

From Pastor's Desk...

Happy Thanksgiving!!! an expression of gratitude for restoration and renewal

When USA became an independent country, the congress recommended one annual day of thanksgiving for the whole nation to celebrate. George Washington suggested the day Nov26 as thanks-giving day. Almost all culture in the world has held celebrations of thanks for a plentiful harvest. When pilgrims came and settled at Plymouth, in Massachusetts, the Mashpee Indians (Wampanoag tribe) helped the pilgrims, taught them to grow corn and other crops for their survival. At the end of the bloody civil war in 1863, Abraham Lincoln asked Americans to set aside the last Thursday of November as a day of thanksgiving. How awesome it is to remember everything that we receive is at His hand: food, clothes, shelter, family, friends, and above all abundant life in Christ.

The theme thanksgiving recurs throughout the Bible. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Moses, Joshua etc. are remembered by the later generations with their remembrance God's intervention in life resulted in making covenant with God. Several cities mentioned in the Scripture provides us great memories of those fathers who celebrated the day of God's restoration and renewal.

David composed an awesome psalm after he brought the ark and set it inside the tent that he pitched for it (1Chronicles 16:7-36). We find how relational he was in his great task: he sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings to God as an expression of gratitude for the success in his mission of bringing the ark from distance. Secondly, he gave a loaf of bread, a cake of dates and a cake of raisins to each Israelite man and woman. David's psalm of thanksgiving is immensely rich in content, a powerful message for our generation.

- Look to the Lord and His strength; seek His face (26:11)
- Remember God's wonders, miracles and judgements He pronounced (12).
- Declare God's glory among the nations to proclaim His salvation (23-28)
- Prayer unto God for deliverance from the nations (35)

Let us gather in God's presence with an expression of gratitude for restoration and renewal. We may pay attention to the words of George Washington, the father of this nation, "Let us be consistent with the divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility and unity. Let us acknowledge the providence of almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits and humbly to implore His protection and favor".

In His Glorious Ministry,

Rev. K. P. Mathew
(Senior Pastor, IPC Hebron, Los Angeles)

THANKSGIVING

(Br. Yohannan George, East Area Prayer Coordinator)

Thanksgiving = Expression of Gratitude.

1 Chronicle 16: 34 "Give thanks to the Lord for He is good."

Thanksgiving is a practice that we cannot afford to discard when the going gets tough. With gratitude comes a whole host of benefits – greater awareness of His presence, increased trust, more joy, and energy to refuel us during adversity.

The Lord desires that we have a grateful spirit no matter what our circumstances. Even in the midst of pain or hardship, we can always thank Him for our Salvation, His presence, and His work in our lives. Ephesians 5:20 "Always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ". Psalms 100:4 "Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise, give thanks to Him and praise His name". Count the many blessings we receive from God, name them one by one, and give thanks to God.

True Christians need to be thankful to God in all circumstances. Apostle Paul encourages the young Thessalonians to be prepared for Christ's return even when they are burdened by grief and overwhelmed by sorrow. That is what we read in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 "Rejoice always" ... "Pray continually" ... "Give thanks at all circumstances for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus". In fact, these are also commandments of God in addition to the TEN. It is quite normal to thank God when everything is good. But the Bible say give thanks in all circumstances.

Why we should be grateful to God in everything?

1. It keeps us continually aware that we are walking in His presence, which contributes to a godly life.
2. Gratitude motivates us to look for the Lord's purpose in everything that happens.
3. Being grateful brings us into submission to God's will when we are suffering pain and heartache.
4. Being thankful reminds us of our continual dependence upon the Lord.

Thanksgiving is essential for rejoicing in the midst of our sufferings. Gratitude to God in difficult times gives our witness a greater impact. Thankfulness displaces anxiety with peace. Thankfulness focuses our attention on God rather than our circumstances.

Gratitude energizes us physically, emotionally and spiritually in difficult times.

WISH YOU ALL A HAPPY THANKSGIVING AS YOU CELEBRATE ON NOV. 23, 2017