

Destiny Newsletter

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by
Dave Breese

A GRATEFUL HEART

There are three main holidays which we will be celebrating in these coming days. Each one of them bears a particular message that we will find to be important to us and to the world in our time.

The first of these is Thanksgiving. In a world of indignation, resentment, hatred, ungratefulness, the word "thanksgiving" seems like an anomaly. Nevertheless, the attitude of mind which is best described by the word thanksgiving is advocated for us many times in the Word of God. The Apostle Paul told us that we are to be "*giving thanks always for all things*" (Eph. 5:20). He is therefore telling us that ours must be an attitude of gratefulness for everything in life that happens. As hard as this may be upon occasion, this is the key to joyous living.

Thanksgiving is always to be the attitude by which we pray. It is indeed not merely the key to successful prayer, but it's a component of prayer itself. We are to thank God for the answer to our prayers even before those answers may come.

"What do you have that you did not receive?"

We Christians know this and, therefore, prayers before meals are practiced everywhere and they are basically a moment of thanksgiving for the very food that we eat. We know and confess, therefore, that our very sustenance comes from the Lord.

The pilgrims in colonial America knew this more than most. When they ordained a day of thanksgiving, they were thankful for their very lives. They knew that the good providence of God had delivered them from starvation and death. Therefore, their thanksgiving was often lifted with tears of joy as well as totally sincere gratefulness within the heart.

When we think of it, our situation is the same. The Bible asks the question, "*What do you have that you did not receive?*" (1 Cor. 4:7). In fact, it is instructive to note the hundreds of times that the Bible uses the word "receive" or "received" concerning man and his relationship to God. One finally gains the impression that everything in all of life has come to us, not because of our works, but because of the grace of Jesus Christ.

This is certainly true about salvation; it comes to us all of grace. There are spiritual subverters in our time who demand works as well as faith as the basis of our salvation. Their efforts are mistaken, however, because too many times the Bible announces that salvation and everything else is by grace. God gives us grace for saving, grace for living, grace for assurance and grace

for everything. This is why the heart of the true Christian is filled with thanksgiving, because he knows that he would be instantly undone except for the gracious provision of God. Sincere thanksgiving is therefore the proper, indeed the inevitable, attitude of the perceptive Christian. But for the grace of God, the whole world would long since have sunk into hell and eternal perdition.

Therefore, at this time of the annual celebration of Thanksgiving, we must come before God with grateful hearts for His mercy and His love. Any attitude other than sincere thanksgiving is entirely mistaken and totally foolish. Thankfulness to God should surely be one of the first marks of a Christian.

The second holiday which comes to us in this season is that of Christmas. With the singing of familiar Christmas carols, the sight of falling snow, the sound of the wind getting brisker, and the pleasant twinkle of lights everywhere, we will soon be reminded that the Christmas season is newly upon us. We also sense that the coming of this holiday is not merely a set of activities, but there is a certain "feeling" in the air. Many of the Christmas songs talk about how "it's almost beginning to feel like Christmas," recognizing a certain attitude that has come upon the minds of people. In one way or another, we have come to call this feeling "the holiday spirit." A general sense of memory, joy, nostalgia, anticipation and similar things go together to make it that indefinable but very real thing, "the holiday spirit." It is probable that

every person in Christian civilization remembers, during the holidays, a score of past Christmases and a lot of people from the Wise Men to Ebenezer Scrooge. Yes, these are days in which a very real holiday spirit comes upon the nations of the West. We do well to think about that holiday spirit. This joyous day we call Christmas is more than toys and tinsel, of course. Rather, it is the day of remembrance of the most astonishing miracle in the history of the universe. That totally miraculous event was the birth of a baby, the Lord Jesus Christ. Born of a virgin, that baby was God Himself, taking on the form of human flesh and becoming like we are.

This was the miracle about which the angel spoke when he said concerning Mary, *"She shall bring forth a son, and you shall call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins"* (Matt. 1:21). In the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, deity touched humanity and, from that moment on, no person can doubt the love of God. The love of God was forever presented to man in the coming, the life, the death, the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We understand Christmas when we recognize *"that God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them; and has committed to us the word of reconciliation"* (II Cor. 5:19). So, as we celebrate Christmas again this year, we rejoice anew in the promise that *"God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life"* (John 3:16). The gift of God, which is everlasting life, is the most unimaginably precious gift that God ever gave to man.

The third holiday that we remember during this holiday season

is New Year's Day. In this, we celebrate the end of the old year and the beginning of the new. The New Year celebration speaks to us of new opportunities, new possibilities, new hopes, new, bright anticipations. It even speaks to us of the marvel of the prophetic Word, in which God says, *"Behold, I make all things new"* (Rev. 21:5).

There are many times in life when we look back at occasions of failure or foolishness and, as a consequence, are greatly discouraged. It is so easy for the person who (with Satan's help) has made a mistake, for him to say to himself, "God doesn't love me anymore and there are no more possibilities in life." This is, of course, a lie that is propagated by the devil. The fact that any person is yet alive in the flesh in this world is prima facie evidence that he has not run out of bright opportunities and great possibilities. To Christians of all of the ages, God speaks in His address to the Church in Philadelphia and says, *"Behold, I have set before you an open door, and no man can shut it"* (Rev. 3:8). Whatever sin or shortcoming may have overtaken the Christian, there is forgiveness, cleansing and the opportunity to begin anew. The coming of the new year should remind us of this.

