

"Thanksgivings"

New England colonists were accustomed to regularly celebrating "thanksgivings". They were accustomed to engaging in "days of prayer" in which they thanked God for blessings. Normally, after days of fasting, thanksgiving would occur. If researched, there are all sorts of claims to the first Thanksgiving in the United States. The first Thanksgiving Day, as was claimed in history, was in the city of El Paso, Texas in 1598. Another event was in 1619 in the Virginia Colony. Additionally, many people trace the origins of Thanksgiving Day to the harvest celebration that the Pilgrims held in Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1621. However, the Pilgrim's first true thanksgiving was in 1623, when they gave thanks for rain that ended a drought.

I find that interesting. The first recognized Thanksgiving was when they gave thanks for a rain that finally ended a drought. Thanksgiving was not a one day occurrence but happened each time there was a need to thank God for his work in restoring something for/to them. This month, Facebook is filled with people conducting a countdown of what they are thankful for this year. Though there is no harm in this practice, I again find it interesting that we need a set time to be thankful.

What about you? Do you practice thankfulness when it is a practice or traditional time of year? Alternatively, do you give thank all year as you receive blessings? When there is a rain? When you find a parking space in a crowded parking lot? When someone you love makes it through surgery? When you rise for another day? When a loved one hugs you? When you hear of a friend's need being met?

Thankfulness is the act of gratitude. In a world of people feeling entitled to everything, do we realize that we are owed nothing? Everything we get is a benefit or blessing to us. As I sit here, not moving, I can count twenty-four blessings within my view. In fact, it took less than thirty seconds to do so. Why don't you try it? Stop. Do not move. Look around and name the blessings around you.

My friends, leadership is about being thankful also. Leaders know that they are not ultimately in control of all things. One, they know circumstances may prevail. Two, they know other people's behavior is out of their control. So humbly, leaders are thankful for any success they may achieve. Brian Tracy said, "Develop an attitude of gratitude, and give thanks for everything that happens to you, knowing that every step forward is a step toward achieving something bigger and better than your current situation."

This holiday season; let us be thankful for our bounty. Moreover, let us be grateful each day of each year. I am thankful for you and your desire to lead. I am thankful, that regardless of circumstance, you desire to impact the people and communities around you.

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