

Praising God for These 10 Blessings Will Enrich Your Thanksgiving

Read Time: 3 Minutes 36 Seconds

With the avalanche of anxiety-producing stories in the news, aren't you glad we can pause this week and express gratitude to God for our manifold blessings? Let's consider 10 areas often overlooked that can cultivate the attitude of gratitude we need personally and in our families.

Living in our increasingly secular society, it's important we remind ourselves and our families of the pertinent facts concerning the holiday of Thanksgiving (yesterday I shared the story with three Jews selling beauty products in our mall after giving them my gospel tract).

In 1863, a Christian president, Abraham Lincoln, proclaimed a national day of "thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father who dwells in heaven."

The first Thanksgiving holiday was a joyous event celebrated by 90 Native Americans and 53 Pilgrims who enjoyed a plentiful harvest after their prayers and hard work redeemed a very difficult first year in America. Remember that the Pilgrims signed the Mayflower Compact stating their purpose in leaving England to come to America was for religious freedom, not selfish greed.

That purpose is clearly stated: "For the glory of God and the advancement of the Christian faith." Subsequently, they joined together for three days of prayerful thanksgiving to God for the harvest and the blessings He bestowed upon them.

It's important to review these facts with family members and

guests, lest we fall prey to thinking this is just a day off for feasting, football and Friday shopping prep!

As Christians, we always want to cultivate thankfulness in our lives. Recall how Jesus healed 10 lepers yet only one came back to say thank you. God gives us a directive, not an elective: "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thess. 5:18).

We need to develop the habit of giving thanks "in" everything, not necessarily "for" everything that comes our way.

10 Bestowed Blessings

1. Thank God for sending His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, who lived a sinless life and then died the death we deserved in our place.

2. Thank God for the gift of freedom upon which America was uniquely founded. Ours is the only nation in history ever established on the principle that "all men are created equal" and enjoy certain rights that do not come from a dictator, king or government but the living God.

3. Thank God for all the bountiful varieties of food we enjoy every single day. Hunger is the number one cause of death in the world. Fifteen million children die yearly, and 21,000 die daily because of this. One-third of the world is starving while one-third is underfed. Imagine if we had to search garbage cans for specks of nourishment to feed ourselves and our children.

4. Thank God for our health, medical technology and personnel who keep us healthy. In the '90s, more than 100 million children died from illness and starvation alone. Yearly, more than 1 million children die from preventable diseases, like diarrhea and pneumonia, because they lack treatment we easily take for granted.

5. Thank God for our eyes and the phenomenal gift of sight. Jesus called the eye “the lamp of the body,” and it has over 2,000 components! Cover your eyes for a moment and imagine what it’s like to live in darkness, like some do. Would you take \$1 million for your eyes?

6. Thank God for our parents and the promise that God gives: “Honor your father and your mother ... that your days may be long, and that it may be well with you” (Deut. 5:16).

7. Thank God for clean running water available in our sinks, washing machines, dishwashers and toilets. More than 1 billion people lack access to clean drinking water, which yields sickness and complex problems.

8. Thank God for policemen, firemen, garbage collectors, 911 first responders and others who protect us—especially men and women in the military. Can you picture what our life would be like without these public servants?

9. Thank God for the wonderful gift of electricity. More than one-quarter of the human population does not have access to any electricity. What would life be like without the multitude of items in our homes powered by electricity?

10. Thank God for our teachers and education, whether it’s public, private or done at home. One out of every four children in America grows up without the ability to read. Sixty percent of inmates in prison are illiterate. What a blessing to have teachers and the gift of learning?

Here’s the Deal: It is so easy to take things for granted and to grumble and complain unless we catch ourselves and intentionally cultivate thankful hearts. The Thanksgiving holiday affords us a tremendous opportunity to nurture an attitude of gratitude. “Praise God from Whom all blessings flow. Praise Him all creatures here below.” Happy Thanksgiving!

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