

TO GIVE THANKS

©10-11-00 by Steve Wessels
Dedicated to my Lord, Whom I worship

We have a "Thanksgiving" holiday in this country,
A commemorative annual event when
The news media pauses from reporting all the negative news,
A time when many churches and many peoples in many lands
Pause to give thanks to our Creator for a few minutes or a day or two,
Before returning to the football games, the Macy's Parade, the
Cry of business and school schedules, and the
Blitz of Christmas ads screaming for our dollars.

Do we really understand the necessity of Giving Thanks?

I stumbled across a passage in Revelation 14:6-7 awhile back, about
the "eternal gospel", which really set me back on my heels.

The "Eternal Gospel"? What is this?

Why have I not heard of this before?

"The Eternal Gospel is to fear God, to give Him glory, and to worship Him."

The inward attitude of fearing God and His just retribution for our sins, combined with

ThanksGiving for His overwhelming love and compassion

Should manifest themselves within us as deep worship.

To fear God is the inward attitude, the naked realization of your sin,

That awful, sinking feeling in the pit of your stomach that

You've blown it, you didn't study hard enough, you failed the test,

You've lied to yourself, your mate, your colleague, your boss,

your kids... and their friends....

And you don't have the courage to admit your failures,

Which are many.....

To fear God and His wrath for our deliberate disobedience,

To be humble before the Mighty One of Israel,

Who can crush us at any instant like an ant on the sidewalk

In just retribution for our sins, which are many...

But to balance our fear of God with gratitude for His grace and love,

Knowing of His holy desire to forgive and forever forget

ALL of our sins, as far as the East is from the West.....

The inward attitude of fear of God, when mixed with
adoration and love

For all of His forbearance, His grace upon grace,

Must manifest itself in active praise, which is the

Visible manifestation of our inward and outward attitudes.

So many of our precious teens destroy themselves with anger and drugs
And alcohol and sex and lies and suicide..... They don't have Hope...

When our youth run head-first into the brick wall of reality,

When they can't reconcile the overwhelming positive ads in our

TV's and movies and newspapers and magazines for

New clothes and fast cars and more and more and more...

With all of the negative conflicts, the struggles with sex and mates

Or friends or jobs or grades or car insurance or self esteem.....

The overwhelming relationship strife which never seems to ebb,

The institutional indifference our college youth face,

That their thoughts are insignificant, that no one cares,

That they can't make a difference.....

Have we, the parents and leaders, given them Hope?
Have we, by example, taught them to Give Thanks?
Why are we here? What is the meaning of Life?
What goal is there worthy of all of the heartache and struggle and strife?
Is there any hope? Does anyone care?
God, are You there? Do You really care?
Why don't You answer?
Has He not given us His singular, clear answer in His Word,
When He tells us why He created us, that we might
Humble ourselves and worship Him for all He's done?

Attitudes. A third of our life's energies are wasted
Trying to solve and re-solve, over and over again, attitude problems,
Attitudes, which are, in reality, a reflection of our beliefs.

It doesn't matter whether the issue is another Presidential scandal
Or more White House lies
Or international wars or terrorist bombings
Or problems at work or an argument with our spouse
Or obnoxious teenagers within our own homes
Or crime in our streets...

Most problems revolve around attitude issues, which are, in reality
A reflection of our beliefs.

What do you believe this Thanks-Giving?
I believe we must Give Thanks, and humbly worship our Creator
For His great attitude toward us, that while we were yet sinners
He gave us His Precious and Only Begotten Son,
That we might be reconciled with Him,
That we might humble ourselves in adoration and worship...

And in Thanks-Giving to our Creator
I find simplicity and hope and meaning in life,
And purpose and fulfillment and joy and peace and
A dynamic message that our children need to hear over and over again,
And see amidst our daily struggles this very real Thanks-Giving message,
Lest when the doubts assail and the fears overwhelm and
Relationship strife smacks our most precious children in the face
They fall and succumb to depression and anger and retaliation and
The overwhelming desire flee the strife, to be at peace through suicide...

Dare we fail to worship? And Give Thanks? Every day?

Do not our very lives, and the lives of our children, who are
The true lifeblood of our nation, depend on our attitudes?
Our willingness to Give Thanks in every circumstance?
Our willingness to openly worship God with all that we have and are?
Will you sing *JOY TO THE WORLD* with me this Christmas season,
At the top of your lungs?