

No Turkey This Year

Ponder: What is Thanksgiving without turkey?

Scripture: "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thess. 5:28, NKJV).

For the first time in my life there will be no turkey on our Thanksgiving table this year. Prices have increased, but that's not the reason. My wife and daughter will be working extended hours on "Black Friday," so we really didn't want to spend the whole day Thursday preparing and consuming a huge meal.

Can you have Thanksgiving without turkey? Of course! Whether the pilgrims ate turkey back in 1621 cannot be proven. Historical records indicate Governor Bradford sent four men on a "fowling mission" to prepare for the feast, and wild turkeys were plentiful; but ducks and geese also were easily available.

Thanksgiving's meaning comes not from the menu, but from the mindset of the person. The Christians in Thessalonica were undergoing "persecutions and tribulations" (2 Thess. 1:4), yet these are the very people Paul exhorted to give thanks in everything! The Colonists in 1621 had seen the majority of their fellow-pilgrims die over the previous winter. Only twenty-two men, four women, and twenty-five children survived. Yet they were thankful!

If you have hot and cold running water, stop and think that few people could even dream of such until the last century and a half. Before that it was "hot in the summer, cold in the winter, and run to the creek to get it." How thankful we should be!

Christians have even more for which to thank God. We have the hope of eternal life because of the blood of Christ that cleanses us from sin. We have the privilege of prayer. We have sweet fellowship with those of like precious faith. In this country we still have great liberty, including freedom of religion. You can extend that list indefinitely. How could we not be thankful?

At my house, we'll feel a bit weird this year having no turkey. Nevertheless, we will give thanks to God from whom all blessings flow. I'm confident you will do the same.

Hymn: "Count Your Blessings"

Prayer: Merciful Father, we can never thank You enough for all You have done for us. Help us, we pray, to count our blessings and praise you as the giver of all that is good. In Jesus' name, Amen.