



# The Family Friend

A collection of articles and quotes to aid your family in daily living.

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## Not a Holiday or an Attitude

This month\*, our nation celebrates my very favorite holiday. It is not “marred” by some of the manmade legends and superstitions of other holidays. Neither has it (yet) become commercialized as much as other holidays.

Thanksgiving, at least in our family, is a day that loved ones get together and enjoy some time together. There are no gifts to be exchanged. There are, at least in most families, no elaborate ceremonies or rituals. People who love one another get to relax (except for those who spend hours cooking), share memories, make memories, and, hopefully, spend some time expressing gratitude to God for the blessings we have.

During this season, it is not uncommon to be reminded that thanksgiving should not be relegated to a holiday

that is celebrated only once a year. We are told that we need to have “an attitude of gratitude” every season and every day of the year.

Usually, this idea is presented as what might be called a helpful suggestion. We are told that our families would be better; our relationships with others would be enhanced; the atmosphere in our workplaces would improve; and that we would even feel better about ourselves if we had this “attitude of gratitude.”



I would like to challenge the thinking of all of us – including me. What if we started thinking of thanksgiving in terms of something more serious than a helpful suggestion? What if we considered it as a command

that our Lord expects His followers to carry out?

The Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write the following words in Romans 6:3-4:

*Know ye not, that so many of us who were baptized into Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

Now, please consider some things that the same apostle, inspired by the same Holy Spirit wrote to those who had been “risen with Christ” (Col. 3:1). How many of the following things from Colossians 3 sound like “helpful suggestions” to you?

“Put off all of these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth” (v. 8)

“Lie not to one another” (v. 9)

“Put on, therefore, as the elect of God... bowels of mer-

cies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, forbearing one another and forgiving one another, ... charity..." (vs. 12-14)

Again, I invite you to read those words in their original context. When you do, I believe that you will find that these have the force of commands that are to be obeyed by those who truly follow Jesus.

If that is the case, what is the force of these words?

"And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which ye also are called in one body; and be ye thankful" ([Col. 3:15](#), emphasis added).

Is it dangerous for people to fail to be thankful? Do you remember all of those despicable things about which Paul wrote in Romans 1? Do you remember that he wrote that "...they which commit such things are worthy of death..." (v. 32)?

Do you remember where their "downward spiral" began?

"...(When they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful..." ([Rom. 1:21](#)).

It is true that my earthly relationships would improve as I improve in the area of gratitude. It is also true that my feelings about myself would also improve.

All of that pales in comparison with the thought that my eternal destiny may be determined, in some measure, by whether or not I see thanksgiving as a holiday, an attitude, or a command.

\*Original article read, "week."

—Jim Faughn

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## News & Notes

### Suicide Rates Increase

When a celebrity commits suicide, it makes front-page news and dominates the tabloids for months. What many of us do not realize is that 44,965 Americans killed themselves in 2016 and that from 2010 to 2016 there has been a 70% increase in suicide among girls ages ten to nineteen. The nation as a whole has seen a 28% suicide rate increase from 1999 to 2016.

The experts are trying to explain all of this. Certainly, there is more than one factor involved, but we suggest that a major factor is our country's strong movement away from faith in God to a rejection of religion as a whole. Jesus Christ has given us a purpose in life. The unique teaching of Christ is that everyone, no matter what his situation or appearance or abilities, has a purpose in living.

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In addition to that, Christianity provides a way to deal with the failures in life. No one needs to live with a load of guilt. We can be forgiven of our sins and overcome our guilt, and we can turn the mistakes of the past into a ministry to help others walking the same path that we walked.

What can you expect if you are taught that you are an accident, that you have no purpose, and that life is merely a chance-driven battle for survival of the fittest? It is not hard to see the attractiveness of ending your life when you have no purpose, and you face struggles that seem impossible to overcome. How could we not have a suicide rate increase? Source: *Time* magazine, June 18, 2018, page 10.—John Clayton, *Does God Exist?*

## Happy Thanksgiving Day!



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