



November 2019

Dear CWR/PTM Friend and Partner,

**T**wo friends were at a bank when it was held up. After taking the bank's money from the vault, the bank robbers lined up all the customers and started going down the line demanding everyone's jewelry and money. Before the robbers got too close, one of the two friends reached into his pocket and pulled out \$100. He pushed the money into his friend's hand and said, "Thanks." His friend said, "What's this for?" The first friend said, "Don't you remember? I owe you \$100. Here it is. I'm just saying "Thanks.""

The day we observe as Thanksgiving is not called Thanks-saying—it's Thanks-giving because it's possible to say "thanks" without giving "thanks."

The head of the family sat at the Thanksgiving table and gave thanks before they enjoyed their Thanksgiving feast. He thanked God for everything God had provided them even though they had experienced a hard year of unemployment and sickness. Then, when the prayer ended and the meal started the head of the family started to grumble about the hard times the family had endured that year. He complained that they would not be able to have as nice a Christmas as he would like because he had been out of work.

His daughter interrupted him and said, "Daddy, do you think God heard you thank him during your prayer?" The father assured her that he believed God heard every word. Then the girl continued and asked her father, "Do you think he heard everything you were just saying about all of our tough times and not having enough money?" Her father said, "Yes, of course."

"Well," said the little girl, "do you think God believed you more when you were thanking him or when you were complaining?"

**It's possible to say "thanks" without giving "thanks."**

Some believe that the significance of Thanksgiving has all but disappeared, overwhelmed by football games, travel and the orgy of consumer spending on the next day, Black Friday.

Thanksgiving still exists as a day on the calendar. It's still on the fourth Thursday of November in the U.S.A and the second Monday of October in Canada. Businesses and schools and government offices still close and lots of turkeys and pumpkin pies are still eaten. **But has Thanksgiving now just become somewhat of a meaningless thing to say?** Remembering that it isn't Thanks-saying, but Thanks-giving, we must ponder the real meaning of Thanks-GIVING.

*We can say we are thankful without actually being thankful.* We can say "thanks" and we can be filled with thanksgiving, but it is also possible to say "thanks" without being deeply and meaningfully thankful.

The topic of *saying* and *giving* thanks is not necessarily a discussion of either/or—both saying and giving can be part of Thanksgiving, but only if thankfulness and gratitude are present. ***"Saying" thanks does not magically produce an attitude of gratitude that "gives" thanks—but when the attitude of gratitude is***

*present, “saying” thanks will be one of the evidences of that gratitude and thankfulness.*

I’m fond of this prayer offered at Thanksgiving some 100 years ago:

*○ Lord, as you know, here we are again. We are here to do the hardest thing any mortal can do, to say thanks and really mean it. First of all, there are people who don’t ever say thanks for anything because they believe whatever they have they got all by themselves. Then there are others who do say thanks, but that’s all they do—they **say** thanks but they don’t **give** thanks. They say, “Thanks, but why didn’t I get this sooner? What took you so long?” Some even say, “Thanks, but why didn’t I get more?”*

Thankfulness and gratitude are at the heart of our faith as Christ-followers. Jesus gave thanks because he was God in the flesh and because he was revealing the grace and favor of the Father.

Jesus gave thanks to help us see beyond the physical manna that kept the children of Israel alive in the wilderness—a manna that could only provide physical life in the here-and-now. Jesus proclaimed himself as the true Bread from heaven who, if we believe and embrace him, will give us life everlasting.

Our word *Eucharist* has been transliterated into English—it’s a multifaceted word, combining gratitude and thankfulness from the Greek *eukharisteo* and grace and favor from the Greek *charis*. These thoughts combine to produce a common sense of **giving thanks to God**.

The Eucharist is defined as the act of sharing a common meal—of course, for Jesus and the apostles sharing a common meal meant all are welcome at the Table, regardless of status or identity.

The origin of the Christian practice of The Eucharist (also called “Communion” or “The Lord’s Supper”) is when Jesus transformed the Jewish, old covenant practice of the Passover. Jesus took bread and said, “Take and eat. This is my body which is given for you. Do this in memory of me.” Then he took a cup of wine, saying to his disciples, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, whenever you drink it, in memory of me” (read and compare Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:14-20 and 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

The Eucharist is **Thanksgiving to God**. Thanksgiving involves remembering Jesus. When we give thanks we focus on Jesus. The Eucharist—Thanksgiving—is a commemoration of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus—who was, is and is to come.

*Thanksgiving is not just a day—it’s a way of life.* Gratitude is not a singular act, but a way of life. Remembering the goodness that others have given us and the grace of God that has been showered down on us is a way of life. For Christ-followers Thanksgiving will always and inevitably center in and on Jesus—his life, death and resurrection.

Thanksgiving is a Christ-like and Christ-centered attitude and focus, directing our hearts away from ourselves and toward our loving, giving, gracious and generous God. The foundation of all Christ-centered Thanksgiving is our reflection of the heart, mind and soul of God, who lavishes all good gifts on us.

