

# Thanksgiving in July

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One year about this time my husband decided to fix a Thanksgiving dinner with all the trimmings. This is not so unusual. My husband loves turkey. As we were enjoying foods in July traditionally associated with November, I began thinking about gratitude as a year-round event. Shouldn't we be just as conscious about giving gratitude for all blessings in summer as in fall?

Gratitude is an integral part of prayer. Gratitude acknowledges God as the source of good and keeps us from taking personal credit for God's blessings. In one sense our prayer is not complete without gratitude. It is like writing a sentence and forgetting to put the period on the end. Something important is missing, and everyone knows it.

The Bible encourages singing praise to God continually. As Paul writes to the Thessalonians, "Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." (I Thessalonians 5:16-18)

One of the ways we can pray without ceasing is to be continually grateful. We can recognize God's government and control even when things go awry. We can affirm His presence and His love until it is made manifest in our lives. We can be grateful for His goodness even before the evidence of good has appeared.

Jesus expressed gratitude to God continually. He acknowledged God as the only power and that he could do nothing by himself without his Father (John 8:28). Jesus gave gratitude to God even before a healing was evident. For example, when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, he first expressed gratitude for the power of God, "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me." (John 11:41,42) And then he proceeded to call Lazarus forth from the grave, and Lazarus walked out of the cave alive. Jesus had thanked God for the healing before the physical evidence of healing was present. His heart was fully confident of the supremacy of God. He knew that all the power of God was

his to demonstrate. So he thanked God knowing that good would be manifested.

Certainly we can do the same. We need not wait for a time of year or a change of circumstances to acknowledge God's government of events. Divine Love is supreme right now. In fact, the more we acknowledge God's presence and power, the more receptive we are to seeing and receiving His blessings. Gratitude brings our thought into conformity with Christ.

Let us acknowledge God's government and goodness each day. Our heart will be uplifted through obedience to His commands to rejoice, pray without ceasing, and give thanks. By recognizing the divine blessings already at hand, we are preparing ourselves to be receptive to the continued blessings forever flowing from divine Love to His children.

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