



## **History Is in God's Hands "An Attitude of Gratitude" Ephesians 5:14-20**

**Wayne J. Edwards, Pastor**

Many things are going on in our lives today that have the potential of robbing us of the joy Jesus died to give us.

- However, in Ephesians 5:20, the Apostle Paul said, those who have been gifted by God's grace are to *"Give thanks always for all things to God the Father, in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ."*
- Paul wrote this while under house arrest in Rome, which meant he was in a small room with a guard standing at the door.
- But rather than complain about his captivity, Paul used that time to write the epistles of Colossians, Philippians, and Ephesians, as well as a personal letter to Philemon.

Christians in America are in a similar situation today.

- The Marxist-Socialist who are taking over America want us confined to our homes, and the expressions of our faith in Jesus Christ limited to our private relationship with God.

- Just as Paul didn't allow his captors to hinder his mission to get the gospel to the Gentiles, so must we, who are blessed to be called by His name, determine to remain devoted to the Lord, and to our respective assignments to get the gospel to the ends of the world, regardless of the costs to our lives.

In Matthew 24, Jesus described a period of time just before the start of the Great Tribulation, when the earth would be filled with absolute lawlessness.

- In verse 12, Jesus said, *“And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many will wax cold.”*
- Iniquity means unbridled immorality, unrestrained evil, and uncontrollable crime, such as we are experiencing today.
- Either this is God's judgment upon His people, and He is calling us to repentance, or this is God's method of testing our resolve to see if we will remain true to our commitment to Him, regardless of the suffering we are called to endure.
- On average, eleven Christians are killed each day because of their confession of faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord.
- While we have not seen such persecution in America, we may see it soon, for regardless how this election is resolved, we are headed for a time of utter lawlessness; the likes of which we have never seen before.

As a part of that agenda, the Marxist-Socialist are doing all they can to destroy the foundation, that for two centuries made America the most envied nation in the world.

- Thursday, November 26, will be the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1620 voyage of the Pilgrims from Plymouth, England, to America.
- In their effort to deny God's sovereign leadership and direction, secular humanists have labeled the pilgrim story a “myth,” and the “woke” media says the historical accuracy of such an event is on the level of a 3<sup>rd</sup>-grade coloring book.
- However, according to the diary of William Bradford, the pilgrim who organized the journey, these are the events that led up to that first Thanksgiving Service in 1621.

In July 1620, 102 passengers, and 30 crewmembers boarded the ship called the Mayflower which was docked at Plymouth; a port on the southern coast of England.

- In September, they set sail for what they termed the “new world” on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean.
- Forty of the passengers were Protestant Separatists called Pilgrims, who wanted to be free from the Church of England so they could worship God according to their own understanding of the Scriptures.
- They established the Plymouth Colony; the first colonial settlement in New England.

- The Puritans came later – they remained loyal to the Church of England, but wanted the freedom to worship God in their own way.
- They established the new colonies in Massachusetts Bay, Saybrook New Haven, and in Connecticut.
- Before they landed, William Bradford wrote a statement of agreement to which he required all passengers to sign.
- This Mayflower Compact defined the basic rules of behavior required of every person once they reached land.

**“In the name of God, Amen. We, whose names are underwritten; having undertaken for the Glory of God, and advancement of the Christian Faith, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia; do solemnly and mutually in the Presence of God and one of another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil Body, for our preservation, and the furtherance of the ends aforesaid.”**

Five of them died while at sea, including Bradford’s wife. Forty-six more of them died by the end of the first winter.

- When spring came, the Wampanoag Indians taught them how to plant crops and preserve food.
- In the fall of 1621, they held the first Thanksgiving Day – a three-day feast to celebrate their first harvest, and to offer prayers of thanksgiving unto God for His many blessings.
- The Wampanoag Indians brought venison and turkey, the pilgrims caught fish and clams, ground corn into meal, gathered wild fruit and berries, and they prepared the meal on an open fire.
- In 1623, then Governor Bradford declared December 13 as the day of prayer for people to show their gratitude to God, and services were held in each of the 13-colonies.
- A century later, President George Washington proclaimed Thursday, November 26, 1789, as “a day of thanksgiving and prayer.”

