



## 1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-18 | Thanksgiving is more than a day...

*Wednesday, November 26, 2014 – Thanksgiving Eve*

*<sup>16</sup> Rejoice always, <sup>17</sup> pray continually, <sup>18</sup> give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

A huge turkey. Bowls full of stuffing. Mashed potatoes and gravy. A delicious wine. Family. Friends. A home. Health. Freedom. Happiness. You have so much to be thankful for this Thanksgiving. Truly you have been blessed. But there is so much more to Thanksgiving than the carcass of a bird. In the carcass of Jesus lies the greatest gift, the most remarkable rest, the most magnificent meal. In Christ, you have forgiveness. For that you can be thankful.

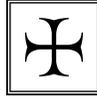
Forget what you had for a meal this week. Forget the great times with family and friends. Forget the incredible deals on Black Friday. See what your God did for you. See what Jesus gave you through his death. There lies the most important reason to give thanks this week. There is the reason you celebrate Thanksgiving every day.

And truthfully, you need to know this. You didn't deserve it at all. You may have felt that you deserved the meal you had this week. You may have felt that you worked hard for it, that you earned it, that it was a well-deserved rest from work. But the truth is that the terrible words of God when says, "the wages of sin is death," (Romans 6:23) is directed straight at you. It's unavoidable. You've sinned. You've "fallen short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23) You haven't been the perfect husband or wife. You've cut corners at work or treated your employees with disrespect. You've had illicit thoughts and desires and you've hurt people with what you've said with what you've done. When you boil it all down—you've sinned. You don't have a meal to look forward to, you don't have an enjoyable time with friends and family to get excited for. Because of your sin, you have a dreaded punishment to endure. An eternity in hell with no rest, no vacation, no respite. Only suffering and punishment.

But therein lies the reason to be thankful every day. Jesus Christ didn't just come for recognition. He didn't come to "fit in" with the right crowds. Jesus Christ came to "seek and to save what was lost." (Luke 19:10) God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that if you recognize who you are and what you've done, you can find rest by believing in him and gaining not eternal suffering, but eternal life. (John 3:16) You can be assured that there's nothing to be done. Christ has done it all for you. He lived the perfect life. He died the sacrificial death. Every sin, every misdeed, every horrible word, every hurtful action has been paid for. Not just for what you have done, but for what you will do. (John 1:29) What must you do to be saved from sin? Repent. Turn from your ways. Look to Christ. Trust in him.

Dear Christians, this time of year certainly presents many opportunities to give thanks. But take time this season—and every day!—to give thanks to your heavenly Father for the most important, meaningful,

and lasting gift he could ever give to you. "Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." Amen.



*Soli Deo Gloria!*

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