



WILMINGTON EMMAUS

Pray...with Thanksgiving

By Dr. Ralph F. Wilson



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All Emmaus walks and gatherings are held at the United Methodist Church
 P.O. Box 191
 61 E. Main St.
 Wilmington, OH 45177



I've heard a lot of droopy prayers in my life. Hey, I've prayed a lot of them, too.

- Prayers of desperation -- God, you've got to help me!
- Prayers of self-pity -- God, things are so awful!
- Prayers of resignation -- God, if you want to leave me unemployed, then I can't stop you!

But I'm learning how to pray a different kind of prayer -- prayer said with thanksgiving. I learned it from St. Paul who, writing from prison, taught me a most powerful lesson. He said,

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

Strange. Here he is suffering himself, yet he's telling me to pray with thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving is the seasoning that makes our prayers edible to God. After all, who wants to hear people whine all the time? I've learned that you can't whine and give thanks in the same breath. Self-pity and thankfulness don't mix any better than oil and water.

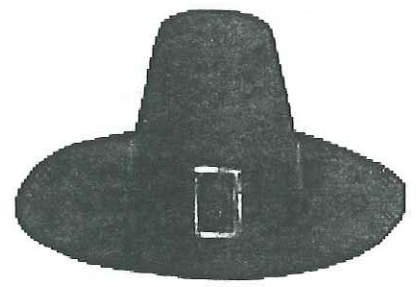
In fact, mixing thanks with prayer somehow changes it. When we remember what God has done for us in the past and think about who he is in

the present -- and express that in thankfulness -- our prayers become more gentle, more trusting somehow. Thankful prayers are offered with faith. And faith is an essential ingredient for prayers that God chooses to answer.

We remember the Pilgrims on Thanksgiving Day, not so much for their turkey dinner, but for the sheer faith that inspired them to give thanks in a year that saw nearly half their number die of sickness. Yet they prayed with thanksgiving.

When your annual day of feasting is over, you may bemoan your extra helpings of dressing, mashed potatoes, and pumpkin pie. But if you can hang on to the "thanks" part of Thanksgiving, you'll be a different person. Because when you learn to talk to God about your needs -- mixed with a healthy dose of heartfelt thanks -- then you have crossed the divide from whining at God to real prayer.

Happy thanks-giving!



Trivia:

What did God say at the baptism of Jesus?

A. "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:17)

What did the Israelite people ask Samuel for at Ramah?
A King (1 Samuel 8:6)

What did Samson bet thirty men that they could not do?

What did Herod do as a result of Peter being freed from his jail by an angel?

Tom & Mary Brunner

Can you believe it is already November? It seemed like just yesterday (not a year ago) that we asked for prayers for our oldest daughter Julie when she was deployed to Iraq. Our prayers have been answered. Her unit left Iraq today (October 26th) and they are finally on their way home to American soil. We thank each of you for keeping her in your prayers. As you are reading this article, we will be in North Carolina visiting Julie and thanking God she arrived home safely. Let us continue to pray for our men and women who are still serving our country not only in Iraq, but in other areas of the world.

November - the month to be thankful. I know we give thanks to God everyday of our lives, but it seems when we celebrate Thanksgiving everyone is especially thankful.

We know the Pilgrims at Plymouth Rock were thankful that first Thanksgiving. The first Thanksgiving in New England was celebrated in Plymouth less than a year after the Plymouth colonists had settled in America. The first dreadful winter in Massachusetts had killed about half the members of the colony. But new hope arose in the summer of 1621. The settlers expected a good corn harvest, despite poor crops of peas, wheat, and barley. So, in early autumn, governor William Bradford arranged a harvest to give thanks to God for the progress the colony had made.

The festival lasted three days. The men of Plymouth had shot ducks, geese, and turkeys. The menu also included clams, eel and other fish, wild plums and leeks, corn bread and watercress. The women of the settlement supervised cooking over outdoor fires. About 90 Indians also attended the festival. They brought five deer to add to the feast. Everyone ate outdoors at large tables and enjoyed new friendships made.

As we sit around our tables loaded with a Thanksgiving feast, we too are thankful for all God has given to us - the food that graces our tables, a roof over our heads, clothes on our backs, our families and friends with whom we can share our joys and sorrows, and our health. We enjoy sitting around the table sharing what we are thankful for and how God has blessed our lives.

We are also thankful for those who forego their own personal Thanksgiving to cook and serve a wonderful meal to those who are less fortunate.

Psalm 100:4 reads; "Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts praise; give thanks to him and praise his name." God is our Creator and he alone is worthy of our praise. It seems strange that we have to be reminded to give thanks, but this is what the psalm tells us we are to do. The Psalm was thought to be the beginning hymn for a thanksgiving service in which a procession of worshippers would sing as they entered the temple. It was a call to worship and more importantly a call to give thanks as they remembered the words "For the Lord his good; his steadfast love endures forever.

We praise God because the Lord is God. God is the creator of all things. God created us and has made us his people. Our God is a God of love who cares for us as a shepherd cares for his flock. God himself- his creative activity, his love, his faithfulness, his call to us to be his people- these are the things that are worthy of our praise and thanksgiving. As we focus our attention on God and God's love, we can find a vision of what God has in mind for the world. He wants to bless us. We should always enter into His presence joyfully and with the spirit of thanksgiving.

Happy Thanksgiving!

DeColores,
Mary and Tom Brunner



2006 Subscription Renewals

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If you haven't already, please start sending me your \$\$\$ or check for the Newsletter. Remind all your friends, or give a subscription as a gift. We need:

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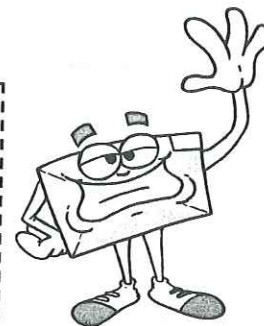
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If you have any questions...call me at 937-382-7227

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Address _____ Phone _____

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Reunion

Women's Walk #75 will have a reunion before the Gathering, Nov 8, 2005 at 6:00p.m. in the Youth Lounge

Cindy Bloom was Lay Director.

Babysitting

There is no charge for babysitting at gatherings and closings. Please remember, no babysitting is provided at Candlelight services. You will need to make other arrangements.



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
133 E WALNUT ST
HILLSBORO, OH 45133

Gatherings are held
on the second Tuesday of each month
Board meeting – 6:00
Gathering – 7:00
(singing starts at 6:45)

When attending a gathering or closing,
You may wish to bring food to share
During the fellowship time

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Don't forget
Wilmington
Emmaus is
on the web:

www.wilmingtonemmaus.org

Chrysalis Hoot is held every
third Monday of every month
at the Grace Methodist
Church in Washington C.H. It
starts at 7pm. Come and be a
part of the Chrysalis Commu-
nity.

Agape—If you are sponsoring
a pilgrim, please get your
letters out to people early.

Name Badges Are
Important!

Don't forget to wear your
name badge to all Emmaus
events. This includes working
in the kitchen, scrubbing
bathrooms, gatherings, can-
dlelight's, and closings.



"Do you have anything with moral fiber?"