

Now Thank We All Our God
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When Mark Twain was at the peak of his writing career, it is said that his magazine and journal articles were worth \$5 a word - very good pay in those times. Taking this into account, an enterprising graduate student from Harvard University sent him a letter: "Dear Mr. Twain: Enclosed please find \$5. Please send me your best word."

A few days later, the student received a telegram with this single word response: "Thanks!" "Thanks" may be the most valuable word in our language. It is definitely one of the words that comes forth during this Thanksgiving season. We give thanks for our many blessings. In the midst of these blessings, it is important to remember that the historical perspective of Thanksgiving arose out of giving thanks not just for blessings but for He who blesses - even in the midst of adversity and difficult times.

Think for a moment about the first Thanksgiving. During the first winter, half of the Plymouth colonists had died. In the midst of their situation, friendly Indians taught the Pilgrims to fish and to hunt and to plant corn. The result was that the summer and the fall brought a good harvest. So, despite all the death and hardships, they held a three-day Thanksgiving celebration with about ninety Indians as guests. Their gratitude was not for something but in something.

Real Thanksgiving is a declaration of faith concerning that One who is bigger than our circumstances. It is faith in the One who can make all things work together for good. There are many things in life that confound me, but the one anchor of my soul has always been that God is good and God is faithful and that I can do all things through Him who gives me strength. For that, I give thanks.

"Now thank we all our God with heart and hands and voices; Who wondrous things hath done, in whom His world rejoices." (Martin Rinkart, 1663)

Added note: Blessings to think about this week before Thanksgiving!

If you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof overhead and a place to sleep, you are richer than 75 percent of this world of ours.

If you have money in the bank, cash in your wallet and spare change in a dish someplace, you are among the top 8 percent of the Earth's wealthiest people.

If you woke up this morning with more health than illness, you are more fortunate than the million who will not survive this week.

If you can attend a worship service or any other religion-related meeting without fear of harassment, arrest, torture or death, you are fortunate. Billions of people in the world cannot.