

REST AND BE THANKFUL

"Rest and be Thankful" - William Wordsworth

Someone said, if you want to find gratitude search in the English dictionary. The attitude of gratitude is very rare in the present world. Once God send two angels to the world, each one with a basket. The one was asked to collect petitions and prayers and the other to collect praises and thanksgiving from the 'Adamic' world. The first one completed his task soon and returned to God with the full basket. The second one went everywhere and returned to God late with almost an empty basket.

By Presidential Proclamation, the 4th Thursday of November is traditionally a day of National Thanksgiving in the U.S. But the Bible says, "Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thes 5:16-18). Another passage says, "Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (Eph 5:19-20).

One of the seven sages of ancient Greece thanked God for three things:

1. For being born as a human not as an animal
2. For being born as a man not as a woman
3. For being born as a Grecian (Greek) not as a Barbarian (unschooled)

Top Ten Things we should all be thankful for:

- 1) God's love exhibited to us through Jesus Christ
- 2) Bible - reveals God's plan for us
- 3) Parents, Life Partners, Siblings, and Friends
- 4) The church we attend
- 5) For the state and state officials
- 6) For educational and job opportunities
- 7) For good roads and cars
- 8) For the roof over your head (house)
- 9) For our health
- 10) For the free oxygen we breathe and the availability of drinkable water

So rest and be thankful to God, Family, Church and the State.

God Bless You.

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GIVING THANKS AS A MARK OF TRUE CHRISTIAN

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As we approach thanksgiving holidays, let us pause to reflect the significance of thanksgiving in a true Christian life. For many, the extent of thanksgiving is limited to a one-time, get-it-out-of-the-way holiday that reminds them to reflect on how blessed they are. However, giving thanks to God is taught throughout the scripture in both Old and New Testaments. Each day should be a day of thanksgiving to God.

The Old Testament has various instances of **Sacrifice of Thanksgiving** to reflect gratitude. The Israelites sang a song of thanksgiving as they were delivered from Pharaoh's army after the crossing of the Red Sea (Exodus 15). God required all Israel to gather together three times each year (Exodus 23:14-16.) The very essence and purpose of these gatherings were praises and thanksgivings. The book of Psalms is composed mostly with the **Songs of Thanksgiving**, both for God's grace to the Israelites as a whole through His mighty deeds, as well as for His individual grace to each of us. Also, Psalms outlines the significance of thanksgiving in praise and worship (Psalms 136: 1, 100:1-5, 18:49, 26:7, 30: 4, 30:12, 35:18, 50:14 and so on).

In the New Testament, there are repeated admonitions to give thanks to God. Phil 4:6 and I Tim 2:1 exhorts us to make *Thanksgiving as an integral part of our prayers*. 1 Thes 5:18 teaches us *Thanksgiving as God's will and Gods command*. Eph 5: 19-20: encourages us to *be thankful for everything in all circumstances or trials we go through*. To have a thankful heart becomes a huge challenge when trials come. However, this is a time, which reveals our maturity in Christ. Job worships God in the midst of his tribulations. He 'blessed' the name of Yahweh (Job 1:21). That's a phenomenal demonstration of praise. Furthermore, we see Paul rejoicing in the prison (Phil 1:12-18). Whatever our circumstances, the Lord is still our hope and our comfort, God works everything for the good of those who love Him (Rom 8:28). As believers, our eternal hope is to secure no matter what is happening here on earth.

Lastly, *give thanks for who He is* (Revelation 11:17). If we do not praise and thank God for who He is (first and foremost), then we reduce God to the status of just a gift giver. We need to give thanks to our God Himself and for His sovereignty.

Thankfulness acknowledges God's sovereignty and glorifies God. God wants us to be thankful for His goodness, His mercy, and His truth. We have every reason to be thankful to God, especially for the *eternal salvation from our sins and for the work of God in our life* (Col 1:12-14). What a loving God we have. To choose to be thankful is to walk by faith and not by sight.