When David gave thanks for the gifts given to construct the temple his son Solomon would build he said, “Yours, LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours...Wealth and honor come from you...Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand” (1 Chronicles 29:11, 12, 14).

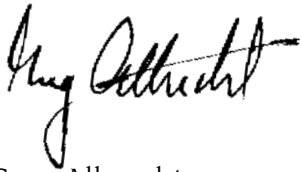
By the grace of God we are empowered to know all that we are and all that we enjoy comes from him!

By the grace of God we join together giving thanks to him.

By the grace of God, through our collective efforts in the ongoing work of this ministry, we rejoice in helping to pass on and proclaim the good news of the Eucharist—the gratitude and thankfulness Jesus lives in us, the grace and favor God lavishes on us, and God's invitation to one and all to receive and accept his generosity, grace and goodness.

Happy Thanksgiving my dear friends, teammates and fellow Partners in this ministry!

Your brother and co-worker in Christ,



Greg Albrecht

President, Plain Truth Ministries

PS. Here are a few letters of thanks from people who have been blessed by the ministry of CWR/PTM which you help to provide!

*Thanks for all the resources you have provided me with over the years. They have helped me immensely in my journey with Jesus.—New York*

*Thank you for all you're doing for me and others like me. Your literature and sermon CDs are such a blessing to me. Please keep doing such a great job of providing all these resources to help us grow in the Christ-centered life—the Jesus way!—Florida*

*CWR/PTM has helped me to more fully comprehend that God's grace has not been extended to me based on what I've done or not done, but because of what Christ has done, is doing and will do. For this I am eternally thankful to God primarily and to you secondarily.—Illinois*

## CWR/PTM Prayer List—November 2019

These requests for prayer represent just a few of the thousands we receive and pray for. We invite you to join us in praying for these and the others that space does not permit us to include here. Thanks for joining with us as a CWR/PTM Prayer Partner.

*I'm 92 years old and I have pain in my elbow, the upper part of my arm and the upper part of my back.—Connecticut*  
*I've been suffering with shingles for 15 months; it's in my left eye and causing real problems. Pray for healing.—Mississippi*  
*Our granddaughter has low blood platelets. She will soon have her tonsils and possibly some adenoids removed.—Michigan*  
*My wife died recently and I'm living in an assisted living facility. I have heart failure and truly need your prayers.—Idaho*  
*I am seeking housing so please pray that I will find a place in a safe neighborhood that I can afford.—Florida*  
*I am 91 years old and I appreciate all the help I've received from you over the years. Thanks for your prayers.—Wisconsin*  
*Please pray that my diabetes will be healed. I've had it for many years and my feet cause me a lot of pain.—New Hampshire*  
*Please pray for my wife who suffers from severe anxiety & depression. As a result our relationship is strained.—Florida*  
*I am so grateful I can see well enough again to read the magazines, partner letters and books that you send me.—California*  
*Please continue to pray for my wife's complete recovery. Thank you for all your prayers.—New York*  
*Please pray for my sister. She's having heart problems and her cardio specialists are not sure what is going on. She needs healing physically, mentally and spiritually and to retire from a stressful job where she works the night shift.—Pennsylvania*  
*Please pray for my wife. She suffers from a mental illness and has been hospitalized for almost two years.—South Dakota*  
*Pray I can find a job closer to home. My parents are aging and I'm too exhausted to give them the help they need.—California*  
*My cousins need strength along with memory improvement. Please pray for their well-being and good care.—Maryland*  
*Please pray for my granddaughter, who will be having her first baby soon. And please pray for healing of my back. I am in constant pain, especially when I walk.—Mississippi*  
*Please pray that the pressure in my eyes from glaucoma will stabilize.—California*  
*My daughter, just out of the Army, is having eye trouble and also dizzy spells. She needs prayers.—South Carolina*  
*I have been sick with colon cancer and I'm taking medication for it. Please keep me in your prayers.—Texas*  
*My wife is now in hospice care. She has an inoperable heart condition. This puts a great deal of stress on me.—Arkansas*  
*My white blood cell count is going up due to Leukemia. Your prayers would be most welcome.—Ohio*  
*Please pray for the pain to ease in my legs, feet and knees. Thank you for your prayers.—Colorado*  
*I'm 81 years old, and last month I had colon blockage removed. I was in the hospital for fifteen days but I still have pain and nausea. Please pray for comfort and healing.—Georgia*  
*Please pray for my nephew who will have brain surgery. If it's not successful he will have a limited time to live.—Indiana*  
*I would like to request prayers for my mother who has complications from diabetes. Thanks for all you do!—Arizona*

Our Father in Heaven: We thank you for your grace, mercy and love. You love each of these individuals, and we thank you in advance for the answers you will provide for each request. With thanksgiving for our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, our suffering servant who heals us, in whose name we pray—Amen.