



November 2021

Dear CWR/PTM Friend and Partner,

*"All things come of Thee, O Lord, and of Thine own have we given Thee."*

**A** *All Things Come of Thee* is a traditional hymn and prayer, whose message reminds us that **giving** thanks results, for Christ-followers, in **giving**. *All Things Come of Thee* confesses that **anything** and everything we give to God ultimately belongs to him for he gave it to us to begin with. Our Thanks-Giving is but a minimal return to God of his greater and supreme gifts he lavishes on us.

Thanksgiving is a wonderful time to acknowledge that all we have, from the money in our pockets, to the food in our refrigerator and the breath in our lungs, is a gift from God for our life here on earth.

*All Things Come of Thee* is often linked with King David's prayer of thanksgiving for the willing and generous gifts given for the construction of the temple. Though his people had responded generously to his appeal for funds to build the temple, most of all David thanked God, saying: "*But who am I, and who are my people, that we should give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand*" (1 Chronicles 29:14).

It's been said that we should feel sorry for atheists at Thanksgiving because they don't know to whom they should direct their thanks. Perhaps we should also feel sorry for all who know to whom they should give thanks but seemingly don't know how.

The secular holiday of Thanksgiving is overwhelmed by too much food, too many distractions of travel and too much entertainment. Sadly, the lessons of gratitude deeply embedded within the holiday of Thanksgiving are, for our children, often hurried over in the rush to get more material stuff at Christmas. And in many cases, perhaps most, children are taught to attribute the gifts they receive at Christmas to Santa Claus, rather than God, or even parents.

**To whom are we thankful? Who is the Source of all goodness and the giver of every good and perfect gift?** Like detectives at a crime scene, in our thanksgiving we always return to the scene and Source of the gift. The scene of giving is filled with the source, the fingerprints of God. The scene of all that we have is filled with evidence of the Source, who gives to us out of his lavish, never-ending love, grace and mercy.

A comedian tells the story of being on a plane while listening to people complain they were unable to use their cell phones. There they were, he says, up in the air, floating in the sky, travelling at a speed and with a comfort level their ancestors would never have imagined. They were, of all things, flying like birds in a heavy metal tube that elementary reason suggests as being too heavy to fly...let alone loaded down with humans, baggage and cargo.

There they were, flying above the crime-infested, war-torn, poverty-ridden, oppressed earth below...and all they could do was complain about the lack of coverage for their cell phones.

The comedian observed, “How quickly we humans come to believe the world owes us something that we didn’t even know existed until a few years before” [airline travel and cell phones in this case]. His point was that we are more likely to gripe and complain about what we feel entitled to than we are to give thanks.

We do have a tendency to forget. We do so often think of our world in terms of our needs and desires rather than being thankful for what we have been given, particularly in the light of the favorable circumstances we enjoy that the vast majority of the rest of mankind does not.

Martin Luther once said “The greater God’s gifts and works, the less they are regarded.” A North American with an average standard of living is more likely to be unsatisfied and desire more of what they do not have than an impoverished average citizen of planet earth who wakes up not knowing where his food for the day will come from.

A lonely person in a nursing home is more likely to deeply appreciate one visit, phone call or letter than one of their grandchildren might be with the gifts they received for their more recent birthday. Thanksgiving involves perspective and the wisdom born of many experiences and endurance—perspective, experience and endurance can produce God-given appreciation.

Thanksgiving can be difficult, and I don’t mean the prospect of having to be with relatives who might have a longstanding disagreement with you. Thanksgiving can be difficult because many of us experience far less suffering and need than we do blessings and prosperity.

**Suffering and doing without can motivate us to give thanks in a way that health, blessings and prosperity do not.** Suffering, whether our own, or that of others—or the relative lack of suffering, suffering we might have experienced were it not for the grace of God (“there but for the grace of God...”) can drive us to our knees in thanksgiving.

Which brings me to the story of a parrot and suffering. Since it’s one of my favorite Thanksgiving stories I may have inflicted it on you in the past—forgive the repetition if that is the case.

When a *lady purchased a parrot from a pet store* the owner warned her that the parrot had been raised by a sailor and had learned much of its vocabulary from him. The woman thought she could rehabilitate the parrot’s salty language so she purchased him and took him home.

No sooner had the woman taken her new parrot home and placed him in his beautiful new cage, the parrot unleashed an unbelievable string of obscenities—strong enough, the lady thought, to “make a sailor blush.”

She expected that she might have to “work on” the parrot’s colorful vocabulary but she was shocked how quickly she was tested. She immediately took the parrot out of his cage and placed him in the freezer. After five minutes she took him out and asked him, “Have you learned your lesson? Your language is unacceptable in my home!” In response, the parrot erupted with curse and swear words.

