

**'THANKSGIVING DAY' CAN BE EVERY DAY****By Robert J. Tamasy**

This week people across the U.S.A. will observe another Thanksgiving Day, as it has been observed since 1863. The practice, however, dates to the early 1600's when immigrants from England made it an annual celebration. This is also part of the traditions of other nations, including Canada, Saint Lucia, Liberia, and unofficially in countries like Brazil, Germany and the Philippines.

Even in nations where formal Thanksgiving observances are not conducted, the simple act of feeling and expressing thankfulness is appropriate. We do not need an official government edict to reflect on those things for which we are thankful. In fact, every day can be a 'thanksgiving day' if we choose to make it so.

The question is, to whom should we be thankful? And thankful for what? In the workplace we can be thankful in many ways: To employers or bosses for the jobs we have. Customers who enable our companies to exist. If we are small business owners, we can be thankful for the opportunities, skills and talents we possess, employees, and patrons who take advantage of what we have to offer.

We can feel thankful for education, training, experience and expertise without which we could not excel at the work we do. Ultimately, however, especially if we are followers of Jesus Christ, we must direct our thankfulness to the Lord for providing us with everything we need.

Israel's King David, who had accomplished much during his lifetime and reign, understood that God was the source of everything he was and everything he possessed. Before a large assembly he prayed:

*"Praise be to You, O Lord God of our father Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is Yours.... Wealth and honor come from You; You are the ruler of all things. In Your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all"* (1 Chronicles 29:10-12).

The writer of much of the Psalms in the Old Testament, David echoed those thoughts in many other chapters of praise. For instance, he declared:

*"I will praise You, O Lord, with all my heart; before the 'gods' I will sing Your praise. I will bow down toward Your holy temple and will praise Your name for Your love and Your faithfulness, for You have exalted above all things Your name and Your word. When I called, You answered me; You made me bold and stouthearted. May all the kings of the earth praise You, O Lord, when they hear the words of Your mouth. May they sing of the ways of the Lord, for the glory of the Lord is great"* (Psalm 138:1-5).

We could cite many other passages from the Bible, but the point is simple: Our days can and should be days of thankfulness for so many things: Our spouses and families; health; the material resources God has entrusted to us; the doors that were opened for us to arrive at where we are presently in our careers; the successes we have enjoyed – and also our failures. Because as we read in the Scriptures:

*"Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything"* (James 1:2-4).

In good times and bad times, triumph and adversity, every day can be 'thanksgiving day'!

Workplace; Pursuing Life With a Shepherd's Heart, *coauthored with Ken Johnson*; and The Heart of Mentoring, *coauthored with David A. Stoddard*. Bob's biweekly blog is: [www.bobtamasy.blogspot.com](http://www.bobtamasy.blogspot.com).

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### Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. Do you observe Thanksgiving Day where you live? What do you think are the benefits of having such an annual celebration?
2. If someone were to ask you, "What are you thankful for?", how would you respond?
3. Many people, even if they are thankful for many things in their lives, do not acknowledge God as the provider of everything they possess and have accomplished. What do you think about that? Can you think of a time when you were like that? Why are expressions of thankfulness to God important?
4. Is thankfulness something that comes naturally for you? Or do you have a tendency to take things for granted, perhaps taking credit yourself for your successes and prosperity? Explain your answer.

*NOTE: If you have a Bible and would like to read more, consider the following passages:*  
Psalm 42:1-5,11, 118:1-9,13-16,25-29; Isaiah 51:3; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

### Challenge for This Week

For some, a special day of thanksgiving is nearing. But even if thanksgiving is not an official celebration where you are in the world, there is nothing to stop you from expressing your thanks to God in prayer and in words you speak to other believers.

Set aside some time this week to reflect on what God has done in your life and what you sense He is preparing for you in the future. Perhaps you might want to read a specific passage in the Bible that describes God and why our thankfulness to Him is so important.