

REMINDER

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AMERICA'S CHRISTIAN HERITAGE WEEK

*“. . .to keep our families secure, communities safe,
and America free. . .”*

“The religion which has introduced civil liberty is the religion of Christ and His Apostles. . . This is genuine Christianity and to this we owe our free constitutions of government.”

- Noah Webster, History of the United States, 1832, public school textbook



The Pilgrims left Plymouth, England, on September 6, 1620. Their destination?
The New World.

Although filled with uncertainty and peril, it offered both civil and religious liberty.

For over two months, the 102 passengers braved the harsh elements of a vast storm-tossed sea. Finally, with firm purpose and a reliance on Divine Providence, the cry of "Land!" was heard.

Arriving in Massachusetts in late November, the Pilgrims sought a suitable landing place. On December 11, just before disembarking at Plymouth Rock, they signed the ***“Mayflower Compact”*** - America's first document of civil government and the first to introduce self-government.

After a prayer service, the Pilgrims began building hasty shelters. However, unprepared for the starvation and sickness of a harsh New England winter, nearly half died before spring. Yet, persevering in prayer, and assisted by helpful Indians, they reaped a bountiful harvest the following summer.

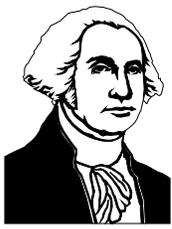
The grateful Pilgrims then declared a three-day feast, starting on December 13, 1621, to thank God and to reading as found celebrate with their Indian friends. While this was not the first Thanksgiving in America (thanksgiving services were held in Virginia as early as 1607), it was America's first Thanksgiving Festival.

Pilgrim Edward Winslow described the Pilgrims' Thanksgiving in these words:

“Our harvest being gotten in, our Governor sent four men on fowling [bird hunting] so that we might, after a special manner, rejoice together after we had gathered the fruit of our labors. They four in one day killed as much fowl as... served the company almost a week... Many of the Indians [came] amongst us and... their greatest King, Massasoit, with some ninety men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted; and they went out and killed five deer, which they brought... And although it be not always so plentiful as it was at this time with us, yet BY THE GOODNESS OF GOD WE ARE... FAR FROM WANT.”

In 1789, following a proclamation issued by President George Washington, America celebrated its first ***Day of Thanksgiving to God*** under its new constitution. That same year, the Protestant Episcopal Church,

(continued inside)



of which President Washington was a member, announced that the first Thursday in November would become its regular day for giving thanks, "unless another day be appointed by the civil authorities." Yet, despite these early national proclamations, official Thanksgiving observances usually occurred only at the State level.

Much of the credit for the adoption of a later ANNUAL national Thanksgiving Day may be attributed to Mrs. Sarah Joseph Hale, the editor of *Godey's Lady's Book*. For thirty years, she promoted the idea of a national **Thanksgiving Day**, contacting President after President until President Abraham Lincoln responded in 1863 by setting aside the last Thursday of November as a national **Day of Thanksgiving**. Over the next seventy-five years, Presidents followed Lincoln's precedent, annually declaring a national Thanksgiving Day. Then, in 1941, Congress permanently established the last Thursday of each November as a national holiday.

Lincoln's original 1863 **Thanksgiving Proclamation** came - spiritually speaking - at a pivotal point in his life. During the first week of July of that year, the *Battle of Gettysburg* occurred, resulting in the loss of some 60,000 American lives. Four months later in November, Lincoln delivered his famous "*Gettysburg Address*."



It was while Lincoln was walking among the thousands of graves there at Gettysburg that he committed his life to Christ. As he explained to a friend:

"When I left Springfield [to assume the Presidency] I asked the people to pray for me. I was not a Christian. When I buried my son, the severest trial of my life, I was not a Christian. But when I went to Gettysburg and saw the graves of thousands of our soldiers, I then and there consecrated myself to Christ."

As Americans celebrate Thanksgiving each year, we hope they will retain the original gratefulness to God displayed by the Pilgrims and many other founding fathers, and remember that it is to those early and courageous Pilgrims that they owe not only the traditional Thanksgiving holiday but also the concepts of self-government, the "hard-work" ethic, self-reliant communities, and devout religious faith.

Are YOU thankful to God?

- David Barton, WallBuilders Ministries



Robbing Yourself Blind

(see: Numbers 14:1-30)

A missionary translator was endeavoring to find a word for "obedience" in the native language. This was a virtue seldom practiced among the people into whose language he wanted to translate the New Testament. As he returned home from the village one day, he whistled for his dog and it came running at full speed. An old native, seeing this, said admiringly in the native tongue. "Your dog is all ear." Immediately the missionary knew he had his word for obedience.

A hardened unbeliever went one day to see - but not to hear -

George Whitfield when he preached outdoors to a great throng. In order to have a good vantage point, he climbed a nearby tree. Putting his fingers in both ears, he began to watch the mighty preacher. Then a persistent fly lit on his nose. He shook his head, but the fly wouldn't move.

