

International Conversation Cafe

Topics from a Biblical Perspective: The Value of Being Thankful

In the United States, the fourth Thursday of the month of November is designated a public holiday of “Thanksgiving.” The tradition of Thanksgiving comes from the first settlers, the Pilgrims, who settled in the North East, in what is now Massachusetts. The Pilgrims set aside a day in the fall of 1621 to feast and thank God for helping them survive the winter and harvest enough to help them get through the next winter. In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln declared a national day of Thanksgiving to remember blessings.

In your groups, have each person choose a question to ask the others. Take turns sharing your answers. May these questions help to spark the spirit of Thanksgiving!

20 Questions for Thanksgiving

--by Karen Horneffer-Ginter, Nov 22, 2012

- 1) What teacher are you most thankful for and why? What did you learn from him or her?
- 2) What’s the season you’re most thankful for, and what’s your favorite part of each season?
- 3) What electronic device are you most grateful for, and what does it add to your life?
- 4) What musician or type of music are you most thankful for?
- 5) What are you most grateful for that brings beauty to your daily life?

- 6) What form of exercise or physical activity are you most thankful for?
- 7) What foods are you most thankful for?
- 8) What local store or restaurant are you most grateful for? How does it contribute to your quality of life?
- 9) What book are you most grateful for, and why?
- 10) What act of kindness has made the greatest difference in your life?

- 11) What challenging experience has ended up changing your life for the better?
- 12) What form of art are you most thankful for: music, acting, writing, painting, drawing . . . something else?
- 13) What place do you feel most grateful for and why?
- 14) Name three days in your life that you feel especially grateful for.
- 15) What color do you feel most thankful for—is there a color that you can’t imagine living without?

- 16) Is there a personal limitation or flaw that you've come to appreciate?
- 17) What vacation are you most grateful for?
- 18) What philanthropic cause or organization do you feel thankful for?
- 19) What product do you use on a daily basis that you most appreciate?
- 20) What, from this year, do you feel most grateful for?

How does your country/culture/family encourage the attitude of thanksgiving? Why do you think the attitude of being thankful is important? Why do you think it is so easy to forget to be thankful?

The Bible also recommends the habit of giving thanks to God. Psalm 100 is one of the most famous poems in the Bible that instructs us to be thankful.

A psalm. For giving grateful praise.

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.

Worship the Lord with gladness;
come before him with joyful songs.

Know that the Lord is God.
It is he who made us, and we are his;
we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving
and his courts with praise; (This is a reference to the courtyard of the temple.)
give thanks to him and praise his name.

For the Lord is good and his love endures forever;
his faithfulness continues through all generations.
Psalm 100

- What words are not familiar?*
What is the main thought of the poem?
What is this poem teaching us about God?
What is this poem teaching us about people?
Why do you think the poet recommends giving thanks to God?
How could an attitude of thanksgiving change us for the better?

Take a few minutes to write a note to thank someone for a kindness they have shown to you.

