Topical - Thanksgiving

A Feast of Thanksgiving

1st Peter 2:11, Psalm 23

Thanksgiving tomorrow! • Thanksgiving **Traditions** • Favorite **Foods** • **Football** • Turkey Induced **nap**	• Pilgrims, Native Americans • 1st Grade Event • Cornucopia
Harvest festivals around the world, every culture Sukkot, Tabernacles, Sept/Oct	**Uniquely American holiday** intertwined with our founding and with Christian ties

pilgrim

American Heritage defines

- A religious devotee who journeys to a shrine or sacred place.
- A person who travels, especially to foreign lands or to a place of great personal importance.
- One of the English Separatists who founded the colony of **Plymouth in New England in 1620.**

Pilgrims - puritans Christians who wanted to rid the **church of England** of the remaining ties to Catholicism 1500s-1600s Went to **Holland** for religious freedom, but found their society too wicked and inclusive **Boarded ships** to come to America	North sea, cargo ships We take crossing for granted They did it in wooden boats. Barely survived.
Not America's First Thanksgiving Others had celebrated similarly in other regions of the New World.	McKenzie *"First American Protestant Christian Thanksgiving North of Virginia and South of Maine."*

https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/reviews/first-thanksgiving/

1621, 50 Pilgrims, 90 Native Americans

"That the Pilgrims could celebrate at all in this setting was a testimony both to human resilience and heavenly hope…We should picture an outdoor feast in which almost everyone was sitting on the ground and eating with their hands." McKenzie

Didn't have

- Pumpkin pie (no ovens)
- Cranberry sauce (no sugar)
- Sweet Potatoes (not from North America)

Probably wasn't a turkey! But a goose or duck.

Turducken?

Although the story isn't as romantic as we picture

It is nonetheless the foundation of America By Christians

Seeking "life liberty and the pursuit of happiness"

in living a life for God - new lives, new world

Bible calls us pilgrims

1 Peter 2:11 – Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul,

On the way to our own new world
A new heaven and Earth

Not in a wooden ship, but an earthen vessel

And we should be thankful!

Sometimes it's easy to focus on

- What we need
- What we lack
- What's wrong
- How dark it is outside
- The ills of family drama
- The cost of turkey

(Thanks to Winco!)

And we forget all we really have
Bahamas, returning, salad dressing

Especially what we have in Jesus

- New life
- New family (Christians! Church!)
- Salvation
- Hope
- Never truly alone

We have more blessings than we realize

Where? Look up. Look around. Start being thankful.

- *We think the world to be good and are (rightly) upset at the evil*
- *But truly the world is evil, it is a miracle there is any good left in it!*

Sierra prays…thankful for all the little things Seeing her new friend, watching a movie, the sunshine **Matthew 18:1-4** – At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. "Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.	**Discontent, ungrateful, coveting, stealing - starts from a place of being unthankful, entitled** **James 4:1-3** – Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. **Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.**
The magic words **<u>Please</u> and <u>thank you</u>** **If you don't see anything big to be thankful for, start thanking for the small things** **The things we take for granted** • Woke up • Had some clothing to put on • Hopefully had something to eat • Electricity • Enough gas in the car to get here • A day off tomorrow • Or not a day off because you have a job and that job helps feed you	**Thanks** - 75x **Thankful** - 3x **I think a better word might be praise Because that's our response** **A thankful heart…praises!** *Why worship in song is so important to the heart of a Christian - a thankful heart worships - even when it doesn't feel like it Obey and the feelings come* **Praise** - 237x **Worship** - 112x
As a Christian, that is our response to God **Real thanksgiving, real appreciation <u>results in praise</u>**	• His goodness • His mercy • His faithfulness • His provision • His Word • His Spirit • His promises

John 14:12-14 – "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. "And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. **"If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.** **God wants you to ask Him!** Things that seem impossible. Out of our ability. Things only He can do. **When he does, we are thankful and praise** *Maybe we aren't thankful and don't praise because we never stopped to ask!*	**I think we don't have** ● We don't ask ● We become ungrateful for not having ● We covet ● We can't get on our own ● We don't ask ● Downward spiral to dark places **When God wants us to live in the light!** **And how do we start back to the light?** **Asking.**

Matthew 7:7-11 – "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. "For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. "Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? "Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, **how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!**

God wants you to ask Him **For what? Everything!** Because He loves you! He wants to bless you! He wants to be the one to provide for you! **And he probably already has!** **If you'll just stop for a second and look** **Thanksgiving tradition going around table and talking about what we're thankful for** A person, a thing, something that happened, that God did, the past year	**Maybe you dread the holidays** **They're hard. Lonely.** ● Family lives elsewhere ● Or has passed ● Family lives nearby, but they're no fun ● Maybe it was a bad year ● Lost someone around the holidays **Know this. If you're a Christian, you're God's kid.** I'm not going to give my kids everything they ask for But I will give them above all they can ever ask think or imagine **I want to bless them** **I want them to be full**

Psalm 23:1-6 – A Psalm of David. The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. **You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.**

God has prepared a table for you, invited you! *To a feast of thanksgiving!* **Will you sit at it? Or stay in your pouty mood refusing to sit and relax and enjoy his blessings?** *Funny picture of me at the bowling alley*	**Great! Now that you're seated, can you see your plates and cup?** **Are they empty?** Not that appetizing? **Look again.** This time, be thankful for what you see. **Keep looking.** Keep thanking God. **Now look at your cup.** Is it not running over with blessings?
Even if that blessing is JUST ● forgiveness of your sins ● Made right with God ● Access to Him and heaven **Where you're going - as a pilgrim** ● The boat won't survive another trip ● One way only ● Many people and things were lost on the way ● Your sitting on the grass with no pumpkin pie ● But you've made it to the New World **When you get a glimpse of the New Heaven** **It'll give you strength to hang on until you land**	Y**our savior has called you** **And prepared a feast for you** And that feast is in heaven **It is where you are headed, pilgrim** **With that in mind, can you be thankful?** **The funny thing about being thankful is - you don't have to start out feeling that way** But when you start THANKING God, you starting feeling thankful **And when you start feeling thankful, you see the blessings that are there already** **And then you start praising God** **And your cup runs over** **And that is what you become most thankful for**

Jesus, who will never leave you or forsake you, is right there with you, and will bring you home and is <u>preparing a feast for you for eternity</u>	And then, whatever comes in this life that might make others depressed, bitter, broken, **because you have your sights set on the new heavens and earth, makes you thankful - you can praise while still in it**
Because you're living for that feast **Not this one** **So when this feast is light** **You can look forward to the real feast** With Jesus With those who've died in Him and gone ahead	**Because heaven is a place full of praise** **And we can be thankful that we can take part in that praise** On this side of the ocean In the broken down boat Because he will safely get us to harbor

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 – Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, **in everything give thanks**; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Hebrews 13:15 – Therefore by Him let us continually offer the **sacrifice of praise to God**, that **is, the fruit <u>[a reaped harvest]</u> of our lips**, **giving thanks to His name**.

Revelation 11:17 – [24 Elders] saying: "**We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty**, The One who is and who was and who is to come, **Because You have taken Your great power and reigned.**