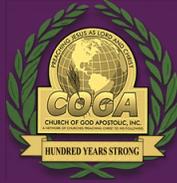


COGA NEWS



WHAT'S IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE

- Why Should I Be Thankful?
- The Time For Thanksgiving (When & Where)
- Upcoming Events
- A Little Something to Laugh About



WHY SHOULD I BE THANKFUL?

Bishop Cecil Reid



Do you know the reason for the season? It's so much more than a day for a Thanksgiving meal.

1. Because it honors God. When we are thankful, we recognize that God exists, and we are acting on the reality of His life as the very source and means of ours. True thankfulness recognizes our total dependence on God and stems from realizing that everything going on in our lives and all we have is the product of God's sovereign control, infinite wisdom, purposes, grace, and activity (2 Cor. 4:15).

2. Because it is commanded in Scripture. First, the Psalms are filled with the call to give thanks. An example is Ps. 100:4 which says, "Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name." Then Paul tells us in 1 Thessalonians 5:18, "In everything keep on giving thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (my translation). In Colossians, he twice gives the command to be thankful (3:15, 17).

3. Because of the dangerous consequences of thanklessness:

Thanklessness is dangerous to self and others. It dishonors God and leads to proud humanism or dependence on man rather than God (cf. Rom. 1:21). In addition, it leads to bitterness, complaining, and a joyless life (Heb. 12:15). Since thankfulness is a response to the grace of God, its opposite, bitterness with its companions, complaining and grumbling, are the product of an unthankful heart that fails to properly respond to God in faith to His person, infinite wisdom, grace and purposes. Thanklessness promotes pettiness and occupation with self, people, and problems. That in turn creates depression and feelings of hopelessness because we become focused on our problems rather than on the Lord.

But thanks be to God who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and who makes known through us the fragrance that consists of the knowledge of him in every place (2 Cor. 2:14).

This verse in 2 Corinthians demonstrates that a thankful and God-focused person counts on God and His triumph and will manifest the sweet fragrance of a life filled with the knowledge of Christ rather than the spirit of bitterness and complaining. Thankfulness, then, becomes a

Thank You!

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spiritual barometer; it is an evidence of the condition of our spiritual life and value system, which should give us a warning if we have ears to hear (Eph. 5:4 & 20 note the context of each verse).

For verse 4, the context or focus is living as children of God rather than as children of the world; for verse 20, the context or focus is the fruit of the Spirit).

THE TIME FOR THANKSGIVING (WHEN AND WHERE)



- 1. We should give thanks whenever we pray.** Thanksgiving turns our eyes from our problems and ourselves to the Lord that we might focus on Him and His sovereign grace. It helps us to see life through the perspective of God's person, principles, promises, plan, provisions, and purposes. Then, as this happens, this upward focus promotes faith and courage in the face of the trying and painful situations that we all eventually face to one degree or another.
- 2. We should always give thanks in everything and for everything** (Eph. 5:20; 1 Thess. 5:18). It helps us to focus on the sovereignty of God, and the fact that He is in control and working all things together for good, regardless of how it may seem to us in our limited perspective. (Rom. 8:28, 29; Jam. 1:2-4; Gen. 50:19-20). While all things may not be good, God uses them for good, the good of making us like His Son.
- 3. We should always give thanks because it protects us** against the dangers and consequences of thanklessness mentioned above.



UPCOMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER

- Food Drive for Needy Families - Mission Dept.
- 23rd > Thanksgiving

DECEMBER

- 17th > Sothern District Christmas Program
- 31st > Watch Night Service

Find more information on www.cogainc.org



A LITTLE SOMETHING TO LAUGH ABOUT

- My favorite winter activity is going back inside and putting my pajamas on.
- "In November, I'm thankful for elastic waistbands."
- "Even though we're a week and a half away from Thanksgiving, it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas." —Richard Roeper
- "November: The month of pretending I'm going to start my diet after Thanksgiving."
- "Thanksgiving: when the people who are the most thankful are the ones who didn't have to cook." — Melanie White

