

Happy Thanksgiving

Written by Scott Evans

Monday, 21 November 2016 18:02 -

It is that time of the year again. The time when the scents of turkey and stuffing, pumpkin and apple pies and many other traditional foods waft through the air. The time of year when we gather with family and our closest friends. The time of year when our thoughts turn to football, parades, shopping and celebration. The time of year that we in America call Thanksgiving Day.

Thanksgiving can trace its roots all the way back to 1621. That was when the original settlers at Plymouth Rock joined the Wampanoag Indian Tribe for a harvest feast. The day did not become an official holiday however until 1863 when President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed the day as a National Holiday. Here is a portion of that proclamation from President Lincoln; "I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens. And I recommend to them that while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and 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 interposition 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." I do not see anything in there about shopping, football, parades or even eating for that matter! Our country has come a long way from that original proclamation.

First Thessalonians 1:16-18 states; *"Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."*

In a Christian's life, we should be in a constant state of thanksgiving to our Savior. In fact, as the previous verse states, we should give thanks in everything. On Thanksgiving Day, you will likely see many eloquent things posted on social media or hear them spoken at family dinners expressing thankfulness for the many blessings that God has given. There is nothing wrong with that! I too am very thankful for the home I live in, the vehicle that I drive, the job that God had given me to provide an income and the countless other worldly possessions that I have. I am also incredibly thankful for my family, my good and faithful friends, my church family and those people whom God has brought into my life. And, of course, I am most thankful that Jesus Christ sent His Son to die for my sins and I had enough sense to accept Him into my heart and into my life and I am thankful for His faithfulness in providing for me in all ways.

However, the Bible in First Thessalonians 5:18 it says that we are to be thankful in all things. In fact, it goes so far as to say that it is the Will of God! Does that mean we should be thankful for the unhappy events in our life? I do not think so! I know I was not thankful when either of my parents passed away. I was also not thankful when I had a heart attack at the age of 43. I know I was not the least bit thankful when I had kidney stones!!!! However, I believe that verse means that as a Christian we are to be aware that God is constantly at work in our lives and that is something to be truly thankful for. This means that God will produce good results out of the difficult circumstances in yours and my life. As I look back on the events of my life, I can see God's Hand clearly at work in all those difficult circumstances. We must remember that we see

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the here and now while God sees all things, past, present and future. So, this Thanksgiving I encourage you to give God the praise for the difficult days in your life as well as the good ones. Thank Him for working all things for your good and for being a faithful God in all ways and in all things and *“in everything give thanks.”*

Happy Thanksgiving to you and your family from all of us at the Southern Gospel Music Forum!