

THANKSGIVING

– A TIME TO GIVE THANKS!



One night, at a prayer-and praise meeting, a good brother related a long, complaining strain of experiences about the trials and difficulties, which are encountered on the way to Heaven. At the end of his talk, another brother arose and said, "I see that our brother who has just sat down, lives on Grumbling Street. I lived there myself for some time, but I never enjoyed good health. The air there was bad, the houses are bad, the water is bad, the birds never sang in the streets and I was always gloomy and sad. But finally I moved. I moved to Thanksgiving Street, and ever since then I have had good health and so has my family. The air is pure, the water good, the houses are good, the sun shines all day, the birds are always singing and I am as happy as I can be. Now, I would suggest to our brother, that he too move. There are plenty of houses 'to live in' on Thanksgiving Street."

As we approach Thanksgiving Day, 2010, our ability to give thanks is going to be directly based on our perspective of where we are in life. 2010 has been a challenging year for many of us, yet there is still so much to be thankful for. As history reminds us, the Thanksgiving holiday was birthed out of adversity, challenging, and difficult times. The first Thanksgiving, around the fall of 1621, occurred after about half of the Pilgrim population died from sickness and or starvation, yet they still found reason to celebrate and give thanks.

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Over 100 years later, the nation's first president, George Washington tried to revive Thanksgiving after a bloody Revolutionary War which led to the loss of many lives, yet they found reason to celebrate and give thanks. Nearly 90 years later, Abraham Lincoln at the end of yet another bloody and divisive war, the Civil War, declared the last Thursday in November as Thanksgiving Day a national day of thanksgiving and celebration. In essence, Thanksgiving was born in times of adversity, but let us remember that adversity is only half the story.

In 2010, we are faced with difficulties and hardships on every side. The economy is down, unemployment is up, homelessness and foreclosures have become common place. Our schools are systemically failing our children. Partisan politics are dominating the political horizon with empty rhetoric laced with poisonous lies while the real needs of people are being neglected. Yet, I declare we still have much to be thankful for! Let us be reminded of history's lesson, that the darkness of adversity only sheds a glorious light on the perseverance of a people. Beloved, we are still here! Things may not be the way we would like for them to be but through the power of God in Jesus Christ we can do something about it. We can have the tenacious resolve that we're not going anywhere and we're not going down without a fight!

As a people and as a community we should give thanks for the rich heritage and perseverance that God has blessed us with. We should be thankful that our Lord has delivered us from circumstances far worse than we face now, because if the truth be told things have never been 100% right, and won't be until that Day. So let us be thankful that God loves us and has empowered us as a people to change our circumstances. Let us be thankful that God has given us hands to build up and not tear down. Let us be thankful that God has given us mouths to sing praises and thanksgiving not grumblings and criticisms. As we give thanks together be reminded that the best is yet to come. Let us thank God for the harvest that is to come in 2011!

- *Pastor Reginald E. Bachus*

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