The past year held many trials besides the pandemic which suddenly changed our entire lifestyle & freedom. I am thankful during that time I was able to support and help my sister during her battle with cancer, and also another dear friend. I was so inspired by their strong determination and strength to get well which can only come from their faith, trust and relationship with the Lord. It was the greatest pleasure to be there in time of need because it helped me to trust God whatever the outcome. I've had my share of health issues and thank God every day for what I can do, and not what I cannot.

“Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

I am also thankful to the Lord for keeping us protected from Covid, WOCC, Pastor Stan and our church family to keep us connected throughout.

Praise The Lord
(Thank you Ruby)

(Introduce Kenny)

Kenny Ang also has a thanks to give publicly.

(optional) **COVID**

- What God has done in the midst of Covid.
- 5% more Americans read the Bible. 16,500,000 people.
- Daily Bible readers did not waiver in their faith practice.
- Pop Christianity is on life support. (No counter-culture values.)

(Pray)