

2021 THANKSGIVING SUNDAY

HONORING THE 400TH. ANNIVERSARY OF THE PILGRIMS' FIRST THANKSGIVING
AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE 1ST. AMERICAN HOLY DAY.

MEDIA REFERENCE NUMBER JHX522

Sunday, November 21, 2021

THE TITLE OF THE MESSAGE:

They Knew They Were Pilgrims

A brief look at the theology of America's founding and the overriding presence of the God of providence. A sermon given on the Sunday eve of Thanksgiving 2021 and how cultivating a heart of Thanksgiving is needed now more than ever.

SUBJECT TOPICALLY REFERENCED UNDER:

Thankfulness, The Goodness of God, Mercy, Hope, Perseverance, Thankfulness.

:1 Oh, give thanks to the LORD! Call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples! Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; :2 Talk of all His wondrous works! Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise. :3 Be thankful to Him, and bless His name. Therefore I will give thanks to You, O LORD, among the Gentiles, And sing praises to Your name. :4 Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever. :5 Stand every morning to thank and praise the LORD, and likewise at evening time; :6 "Now therefore, our God, We thank You And praise Your glorious name. :7 Now these all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

(1 Chr. 16:8-9, Psa. 100:4, 2Sam. 22:50, 1Chr. 16:34, 1Chr. 23:30, 1Chr. 29:13, Heb. 11:13)

This Week Marks The 400th. Anniversary Year of the First (American) Thanksgiving in 1621 A.D.

When I attended elementary school – in the days leading up to Thanksgiving Break, there would be school plays and thanksgiving crafts but on the last day of school – we were encouraged to make our version of those wide-brimmed hats and buckled shoes that made our pilgrim outfits – I took the Pilgrims for granted as they became the stuff of holiday parades. Now, today - The Pilgrims have fallen victim to the efforts of Progressives and those desiring to create their own version of our nation's founding. The multi-cultural-woke-ism of ignorance is winning the emotional war for feelings.

"Facts are stubborn things" said John Adams and he is correct.

Thankfully, facts were stubborn then and they are stubborn still.

In the 16th & 17th centuries in Europe, Christianity was still coming out of its long captivity at the hands of religionists. Thankfully, a group from among “The Church” of those days began to give themselves to the simple reading of the Bible. The result was that they had to challenge the paganism that still Remained. These Bible readers or “Puritans” – the “Back to the Bible” people – were made up of a body of believers who desired to break away from the organized pollutants and idolatry of the “State” church. Those who did were called Separatist or the “Separators” – we call them Pilgrims.

They Knew They Were Pilgrims

1.) Being pilgrims – they knew hope

Hebrews 11:13

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

At just over 10 years of age, the young William Bradford was about to hear the reading of Scripture and when he did – one verse would change his life forever – including yours today...

Matthew 18:20

“For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”

1 Peter 1:1

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the pilgrims of the Dispersion

Among the founding documents of the United States of America there is one that is tragically overlooked and rarely consulted.

I’m talking about the historical classic, “Of Plymouth Plantation” by governor William Bradford.

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/bradfords-manuscript-of-plimoth-plantation>

It is a detailed record of Bradford's first-hand, eyewitness account of the Mayflower’s 65 day long voyage to a new world and the many years spent on the settling of Plymouth Plantation - what would become Plymouth Massachusetts.

Who authored for us our original birth certificate, The Compact

<https://images-na.ssl-images-amazon.com/images/I/511erUwWwoL.AC.jpg>

The Mayflower Compact

In the name of God, Amen. We, whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread Sovereigne Lord, King James, by the grace of God, of Great Britaine, France and Ireland king, defender of the faith, etc. having undertaken, for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith, and honour of our king and country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the Northerne parts of Virginia doe by these presents solemnly and mutually in the presence of God and one of another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civill body politick, for our better ordering and preservation, and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof to enacte, constitute, and frame such just and equall laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meete and convenient for the generall good of the Colonie unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witness whereof we have hereunder subscribed our names at Cape-Codd the 11. Of November, in the year of the raigne of our sovereigne lord, King James, of England, France and Ireland, the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fiftie-fourth. Anno Dom. 1620.

There seems to be a new “Mayflower Complex” in Our Day. SpaceX, Amazon’s Blue Origins, Virgin Galactica

“we can agree that we are in search of new possibilities”

(but for the Christian today - there is no Mayflower this time, no “new world” for us to sail – there is the coming messiah)

Hope is the genesis of Change.

(be thankful for the hope you have right now)

They Knew They Were Pilgrims

2.) Being pilgrims – they knew suffering

**Leaving England & then Holland was wrought with setbacks.
Once underway, the early winter storms began
to arrive in the north Atlantic**

<https://www.mayflower400uk.org/education/who-were-the-pilgrims/2020/february/john-howland/>

Poet Ralph Waldo Emerson, Christopher Lloyd, President George H Bush, President George W Bush, Actress Maude Adams, Poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, President Franklin Roosevelt, Author Jane Austin, Actor John Lithgow, Comedian Chevy Chase, Governor Sarah Palin, Actor Alec Baldwin, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge... *2 million Americans today are his genetic descendants.*

THANKSFULLNESS IN THE DAY OF SUFFERING

2 Samuel 21:15

When the Philistines were at war again with Israel, David and his servants with him went down and fought against the Philistines; and David grew faint.

(*grew faint* meaning “weary, to loose the grip of, exhausted, to come to the end of your physical, emotional and mental strength”)

1 Samuel 1:30c

...but David strengthened himself in the LORD his God.

