

Remaining Thankful in 2020



By Jake And Dominic MacAulay

Author of the first American dictionary, Noah Webster, says Thanksgiving is “a public celebration of divine goodness; also, a day set apart for religious services, specially to acknowledge the goodness of God, either in any remarkable deliverance from calamities of danger, or in the ordinary dispensation of his bounties.”

The tradition of Thanksgiving as a time to focus on God and His blessings dates back almost four centuries. While such celebrations occurred at Cape Henry, Virginia as early as 1607, it is from the Pilgrims that we derive the current tradition of Thanksgiving.

The Pilgrims left England on September 6, 1620, and for two months braved the harsh elements of a storm-tossed sea. After disembarking at Plymouth Rock, they, first and foremost, had a prayer service and began building hasty shelters. However, unprepared for a harsh New England winter, nearly half of the settlers died before spring.

Yet, persevering in prayer, and assisted by helpful Indians, they reaped a bountiful harvest the following summer. The grateful Pilgrims then declared a three-day feast in December 1621 to thank God and to celebrate with their Indian friends – America’s first Thanksgiving Festival. This began an annual tradition in the New England Colonies that slowly spread into other Colonies.

The first national Thanksgiving occurred in 1789. According to the *Congressional Record* for September 25 of that year,

immediately after approving the Bill of Rights:

Mr. Elias Boudinot said he could not think of letting the congressional session end without offering an opportunity to all the citizens of the United States of joining with one voice in returning to Almighty God their sincere thanks for the many blessings He had poured down upon them. With this view, therefore, he would move the following resolution:

“Resolved, That a joint committee of both Houses be directed to wait upon the President of the United States to request that he would recommend to the people of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer... Mr. Roger Sherman justified the practice of thanksgiving not only as a praiseworthy one in itself but also as warranted by a number of precedents in Holy Writ... This example he thought worthy of a Christian imitation on the present occasion.”

The resolution was delivered to President George Washington who heartily concurred with the congressional request, declaring:

Whereas it is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor... Now, therefore, I do appoint Thursday, the 26th day of November 1789 . . . that we may all unite to render unto Him our sincere and humble thanks for His kind care and protection.

I believe every year is a perfect time to revisit these first principles, and, especially in light of this historical year of events that may challenge our thankfulness, I believe it is even more important to continue to recognize God’s sovereign hand in our affairs.

So, this Thanksgiving, let us give thanks to the God of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for America’s incredible founding and urgently pray that our government would never

relinquish its God-given duty to secure our rights despite its own urges to play god and control our lives under the guise of protecting them.

Sign up for a [FREE U.S. Constitution course](#) with Jake MacAulay and the Institute on the Constitution.

© 2020 Jake MacAulay – All Rights Reserved

E-Mail Jake MacAulay: Jake@TheAmericanView.com