

The Gables – Thanksgiving

Opening stories are from <http://www.guy-sports.com/humor/christmas/thanksgiving.htm>

Top Ten Historical Thanksgiving Facts

1. Thanksgiving Day is celebrated on the fourth Thursday in November in the USA.
2. Thanksgiving Day is celebrated on the second Monday in October in Canada.
3. The Plymouth Pilgrims were the first to celebrate the Thanksgiving.
4. They celebrated the first Thanksgiving Day in the fall of 1621.
5. The Wampanoag Indians were the people who taught the Pilgrims how to cultivate the land.
6. The Pilgrim leader, Governor William Bradford, had organized the first Thanksgiving feast in the year 1621 and invited the neighboring Wampanoag Indians also to the feast.
7. The state of New York officially made Thanksgiving Day an annual custom in 1817.
8. The annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade tradition began in the 1920's.
9. Californians are the largest consumers of turkey in the USA.
10. By the fall of 1621 only half of the pilgrims, who had sailed on the Mayflower, survived. The survivors, thankful to be alive, decided to hold a thanksgiving feast.

Those Ancestors!



The Taylor's were proud of their family tradition. Their ancestors had travelled to America with the Pilgrim Fathers on the Mayflower. They had included Congressmen, successful entrepreneurs, famous sports people and television stars.

They decided to research and write a family history, something for their children and grandchildren. They found a specialist genealogist and writer to help them. Only one problem arose - how to handle Great Uncle Jefferson Taylor who was executed in the electric chair.

The writer said she could handle the story tactfully. When the book appeared the section about Jefferson read:

Great Uncle Jefferson Taylor occupied a chair of applied electronics at an important government institution, he was attached to his position by the strongest of ties, and his death came as a great shock.

Ode to Thanksgiving

May your stuffing be tasty
May your turkey plump,
May your potatoes and gravy
Have nary a lump.
May your yams be delicious
And your pies take the prize,
And may your Thanksgiving dinner
Stay off your thighs!

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Dialog:

Rick: So, what are you thankful for, Donna?

Donna: Well, I'm thankful for all God has given me. I'm thankful that I'll be with Him one day in heaven; I'm thankful for my children; I'm thankful for my job as a Licensed Massage Therapist; and, I'm thankful that I get to serve as a Deaconess at our church.

Rick: Hmm! That's a good list, but it seems like you're missing something. Is there anything else you're thankful for?

Donna: Well, probably, but that's all I can think of right now.

Rick: What about your husband?

Donna: Oh yes; of course. I'm thankful for you too, honey.

Rick: (Sarcastically) Thanks a lot. Do you have any other thoughts about Thanksgiving?

Donna: Well, there's a lot of stuff I'd like to have, that I don't have.

Rick: John D. Rockefeller, the richest man in the world during the nineteenth century, was once asked, "How much money is enough money?" He replied, "Just a little bit more." While Mr. Rockefeller was a man who had faith in God, and used much of wealth to help others, the point is that you'll never be satisfied with just getting more stuff. Matthew 16:26 says, "What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Donna: Well, I'd still like to have a new car, a new house, and go on nice trips.

Rick: I know, but I think the point is to be thankful with what you *do* have, rather than wishing for things you *don't* have. 1 Timothy 6:6 says, "godliness with contentment is great gain."

Donna: Is there a Bible verse about godliness with discontentment?

Rick: I don't think so. Do you remember the story Pastor Jay told a few years ago about the woman from Uganda?

Donna: No, I don't. Could you remind me?

Rick: Sure. He said that a pastor from the United States was visiting Uganda on a missionary trip. One Sunday, while attending church there, a woman stood up and thanked God for the pair of shoes she had. She said she had been praying to receive a pair of shoes for three months

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and finally got them. She was thrilled that God had answered her prayers. And she was filled with joy and thankfulness. Most of us have shoes. Are we thankful for them?

Donna: Probably not. As citizens of the United States, I think we take for granted that we have shoes.

Rick: Yes. And are there other things we take for granted? Of course.

