



November 2019

An “American” Thanksgiving

Dear Prince Parents:

I have heard it said that Thanksgiving is one day that is purely American. As we pause to celebrate this holiday rooted in our Pilgrim and Puritan traditions of the 1620s-1630s, I ask for some grace as a former American history teacher as I digress into a brief, but hopefully informative, history lesson that may arm you with a few sage-like facts to share at this year’s Thanksgiving table.



Thanksgiving “Holy Days” (now a single, secularized holiday) were originally religious events that occurred periodically, sometimes more than once a year, to celebrate significant achievements. During these holy days, Americans stopped working, turned to God in prayer and celebration, and returned thanksgiving for His blessings and grace. Shortly after our nation earned its independence from England, George Washington issued a Thanksgiving Proclamation in 1789 “to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor.” It was not until 1863 when President Lincoln, amidst the heat of the Civil War and with the strategic objective of unification, proclaimed the fourth Thursday in the month of November a national day of “Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens.”



As our nation’s focus on God’s prominence continues to lessen, this culture shift presents a superb opportunity for us to share our thanksgiving blessings with believers and nonbelievers, alike, as we pause and reflect upon for God’s grace for the privilege of being Americans.

You may want to consider pausing before this year’s Thanksgiving meal to have each person present briefly share one blessing from this past year and conclude with a prayer asking God for His continued blessing upon our churches, families, and school. Enjoy your children during this respite from school!

Warm regards and in His service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Seth A. Hathaway'.

Seth Hathaway
Head of School



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