- In 1863, President Lincoln established the last Thursday in November as a national day of thanksgiving.
- In 1941, Congress passed the legislation, and President Roosevelt signed it into law, declaring the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of November as Thanksgiving Day – “a day set aside to give thanks unto God for His many blessings.”
- Thanksgiving Day is not a holiday, but rather it is a holy day; a day to pause and give thanks unto God.

There is an all-out attack on the core values of Western civilization.

- The core value of Western culture is our religious freedom, and the predominate religion in America is Christianity.
- The goal of the Marxist-Socialists is to remove every semblance of God, and every reference to the Person of Jesus Christ, and to replace it with one’s loyalty to the global community.
- Therefore, because the founding of America by the Pilgrims was according to the sovereign plan of God, such information cannot be taught in the secular schools.
- That is why they object to our children being taught to say the pledge of allegiance, or to respect the American flag.
- The core value of communism is what must be done by each one for the common good of all, rather than for the glory of God.
- According to the Global Education First Initiative, public schools are to “Help the students to become responsible, caring, contributing global citizens,” and they have been successful.
- A recent survey revealed 43% of students now prefer socialism over capitalism, because they think it is more equitable to all.
- However, democratic socialism is communism dressed up in a more acceptable term, which includes:
  - The abolition of private property
  - The collective ownership of all means of production, including foundries, factories, farms, and the distribution of all products.
  - Central planning, including educating the masses according to the need.
  - Eliminating the gaps in income by providing a basic income for everyone.
- Unless God intervenes, this describes the “new normal” for America for years to come.
- The America that was once the envy of the world was established on individual liberty, with personal responsibility, and personal accountability.
- The America of the future is built upon humanism; a culture without any allegiance to or respect for God.

# **If gratitude is the source of all virtue, ingratitude is the source of all wickedness, and America is drowning in a sea of iniquity!**

*Pastor Wayne*

## **1. The Incoming of the Holy Spirit – Vs 18 – “Do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit.”**

In its broader context, “wine” refers to anything that can become so intoxicating to the soul that it robs us of the joy only the Holy Spirit can give us.

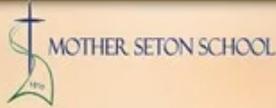
- When one is “saved,” they are indwelt by the Holy Spirit – a foretaste of the holiness in which believers will dwell forever.
- Jesus told Nicodemus that such an indwelling would create such a change in our lives it would appear that we were born again.
- Rather than getting “drunk” on the things and pleasures of the world, the Apostle Paul said Christians are to be “filled,” i.e., under the control by the Holy Spirit.

## **2. The Infilling of the Holy Spirit – Vs 20 – “Giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

- One who is filled with the Holy Spirit manifests the character of Christ at all times, even when they are being falsely accused, physically abused, or crucified, or that is how He responded.
- One who is filled with the Holy Spirit manifests the fruit of the Spirit, which is “love,” and out of that supernatural infilling of love flows, “*Joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control.*”
- Even though it is supernaturally produced, the character of Christ is to be naturally expressed – i.e., it is not something the Christian does, but it is what the Holy Spirit does through them.
- To be continuously filled with the Holy Spirit, the believer must be completely yielded to the Lordship of Christ.

## **3. The Inspiration of the Holy Spirit – Vs – 20 – “Giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

- If we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and infilled with the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit will inspire us to be thankful in all things: i.e., we will have that attitude of gratitude, regardless of our life's circumstances.
- If we are inspired by the Holy Spirit, we will see, as the song says, "all we have needed our God hath provided."
- The first evidence of backsliding is "ungratefulness," an attitude of ingratitude unto God for His many blessings.



## *A Thanksgiving Dinner Prayer*

Heavenly Father, on Thanksgiving Day  
We bow our heart to You and pray,  
We give You thanks for all You've done  
Especially for the gift of Jesus, Your Son.  
For beauty in nature, Your glory we see  
For joy and health, friends and family,  
For daily provision, Your mercy and care  
These are the blessings You graciously share.  
So today we offer this response of praise  
With a promise to follow You all of our days.  
-Mary Fairchild



Jencks-Bascombe. The First Thanksgiving at Plymouth 1914