

**Now thank we all our God, With hearts and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things has done, In Whom His world rejoices;
Who from our mothers' arms, Has blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love, And still is ours today.**

Martin Rinkhart 1586-1649

Dear Friends In Christ :

No doubt, ALL of us are by now feeling a little “*Covid-Weary.*” We are tired of masks, shutdowns, hand sanitizer and social-distancing. In this month in which our hearts naturally turn to Thanksgiving, it would be so easy to focus on what we have lost because of this terrible disease. But, then as I reflect more deeply, I realize that so many of the things that I miss ... Are ALL Blessings that in the past I have just taken for granted. We are already making great progress against this virus. And I am totally confident that in the next few months, we will beat this virus and we will come out on the other side to a “Post-Covid World” that will be a lot smarter and a lot wiser.

For me, part of being smarter and wiser, needs to be a deeper appreciation, and a greater Thankfulness for God’s Daily Blessings that I have just taken for granted. They are things like: the joy of a strong embrace from a friend; a warm handshake with a stranger; breathing freely without a mask; church potlucks and family reunions; the roar and enthusiasm of a packed crowd at a football or baseball game; and finally visiting family and friends from whom we have been self-isolating. In many ways, I have so many MORE things to give Thanks to God for this Thanksgiving 2020, simply because --- I now see them for the wonderful Blessings that they are.

With the month of November, we see again the turning of the seasons, the gorgeous fall colors, and the gathering-in of the harvest. As Christians, our hearts naturally turn in thankfulness and praise to GOD our Creator and Redeemer. I am always reminded of these beautiful words of promise from GOD’s Word:

Every good endowment and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, or shadow due to change.

James 1:17

Truly, GOD is the giver of every good and perfect gift. The seasons of our lives may be filled with many changes, but His goodness and His steadfast love for us never change. For every breath, for every heartbeat, for the opportunity of each new day to love and to serve Him, we give GOD our praise and thanksgiving.

Part of who we are as Christians - is that GOD gives to us a Spirit of Joy and Gratitude. We express this in our daily prayers, in our songs of praise & worship, in our weekly tithes & offerings, and in the way we receive one another in all love & mercy.

I believe that an important way that GOD calls us to live in this “Spirit of Thanksgiving” is for us to express our appreciation for one another. I would invite and challenge you in this Season of Thanksgiving to honor GOD by honoring one another; to express your thankfulness to GOD by intentionally appreciating one another. Today, look for something to affirm in those whom GOD has placed in your life: the store clerk, your spouse, your children, a coworker. Speak to them your word of

appreciation & encouragement. Intentionally cultivate this habit of always looking for that opportunity to encourage others while giving thanks to God. Let us bless GOD by blessing one another.

Always Giving THANKS to GOD for YOU!

**In Christ's Love,
Pastor Paul**