Thanksgiving
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"Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song." Psalm 95:2

It is true that the American holiday of Thanksgiving is not of an official Christian origin, but the idea of being thankful is central to the Christian identity. Christians are defined by their belief that Jesus was given to us as a gift for the forgiveness of our sins and the salvation of our souls.

There is one response to this gift: **gratitude.**

Gratitude is not a requirement for Christians, but a reality of our circumstance. If we are not grateful, we either do not believe we need a savior, or we do not trust that the work of our Savior, Jesus, is sufficient! The world and many poor teachers of the faith rob us of gratitude by requiring certain things of Christians who are saved. When we fall short of those expectations or extra requirements, we feel guilt or shame. We also start to believe our salvation is in our hands, not God's hands.

We were doomed to eternal damnation. We now have eternal life in heaven with Jesus and all who believe. It is done, it is finished, it is ours, and it is guaranteed!
This eternal promise starts NOW! We are saved, NOW! Guaranteed a resurrection, NOW! There are no "ifs," "ands," or "buts." **Jesus died, rose, and won the battle, for you!**

Being grateful does not mean life is always easy. It also does not mean there won't be times when we wish we had something different. These temptations are real and present for humans living in a materialistic world.

However, on Thanksgiving, and at many other times throughout each year, we can take a moment to pause and remember. We can take a step back from all the chaos and recognize the reality we are living in as Christians: called, forgiven, and equipped temples of the Holy Spirit, with the power and presence of God in us. We are presently AND forever members of the eternal family of God, receivers of light shining in the darkness.

That is amazing, and quite honestly worthy of our worship and praise.