



A Holiday in November

A four-day devotional published by
Living Chronic Faith

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For many people in the United States, Thanksgiving is nothing more than a holiday that we celebrate on the fourth Thursday of every November. For them, it is about pilgrims and turkeys and football games.

For the believer, however, Thanksgiving is not just a day--it is a way of life. It is a vital part of our identity.

As we observe the traditional Thanksgiving holiday, may we be even more committed than ever to celebrate our gratitude to God each day with every part of our lives. Over the next four days, I invite you to read these devotionals and think about what role giving thanks plays in your life, and I encourage you to seek the Lord about how to apply what He speaks to you. And I pray that Thanksgiving will never again be just a holiday in November, but may it be the way you choose to live your life.

Happy Thanksgiving from Living Chronic Faith!

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Day One
Good Things

"And thou shalt rejoice in every good thing which the Lord thy God hath given unto thee, and unto thine house, thou, and the Levite, and the stranger that is among you."

–Deuteronomy 26:11

Moses gave the Israelites specific instructions about the offerings they were to bring to give thanks to God when they came into the Promised Land. He gave them a scripted prayer that they were to recite, which spoke of God's faithfulness and provision. Then each person and their family, their friends and houseguests, along with the priest, would celebrate God's goodness together. Moses told them to rejoice in every good thing the Lord had given them. There was no room, here, for dissatisfaction, comparison, or jealousy. They were not looking at their neighbors' blessings or at what they didn't have, but their focus was on all that God had already done for them.

No matter where we are or what we have, everything good in our lives is because of God, and it is good to express our gratitude to Him. The Psalmist wrote, "It is good to praise the Lord and make music to your name, O Most High" (Psalm 92:1, NIV). We are taught from an early age that when someone does something for us, saying "thank you" is the right thing to do, and it's no different when it is God Who does good things for us. We recognize that God doesn't have to do the wonderful things He does for us each day. More than the fact that all of the good in our lives could be gone in a moment, I believe God wants us to focus on the fact that He chooses to bless us. He chooses to accept us. He chooses to love us. With all of the options He had to be His creations, He handpicked us and chose to love us. How amazing is that?! I don't think He wants to hold His goodness over our heads and demand our gratitude, but I think He wants us to respond to the magnificent love He has for us and the desire He has to lavish us with good gifts. So, just as He chose to give us good things, may we choose every day to rejoice in those good things that He has given us.

Heavenly Father, You have opened Your hand and satisfied the desire of every living thing. How awesome is Your ability to provide all that I need at all times! Thank You for Your faithfulness, provision, mercy, and love. Thank You for choosing to love me and be gracious to me. I give You thanks for all of Your blessings. In Jesus' name. Amen.





Day Two

Mēden Merimnate

“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.” –Philippians 4:6

Everyone worries sometimes. When your loved one is late getting home, when you flip a switch and nothing happens, when you turn the key and the car doesn't start, or when that random sharp pain comes out of nowhere, it's completely natural to experience a moment of apprehension or concern. In those moments, every possible result plays out in your head in an instant, from “It's probably nothing” to the worst-case scenario, and you have no idea what the outcome will be and no control over it. This process happens involuntarily, and I think that Paul understands what it means to be concerned. The letter he is writing is to one of the churches that he helped to plant. He is giving them instructions and encouragement, making sure that they take care of those in need, and that they will not quarrel amongst themselves, but that they will walk in obedience to God's commandments as he taught them. He expresses the same concern of any father who wants his kids to be okay. Yet, he writes to them, “*Mēden Merimnate*,” or “do not worry about anything.” As a father figure to so many, Paul is certainly not telling the Philippians to be careless. So, what does he mean?

The verse before gives us an indication. In verse 5, he writes, “Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.” The Greek word translated as “moderation” is ἐπιεικής, and the connotation is that of maintaining balance and avoiding extremes. He is teaching them that they have a certain amount of control, not necessarily of what they feel in a given moment, but how they respond to it. He wants them to manage their emotions—a mark of a maturing believer. Worry is not supposed to be a way of life for the child of God because when we worry, we put the burden on our own shoulders to find a solution. Worrying excessively indicates a lack of confidence that God will take care of you no matter what. The fact that he tells them to “be anxious for nothing” means that it is within their power to choose, and he wants them to choose well.

The question, then, is how? How does one manage their anxiety when an unexpected situation arises? Paul offers a formula. First, he suggests that instead of panicking, they





should pray and petition God humbly and earnestly, believing that He will answer. Then, he adds that even as they are praying, they should be offering thanks to God. Giving thanks to God for what He has already done encourages the heart of the believer with reminders of God's track record of faithfulness. Remembering that He has delivered before gives hope that He will do so again. Giving thanks in advance is a way of engaging faith, believing that God cares so much that He already made a way before the problem became apparent. The payoff (according to verse 7) is that God's mind-blowing peace would stabilize, keep, and protect the heart and mind through Christ Jesus.

Life will present challenges, and when it does, we may experience some worry or concern. In those moments, however, we must decide what to do with it. Will we carry it and let panic set in and allow desperation to govern our choices, or will we remind ourselves of God's goodness and place the situation confidently in His hands? When Paul wrote this letter, it was meant for a specific group of people in Philippi, but it was recorded because God inspired it so that we, too, would have access to this truth—and to His peace.