- There are physical things to be thankful for such as shelter, clothing, clean air to breath, good food, clean water, showers/baths, companionship, and our health, even if it is failing somewhat as we get older.
- Then there are spiritual things to be thankful for such as God’s wonderful gift of Jesus to die on the cross and pay the price for our sins. That we have God’s Word, the Bible. Many of the people around the world don’t own a Bible. Then there is the faith He gives us, which is far more valuable than silver or gold, and the promises He has in His word that He will take care of us in this world and in the next.

Donna: Yes, there is much to be thankful for.

Rick: Most of us won’t be here on earth four years from now, let alone forty years from now, so what’s the point of focusing on gathering more stuff. You can’t take it with you. I love the picture of the hearse travelling to the cemetery with a U-Haul trailer in tow behind it. A picture tells a thousand words.

Donna: What does the Bible say about this?

Rick:

- Matthew 6:19-21 says, “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
- Psalm 24:1 says, “The earth is the LORD’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it...” So, it’s not our stuff. It all belongs to God. He’s just letting us borrow it for a while.

Donna: I sometimes watch TV shows about hoarders. One show was about a woman who had a house that was chock full of stuff. She pleaded for help. The TV crew went into the woman’s home. In every room they found all kinds of junk stacked from ceiling to floor, most of it was clothing. They had a psychologist interview the woman. The psychologist had something very interesting to say. He said that the woman’s problem stemmed not from greed, but from fear. What’s a good Bible verse to help us cope with fear?

Rick: Philippians 4:6-7 says, “Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving,

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present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

Donna: So fear really means you’re not trusting God for something, correct?

Rick: Yes. The Lord is near. Proverbs 5:21 says, “...a man’s ways are in full view of the LORD, and he examines all his paths.” God is right there with you, going through whatever it is you are going through. You can trust Him. Is there something you’re fearful of?

Donna: Hmm. Well, both of our kids are off at college now, so I just want to be sure they’re safe, that they do well in school, that they make good choices, and that we figure out a way to pay for it.

Rick: I agree. People can be afraid of many other things too, such as the fear of running out of money, or the fear of losing their health, or maybe the fear of falling in the bathroom.

Donna: What can we do about it?

Rick: Pastor Jay said we should “Kill it.”

Donna: Kill it?

Rick: Yes. There are three steps to killing a fear:

1. Pray about your fear.
2. Tell God what you’re afraid of. (He knows what you’re going through, because He’s right there with you, but tell Him anyway.)
3. Thank Him.

So, Donna, what did we learn today?

Donna: To pray so we can get more stuff?

Rick: Not exactly.

Donna: That the first Thanksgiving Day was in 1621?

Rick: Well, yes, but what else?

Donna: That we should be content with what we have. We should reflect on our circumstances and think about all the good things we have, rather than focusing on stuff we think we need, but don’t.

Rick: Correct. And what else?

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Donna: That we should trust God to take care of us. He’s right there with us. We should pray about our fears, tell Him what we’re afraid of, and thank Him for delivering us from our fears.

Rick: Yes. So what’s a recent real-world example of thanking God for something that many people would be bitter about?

Donna: Hmm. I don’t know.

Rick: I’ll give you a hint: It happened yesterday at your brother Matt’s house.

Donna: [Tell the story of the dryer catching on fire and filling the house with smoke, four days before 40 people will be coming over to their house for Thanksgiving.]

Rick: Instead of being bitter about what had happened, they were thankful that they had good insurance, that no one was hurt, and that they were at home when it happened, so they could call 911 to prevent the house from burning down.

Donna: Yes. And do you have a Bible verse for being thankful even when bad things happen?

Rick: Sure. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 says, “Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

Donna: So, even if our finances are a mess, our health is bad, or the other circumstances in our life aren’t so great, we should be thankful to God for all he has done for us.

Rick: That’s exactly right, honey. Psalm 100:4 says, “Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.” [Turning to the audience] Have a Happy Thanksgiving everyone!

Donna: Yes. Happy Thanksgiving!