Just as he removed a hand from an ear to flick the fly away, Whitfield quoted the verse, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Matt. 11:15). Then he spoke of the willful refusal of many to hear the Spirit's voice. The unbeliever was so impressed by what happened that he opened not only his ears to the gospel, but also his heart.

Jesus said that if we have ears to hear, then we need to hear. And when it comes to obeying God - we need to be like that missionary's dog. . . "All Ear."

Some people treat **Obedience** as if it were some "extra" package that comes with religion. Like the person who buys a car can get an optional sport stripe, or an optional CD player, or an optional rear-window defroster. To them it is a nice extra, but not a requirement.

But, church - if you have ears to hear, hear me when I say, ***"Obedience is not an optional add-on to Christianity- it is the heart of it!"*** Do I hear someone begin to object and say, *"no preacher, it is faith."* But I maintain, that faith without obedience is **NO FAITH** at all. Even James said ***"faith without works is dead."***

In the scripture text, we read about how an entire generation robbed themselves because of their disobedience (which by the way, is synonymous with faith - had they believed they would've obeyed.) God had promised to be with them and give them the land of Palestine if they would obey. Instead, they sent spies who came back and were filled with fear & disobedience. Read what follows in the text. . .

I. JUST HOW BAD WAS THEIR DISOBEDIENCE?

The disobedience of a few caused others to fall away (see v.1-2).

1. In their disobedience, they "murmured" against God's authority & God's leader Moses (v.2). (*NOTE: This is one of the very real problems in our world today - people despise authority, have no respect, and consequently will not listen*).

2. Disobedience to God causes people to make STUPID choices (v.3-4) (*There's an almost inherent insanity with disobedience. Just as sin gives rise to more sin*).

3. Their disobedience and rebellion led to an irrational fear (see v.9).

4. Their disobedience led them to compound their sin by not listening to reason (v.10) and instead, they were ready to violently treat those who DID choose to obey.

5. God views disobedience in the worst possible light (see v.11) - to Him it is a strong "provocation." It's like poking at a hornet's nest, or stirring up an angry dog.

6. In fact, God views disobedience not only as a provocation, but also as a "tempting" (v.22).

7. God calls them an "evil congregation." (v.27).

II. WHAT BECOMES OF DISOBEDIENCE?

1. I would suggest that one of the first (and possibly one of the worst) punishments for their disobedience was the loss of

their spiritual comfort. God's presence had delivered, guided and watched over them. They should've been secure. But immediately after they made up their minds to disobey God they spent the night in fear & trembling. They lost the sense of God's favor & smile.

2. They lost sight of their purpose and began longing for Egypt again. The same is so true in modern times as well. People disobey God and fall away once, and suddenly they lose their heart for church, for praying, for witnessing, tithing, etc.

3. The disobedience of a few cause great sorrow and consternation among the faithful (v.5-6). It's not as if they didn't have enough to keep them humble and on their knees before God, but now they have to devote their time and energy begging God to be merciful to the wicked.

4. It deserves the wrath and punishment of a Holy God (v.12) And had Moses & Aaron not prayed for mercy, it would've come swiftly and severely.

5. And while there is pardon and forgiveness with our merciful God, disobedience leaves scars. There are results to sin that cannot be swept under the rug. (v.19-23)

6. They robbed themselves of a tremendous blessing.

III. WHAT THE SCRIPTURES PROMISE ABOUT OBEDIENCE -

1. See what happened to Caleb & Joshua (v.24) Note especially the sweetness of their obedience – it was not a grudging, "have to" thing. "had another spirit," and "followed me fully." There is obedience from the head and obedience from the heart – but only one is true obedience – from the heart. (cf. Deut. 26:16).

2. In Joshua 1:8, we see the blessings of complete obedience & faithful dedication. Success.

3. When compared to other virtues – it ranks as superior. See 1Sam.15:22.

4. Lest it be argued that obedience to God is not required, I point to Jesus' words in Mt.7:21 (see also Lk.8:19-21). *"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."*

5. Obedience to God – willing, joyful & complete obedience – is the fruit of a heart that loves the Lord. Jesus said, *"If ye love me, keep my commandments" (Jn.14:15).*

6. For examples of people who were blessed for their OBEDIENCE (as well as faith) see Thompson Chain #2615.

I want to close this Bible study on Obedience by sharing a story that illustrates one aspect of Christian obedience:

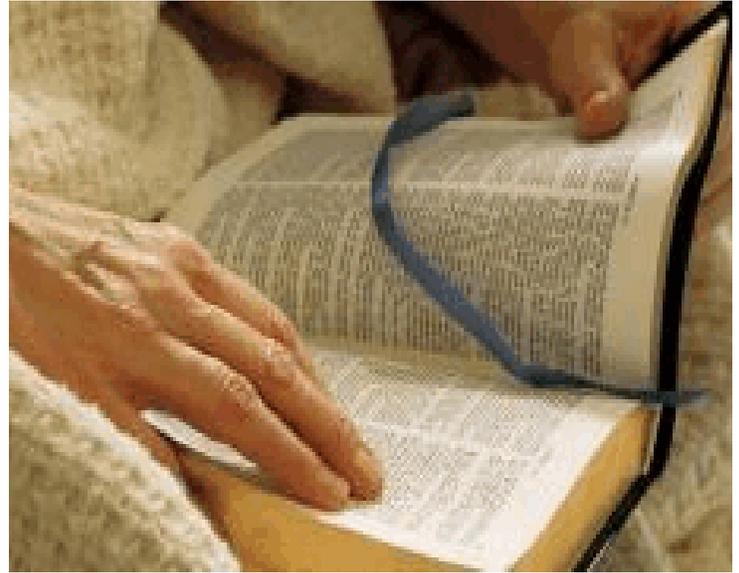
The treasurer of a rural church resigned and was replaced by a man who managed the local grain elevator. The grain operator agreed to the new position on one condition: the church could not require a financial statement or ask him any questions about the finances for one year. The church members were confused by the request but obliged him because he was a successful and trustworthy man.

At the end of the year, this secretive treasurer gave his glowing financial report. The \$25,000 debt had been paid off, there were no outstanding bills, and there was a cash balance of \$12,000. The congregation was elated and wanted to know how he managed to accomplish such a great feat.

He replied, "Most of you bring your grain to my elevator. When I paid you, I simply withheld ten percent on your behalf and gave it to the church in your name. You never missed it, and now you have seen what God can do when we each give back to God the tithe he has commanded of us all."

Tithing provides a beautiful transformation in the life of a Christian who is obedient to God's command, and collectively, tithing transforms the entire scope and magnitude of a church's ministry.

- Pastor Scott Bennett - Hickman Baptist Church



STUDY YOUR BIBLE DAILY

***There Will Be No
Wednesday Evening
Service This Week In
Order That Our
Church Members
Can Better Prepare
For Thanksgiving
With Their Families.***

NURSERY MINISTRY WORKERS FOR THIS WEEK

10:50 a.m. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Piper Martin
 Cradle Roll 2: Ryan Quinnelly
 Floater: Seth White

6:00 p.m. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Rebekah White
 Cradle Roll 2: Nathaniel White
 Floater: Kelsey Moreno

Wednesday Eve. Svc ---- None

AND THE PEOPLE CAME...

Week of November 15, 2009

Sunday School ----- 21
 Sunday Morning Service ----- 35
 Evening Service ----- 34
 Wednesday Eve. Service, 11/8/09 ----- 24

AND THE PEOPLE.....GAVE????

Week of November 15, 2009

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings ----- 	\$ 766.00
New Hymnals Fund -----	\$ 10.00
Total Received for Week of 11/15/09:	\$ 776.00

**Average amount of Undesignated Offerings
 needed to operate the church
 EACH WEEK,
 as a minimum = \$ 1,400.00** 

FUND DRIVE REPORTS

**We Are Suspending Our
 Specific Fund Drives Until Our
 Regular Weekly Offerings
 Come Back Up To Where They
 Need To Be. Please Give As
 Much As You Can To Help Us
 Catch Up After The Extremely
 Low Giving We Experienced
 This Summer And Fall.**

Visit Us Online At - www.southheightsbaptist.com

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED

1. **Admit that you are a sinner.**
2. **Admit that God says all sins must be paid for.**
3. **Accept the fact that Christ took upon Himself the suffering necessary to pay for all your sins.**
4. **You must change your mind about sin and sinning (God calls this repentance).**
5. **By an act of your will, accept by faith the Lord Jesus Christ, who can save you from the penalty of sin. Then, tell God about this in a simple prayer. Believe that God keeps His promise to save you, and thank Him for His salvation.**



Please Remember To Be Faithful to Give!

As with everything else, the costs of keeping a church going never go down - they always go **up**. Bills wait for no one, and churches are no exception to this. An extra, sacrificial gift today by everyone present would go a long way...

We encourage all of our membership to practice obedience to God by being faithful every payday to give back to Him His tithe (10%). *If every family in our church would practice this one simple discipline, we would never have weeks where we have to put off paying some bills until the following week!*

Everything is expensive, especially for a small church like ours, but ours is a BIG God, and He LOVES to bless His children when they are obedient to Him!

If you are already a tither, we thank you, and encourage you to also give offerings as well. If you're currently not tithing, won't you please start **today** - OK? Thank you.

Church Directory

Todd W. White ----- Pastor
 Mickie Shatwell ----- Pianist
 Dickie Eberle ----- Greeter, Custodian
 Larry Mathews, Caryn Quinnelly ----- S.S. Teachers
 Larry & Mary Byars, Brian & Charity Crawford,
 Dwayne English ----- Outreach
 Flowers ----- Hannah and Shirley White