Lord, thank You for promising to be there with us through every challenge. Forgive us for those times when we worried excessively, leaning to our own understanding instead of trusting You. We ask for Your grace to help us pray in every circumstance, and to surrender our panic in exchange for Your peace. Allow us to call to mind Your faithfulness in the face of fear. Increase our faith and give us hearts that sing Your praise, and put all of our outcomes in Your unfailing hands.
In Jesus' name. Amen.





Day Three

Celebrate His Presence

"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name."

—Psalm 100:4

When the Tabernacle was constructed according to the instructions God gave to Moses (Exodus 26), there were very specific guidelines about who could come in. The first area was the outer court. Everyone was welcome there—even sick people, Gentiles, and women, although they were not permitted beyond the gate into the inner court. The Holy Place is where sacrifices were offered, and beyond that was the Holy of Holies or the Most Holy Place. The presence of God dwelled there. Only the high priest could enter this sacred space, and even then, he could only do so once per year, on the Day of Atonement.

Imagine if, at the center of your city, there was a huge tent and that God's presence lived there. How excited would you be to go to that location— even if you had to stand outside? We've all seen videos of people standing outdoors in endless lines to greet royalty, get a celebrity's autograph, purchase concert tickets, go Black Friday shopping, audition for a reality show, attend a movie premiere, get into a nightclub, or even purchase the new iPhone. But the Israelites had the incredible opportunity to stand outside the tent in which God allowed His presence to dwell! Can you imagine feeling the weight of His nearness? Have you ever sensed His presence in church or while praying at home? The Psalmist seems to be exhorting the people of God to approach His dwelling place with great joy and celebration. All have been welcomed to come to the place where God is. Even though mankind was not worthy to go beyond the veil, just to come up onto the porch of the place where God's presence lived must have been a life-changing experience.

Now, however, because of the finished work of Calvary, the veil in the Temple has been torn in half (Matthew 27:51) to give everyone access to God's presence. No longer do we have to enter a physical gate and an actual court. We don't have to go anywhere





to meet with God. He has chosen to allow His Holy Spirit to come live inside us, and He calls us to come boldly before His throne of grace to obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need (Hebrews 4:16). Whenever you enter the physical church building, participate in online worship, or make an altar unto the Lord in your home, in your car, or at your desk at work, He is there with you, and that is cause for celebration. So, for this, may we always enter into His gates, His courts, and His divine presence with thanksgiving and praise!

What a privilege it is, Lord, to be invited into Your presence, to be called into relationship with You, and to have access to all the resources of Heaven. Thank you for establishing an open-door policy for me on Calvary. Please help me to always appreciate the privilege of spending time with you. May I never take it for granted. In Jesus' name. Amen.





Day Four

The Sacrifice of Thanksgiving

Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High: --Psalm 50:14

This Psalm is a reminder to the people of God that He has all of the brilliance of creation to celebrate Him and reflect His goodness. Everything on earth already belongs to Him. So, while He is not criticizing their traditional sacrifices to Him, bulls, goats, birds, cattle, etc., what He really wants is their gratitude, accountability, and obedience. Some translations of this verse admonish the believer to “Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving.” I love how this Scripture acknowledges that sometimes, even as good as God is to us, it still feels hard to offer praise. When you’re sick or hurting, when you’ve been disappointed, when you’re grieving, saying “thank you” may be the last thing on your mind. But that’s when it’s most important. In the darkest moments of your life, can you reach into the recesses of your heart to offer God a sincere “thank you” for what He has already done in your life? Is He still worthy of your best praise when you’re hurting?

Sacrifices were always a way to come into alignment with God’s will. It was an act of obedience and worship—an acknowledgement that we could have and do nothing without God. The sacrifice of thanksgiving is also about alignment. The adversary wants to use the difficult situations in life to discourage us, to distract us, and to defeat us. He wants to get our minds and hearts so deeply immersed in the pain and negativity that we won’t be able to find our way out. But giving thanks to God places our focus where it belongs—on our great Healer, Deliverer, Comforter and Friend. Thanksgiving causes us to put our eyes back on the Lord instead of looking around at our circumstances.

The other sacrifice God wants from us, another way to show gratitude and walk in alignment, is to keep our promises to Him. When we entered into covenant relationship with Him, we committed to live a life that is pleasing to Him. Sometimes, it seems like it would just be easier to cut corners or do things our own way. We see others who are enjoying what looks like a carefree life and wish we could do what they do. But it honors God when we trust Him to guide our every decision and to be willing to follow wherever He leads, even and especially when it’s not easy to do.





Anytime we make a sacrifice for someone, it shows how much value we place on that person and that relationship. Therefore, a sincere sacrifice of thanksgiving to God is one way we can communicate our deepest appreciation and trust and the value we place on our relationship with Him.

Lord, You are everything to me and without You, I have nothing. And even though I may be facing challenges right now, You are worthy of my best praise. So, I honor You and I call You worthy. You are great and mighty and there is none like You. I choose to give You thanks in every circumstance, and I know that You are with me every moment. In Jesus' name. Amen.





We pray that this devotional has been a blessing to you. For more faith-first content like this, please

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Thanksgiving Blessings to you and yours!