The woman was determined, so she put the parrot back in the freezer again...this time for ten minutes. Once again, when she retrieved the shivering parrot, she asked him if he had learned his lesson.

His feathers were frozen stiff and an icicle was starting to form on his beak. He replied, “**Yes m-m-mam! I will clean up my language, please don’t put me back in the freezer. But can you please tell me what that t-t-turkey in there said?**”

The parrot was thankful he had not yet suffered the fate of the frozen turkey. Turkeys and Thanksgiving—they go together, don't they? That said—let me be clear: if you are not thankful, you will not be frozen, nor will you burn forever in the eternal torture of hell—God is not like that, as you know.

What is God like?

*“Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! Who has known the mind of the Lord. Of who has been his counselor? Who has ever given to God, that God should repay them? For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen” (Romans 11:33-36).*

- God is gracious, not vindictive.
- God is greater and better and higher and above all that we are.
- God does not need to lean upon others and seek their advice.
- God does not depend on our gifts, assistance or deeds—he never has been nor will he ever be indebted to any human. He loves us as much right now as he ever has or he ever will. His love and gifts do not depend on our performance.
- God is the source of all life, of all goodness—he is the means and the goal of all things.
- God is our all in all—by his grace we are Christ-followers. By his grace and love we live, move and have our being. Our lives are his gift and when our earthly journey is complete, we will return to God and be in and with him just as we are now, in our mortality, as we rest in Christ.

My dear friends, my brothers and sisters in Christ. What an awesome and incredible privilege it is to link arms with you, to be on the same team and as Friends and Partners of CWR/PTM do more together in proclaiming the gospel than we ever could alone.

We unitedly come together, in spirit and in truth, as part of the universal body of Christ, giving thanks—

Your brother in Christ,



Greg Albrecht  
President, Plain Truth Ministries

P.S. We share this note of thanks from someone who has been blessed by this ministry which YOU help to provide.

*I must tell you how much I appreciate CWR/PTM. Before I started reading and listening to your many resources, I was confused and conflicted about God and what I had been told about him. You have helped me see the real gospel and who God really is. Thank you so very much!—Colorado*

## CWR/PTM Prayer List—November 2021

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 am having issues with my knee replacement—please pray that I will be all right. Please continue to pray for our grandchildren who are on drugs.—Kentucky*

*Please pray for an uneventful move in location for me. Also, please pray for my brother who is moving from California to Virginia and all of my five grandchildren.—New York*

*Please pray for my nephew who has a cancerous tumor on his neck. They can't operate because they would have to remove his voice-box.—Email*

*I am requesting prayers for my brother's ex-wife whose dad passed away due to COVID-19 at age 83. Also please pray for her health problems and struggles due to her diabetes.—Virginia*

*Please keep me and my daughter in your prayers. I'm 93 and she's 65 and we both suffer with health issues.—Indiana*

*Please pray for my sister who is in her 70's and is disabled with back pain. She lives alone with no one to help her. Please pray that God will heal her and send help.—Florida*

*I'm planning on moving in with my daughter soon. Pray for me to get everything settled before I move.—West Virginia*

*Please pray for our leaders and others who are working to help make this world a little better.—Colorado*

*Please pray for my daughter who suffers from depression and anxiety.—Arizona*

*Please pray for all the COVID victims, especially for all those in India.—Kentucky*

*I pray that CWR/PTM will "keep on keeping on." Thank you for helping us remember that Jesus is everything. We are, indeed, living in Jesus as He lives in us. He is our hope of glory.—New Jersey*

*Please pray for my brother who was diagnosed with colon cancer.—Wisconsin*

*Please pray for my physical healing after my triple heart bypass surgery.—Louisiana*

*Please pray for my granddaughter—that she will be saved from a life of drugs and from bad influences.—Tennessee*

*Please pray for me as I'm having a very hard time. I need hope and encouragement.—Florida*

*I lost my husband of nearly 28 years. Please pray for safe and uneventful travels and stay in Indiana, where we're taking his ashes to be buried next to his late parents.—Arizona*

*Everyone at CWR/PTM—you're in my daily prayers. Keep up the good work you do, "as God works in you to do his will and good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13).—Michigan*

*Please pray for my friend who is dealing with ALS that she won't have a lot of pain. Also please pray for another friend that she and her son will solve their differences.—West Virginia*

*Please pray for my three granddaughters, one has Bipolar-2 symptoms and the other two (who are twins) suffer from cerebral palsy.—Illinois*

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.