HOW DO WE DO THIS? – THIS IS HOW Recognize that Jesus is (now-here) rather than (no-where)

2 Timothy 2:3-4

You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 4 No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.

Ephesians 6:10-18

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. :14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; 18 praying always

Acts 23:11

But the following night the Lord stood by Paul and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome."

They Knew They Were Pilgrims

3.) Being pilgrims - they knew thankfulness

Philippians 4:6

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Every holiday season brings with it high expectations – We seem to all share the desire for that Norman Rockwell moment in time, and for good reason.

The desire to be with friends and family - for a cozy and festive time to be enjoyed apart from the year. However, for many of us, this year has a lingering fog of sadness, anxiety, or depression.

Harvard Health Publishing, Harvard University

August 14th, 2021

"This Thanksgiving could prove to be a lifesaver. As a people we pause to reflect upon those things for which we are grateful for or people we are grateful to. The word gratitude is derived from the Latin word gratia, which means grace, graciousness, or gratefulness (depending on the context). In some ways, gratitude encompasses all of these meanings. Gratitude is the cultivation of a thankful appreciation for what an individual receives, whether tangible or intangible. With gratitude, people acknowledge the goodness in their lives. In the process, people usually recognize that the source of that goodness lies at least partially outside of themselves. As a result, being grateful also helps people connect to something larger than themselves as individuals — whether to other people, nature, or a higher power or God."

Psychologists, Dr. Robert Emmons of the University of California, Davis, and Dr. Michael McCullough of the University of Miami, have concluded extended research on the effects of gratitude. In one study, group (1) was asked to write a few sentences each week, focusing on particular topics - things they were grateful for that had occurred during the week. A second group (2) were asked to write about daily irritations or things that had displeased them or caused anxiety, and the third group (3) wrote about

events that had affected them (with no particular emphasis on them being positive or negative). After nearly three months, those in group (1) who wrote about gratitude were more optimistic and felt physically and emotionally better about their lives. Surprisingly, the study revealed that they became more physically energetic and benefitted from no or fewer visits to a physician. Equally surprising to the researchers, was the fact that those who focused on the sources of irritation, anxieties and aggravations were 10 times more likely to be ill or feel ill.”

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Rejoice always, 17 Pray without ceasing, 18 in everything Give Thanks;
for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Isaiah 12:4-5

In that day you will say: “Praise the LORD, Call upon His name; Declare His
deeds among the peoples, Make mention that His name is exalted.
5 Sing to the LORD, For (because, this is the reason why) He has done
excellent things; This is known in all the earth.

Praise the LORD,

Praise heb: Yad’ah confess, proclaim, say it, tell of it.

Call upon His name

Call heb: qara to summon, to shout out, to proclaim, herald forth.

Declare His deeds among the peoples,

Declare heb: Ya’da discover, become aware of, to know by finding out.

Make mention that His name is exalted.

Make heb: za’kar to stick to the mind, to place hard into the memory,
recall, remind yourself to remember.

Sing to the LORD

Sing heb: za’mar to make music, make or give up or offer up in praise, that
which begins with a thought and is expressed by song.

Psalm 46:10-11

Be still, and know - that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth! 11 The LORD of hosts is with us;
The God of Jacob is our refuge.

John 16:33

These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

They Knew They Were Pilgrims

4.) Being pilgrims - they knew God

Physical, Emotional & Spiritual Benefits to being Thankful

Deuteronomy 11:18-21

“Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 19 You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. 20 And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, 21 that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied

This is why people in this world who do not know Jesus Christ have a uneasy sense of being lost and alone in life at this time.

People Have Been Terrorized by the Thought of Death DO THIS

Matthew 14:27

But immediately Jesus spoke to them (you), saying,
“Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid.”

1 Chronicles 16:34

Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good!
For His mercy endures forever.

Psalms 75:1

We give thanks to You, O God, we give thanks!
For Your wondrous works declare that Your name is near.

Psalms 34:1-9

I will bless the LORD at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.
2 My soul shall make its boast in the LORD; The humble shall hear of it and

be glad. 3 Oh, magnify the LORD with me, And let us exalt His name together.
4 I sought the LORD, and He heard me, And delivered me from all my fears.
5 They looked to Him and were radiant, And their faces were not ashamed.
6 This poor man cried out, and the LORD heard him, And saved him out of all his troubles. 7 The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who fear Him, And delivers them. 8 Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him! 9 Oh, fear the LORD, you His saints!
There is no want to those who fear Him.

400 years ago today - That first winter had killed 44 of the original 102 colonists. At one point their daily food ration was down to five kernels of corn apiece. Governor William Bradford's response to those conditions resulted in him issuing a decree that on December 13, 1621, be "Set aside as a day of feasting and prayer showing our gratitude to almighty God for all His benefits."

The Pilgrim Survivors Set Aside Three Days of Thanksgiving to God.

Psalm 144:15

Happy are the people who are in such a state;
Happy are the people whose God is the LORD!

DECIDING, DETERMINING TO BE, "BEING" THANKFUL

Psalm 150:1-6

Praise the LORD! Praise God in His sanctuary; Praise Him in His mighty firmament!
2 Praise Him for His mighty acts; Praise Him according to His excellent greatness.
3 Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet; Praise Him with the lute and harp!
4 Praise Him with the timbrel and dance; Praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes!
5 Praise Him with loud cymbals; Praise Him with clashing cymbals!
6 Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD!

End of Study

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