



THANKSGIVING - MORE THAN 'PRE-CHRISTMAS'

For the last several years it has felt to me that Thanksgiving has become a bit of an afterthought to Christmas. And trust me, I love Christmas. My favorite movie is “It’s a Wonderful Life,” and I have been listening to Christmas music since....well...I never really stopped.

Here we are in Mid-November and Christmas movies are already on TV, Christmas music is already hitting the airwaves, Christmas lights adorn our neighborhoods and Christmas displays are up and buzzing in every store we visit. As a Christmas kinda guy, I love all that.

For as long as I can remember, Christmas and Thanksgiving have been bundled together, and that is a good thing! Any kid in school can explain why Thanksgiving means that the teachers lighten up just a bit, and Christmas break is all that much closer. But what I don’t enjoy is when Thanksgiving simply gets lost in the Christmas hustle and bustle, becoming a mere gateway to “the Holiday Season.”

Thanksgiving is a time to reflect on the blessings we have been given in this turbulent world we call home, and to give praise to God for all He has carried us through. It is a day to remember those who are less fortunate than we, and to consider ways to be light and a helping hand to those in need.

From the Pilgrims who first joined in peace, cooperation and celebration with Squanto and the Native Americans, to George Washington who appointed a day of thanks to “*the beneficent author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be; that we may then all unite in rendering unto Him our sincere and humble thanks for His kind care and protection of the people of this country previous to their becoming a nation,*” to John Adams who asked that we give thanks and pray to God “*that He would smile on our colleges, academies, schools, and seminaries of learning, and make them nurseries of sound science, morals, and religion,*” to Abraham Lincoln, who solidified the last Thursday of November “*as a day of Thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens... and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation...*”

Thanksgiving is and should be a special and unique time to give thanks for what we are blessed with, confess our sins to a loving God who is faithful to forgive our sins, ask Him to heal the wounds of our nation, and ask His peace and favor to be upon us as we seek to do His will in the coming year.

Thanksgiving is a special time, and much, much more than just pre-Christmas.

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