

### 77.3 And Be Thankful

In our last podcast, we spoke about the Pilgrims and some of the history of Thanksgiving. Today I want to take a look at **President George Washington's 1789 Thanksgiving Proclamation**. Let's first remind ourselves of the biblical basis for thanksgiving. Here are a few passages:

**Psalm 136:1-3** (NKJV),

**Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for *He is good!***

**For His mercy *endures* forever.**

<sup>2</sup> **Oh, give thanks to the God of gods!**

**For His mercy *endures* forever.**

<sup>3</sup> **Oh, give thanks to the Lord of lords!**

**For His mercy *endures* forever:**

**1 Timothy 2:1** (ESV), **First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people,**

**1 Corinthians 15:57** (NKJV), <sup>57</sup> **But thanks *be* to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Americans have been familiar with days of thanksgiving throughout our history. We know about the Pilgrims and the days of thanksgiving and prayer during our War for Independence. In 1789, New Jersey Representative **Elias Boudinot** presented a resolution to Congress to persuade President George Washington to declare a thanksgiving observance in honor of the newly created U.S. Constitution. Congress agreed with Boudinot and created a committee to make their request to the President.

President Washington agreed and issued a national Thanksgiving proclamation on October 3, 1789, designating Thursday, November 26, as a national day of thanks. Washington declared that the necessity for such a day sprung from the Almighty's care of Americans before the Revolution, His assistance to them in achieving independence, and His aid in establishing the constitutional government. Here is **George Washington's Thanksgiving Proclamation, 1789** [sic]:

Whereas it is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey his will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly to implore his protection and favor —and Whereas both Houses of Congress have by their Joint Committee requested me "to recommend to the People of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many signal favors of Almighty God, especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness."

Now therefore I do recommend and assign Thursday the 26th day of November next to be devoted by the People of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being, who is the beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be – That we may then all unite in rendering unto him our sincere and humble thanks – for his kind care and protection of the People of this Country previous to their becoming a Nation – for the signal and manifold mercies, and the favorable interpositions of his Providence which we experienced in the course and conclusion of the late war – for the great degree of tranquility, union, and plenty, which we have since enjoyed – for the peaceable and rational manner, in which we have been enabled to establish constitutions of government for our safety and happiness, and particularly the national One now lately instituted – for the civil and religious liberty with which we are blessed; and the means we have of acquiring and diffusing useful knowledge; and in general for all the great and various favors which he hath been pleased to confer upon us.

And also that we may then unite in most humbly offering our prayers and supplications to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations and beseech him to pardon our national and other transgressions – to enable

us all, whether in public or private stations, to perform our several and relative duties properly and punctually – to render our national government a blessing to all the people, by constantly being a Government of wise, just, and constitutional laws, discreetly and faithfully executed and obeyed – to protect and guide all Sovereigns and Nations (especially such as have shewn kindness unto us) and to bless them with good government, peace, and concord – To promote the knowledge and practice of true religion and virtue, and the encrease of science among them and us – and generally to grant unto all Mankind such a degree of temporal prosperity as he alone knows to be best.

Given under my hand at the City of New York the third day of October in the year of our Lord 1789. ~ Go. Washington

George Washington was a devout American warrior who relied on God and His providence. Washington and thousands of colonial Americans experienced God's providence throughout the War for Independence and the nation's establishment. As President Washington opened his thanksgiving proclamation, he proclaimed our responsibility to acknowledge the providence of God, obey His will, be grateful for His benefits, and humbly implore His protection and favor. Then, he set a date for that year's Thanksgiving celebration.

Are you tired of the direction of our nation with voter fraud in our elections? What about the massive immorality, including child trafficking, which permeates our land? How about the Marxist agenda of our politicians, red and blue? We need to realize that we will never regain our liberty through politics. God may similarly be using our political leaders as He did Nebuchadnezzar, but earthly leaders are not our Saviors, no matter how sincere they may be. We do not rely on political leaders but on God. George Washington and our other forefathers and mothers understood this, but we have forgotten.

If we want a prosperous and powerful nation again, we MUST repent of our idolatry and immorality and wholeheartedly return to God. Our Founders and Framers were flawed people through whom God worked to establish an exceptional nation, and they built this nation on a biblical foundation, not a secular one. A key passage that we need to incorporate in our lives is God's statement to Solomon at the dedication of the temple, **2 Chronicles 7:13-14** (NKJV):

**<sup>13</sup>When I shut up heaven, and there is no rain, or command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence among My people, <sup>14</sup>if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.**

Encountering God either attracts us or repels us. Too many people, including some Christians, resist God's presence, and we want to go our own way and look where we are. We need GodNAmerica! When we trust God, we experience His providence, WANT to obey Him, express gratitude, and pray for His protection and favor. Most who genuinely encounter Him want more, not less.

Don't focus on the food or football when you meet with your family tomorrow. Rather, thank God for providing family, our nation, our hope, and life in Christ. When enough Americans embrace God, God will embrace our nation. As George Washington reminds us, acknowledging God is a duty and privilege.

Keep The Light of *Genuine Thanksgiving* Burning!