Speaking about bright possibilities, this is surely the time to anticipate them. The world of technology has given us new, great instruments to touch millions of people with the message of the Gospel of Christ. The very anxieties of the world expand the possibilities for global evangelism. This because we Christians alone have the message from on high for a time like this.

In addition, God, in His providence, has brought the brightest generation of young people into the Church that most of us

have ever seen. They are familiar with modern technology and, when consecrated to Christ, can be laborers in a marvelous day of tremendous possibilities. What will the future hold? It will hold danger, opportunity, challenge and a hundred unpredictables that lend great excitement to the prospect of tomorrow. Therefore, it is wise for the Christian to face this new year with bright anticipation and a sense of serious appreciation of the times in the midst of which we live. This New Year's Day will bear greater import toward the future than most that we have seen.

We would also be remiss if we did not remind ourselves that the coming year may bring to pass that great event, the Rapture of the Church. All that is taking place in today's world reminds us of the marvelous promise that Christ is coming again for His own. How grand that we have the promise, *"Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed"* (I Cor. 15:51,52). What a moment that will be! We shall receive our glorified bodies and be taken home to heaven, ever to be with the Lord. Yes, indeed, there is a generation that will not die, but will be caught up intact into that great meeting in the air. That generation could certainly be this generation! Why not?

We should, therefore, let "the holiday spirit" be filled with joyous participation in the opportunities of today and bright anticipation for tomorrow. Yes, before the year is out we all could be translated from earth to heaven. Because of this blessed hope, let us today and throughout this holiday season, be filled with joy.

THE TIDE OF OUR TIMES

“PEACE AND SAFETY” is the siren song playing in the background as the world continues its relentless march into the end-times and the awaiting arms of the Antichrist and his false prophet. Designated as the “Millennium Summit,” the UN’s 55th session opened to the “largest-ever gathering of world leaders” in history with a call to unity and peace as 149 world leaders met to “ponder what kind of global society they hope to achieve.” Peacekeeping was the overarching theme with the agenda for the world’s elite including everything “from Albanian refugees to zinc mining” as well as plans to “ratify a record 514 multilateral treaties.” Surely with this latest summit, the world continues to move closer to that time *“when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them”* (1 Thess. 5:3).

INCREDIBLE! Absolutely incredible! Yes, out of the “spiritual summit” which preceded the Millennium Summit came a pronouncement from the pit of hell! During this summit of world religious leaders, reports tell us that over 1,000 religious leaders came together in a show of unity—“cardinals, rabbis, and patriarchs joined shamans, bodhisattvas, gurus, and other ‘living gods’—to encourage the faiths to bury ancient enmities and cooperate in resolving world conflicts.” This should cause one to shudder. And as troublesome as all of this may be, even more unbelievable is the statement

coming out of this so-called spiritual summit declaring all religions to be equal!

Which brings up one more question. “Just how close are we to the end, really?”

SOMETHING

NEW and quite amazing has been occurring at high school football games in towns and cities across America during the current fall football season. It seems that in response to

a recent Supreme Court ruling effectively banning “organized” public prayer before the game (in the case Santa Fe Independent School District vs. Doe), that a groundswell of “spontaneous” pre-game prayer has erupted in numerous places throughout the nation. In some localities, literally thousands of fans have joined in the “prayer rebellion” by uniting in a recitation of the Lord’s prayer immediately following the national anthem. As to the reasons behind this grassroots movement, one person was quoted as saying (and aptly so), “it’s not about praying anymore. It’s about our rights and freedoms being taken away.” For the record, the court’s ruling “banned prayers before football games [only] if the school initiated and promoted it.”

“A NEW WORLD RELIGION WILL ARISE.” Thus reads the beguiling subheading found in an article dealing with future trends and the predictions of a well-known “trendspotter.” It’s interesting to note that this “new religion” will be “based more on

something loosely defined as ‘spirituality’ than on specific creeds” and thus made to “appeal to the next generation.” Surprising? Not really. This is actually not new at all. The origins of this “new religion”—whatever its final form may be—are as old as the Garden of Eden and the fall of mankind. If you listen carefully, you may even hear the hiss of the Serpent as he subtly whispers, *“Ye shall be as gods”* (Genesis 3:5).

For a very brief description of this final world religion, see *Revelation Chapter 13, verse 8*: *“And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him [the Antichrist], whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”*

“ARE WE LIVING IN THE LAST DAYS?” is a very pertinent question indeed. From the seething cauldrons of hatred in the Middle East and elsewhere to the mapping of the human genome—“God’s instruction book for life”—even as we watch we see many strange and exciting developments taking place in the realms of human knowledge and experience. Surely the signs of the times are multiplying before our very eyes and the Rapture of the Church and the start of the Tribulation could be very soon. Jesus is coming! Are we ready?

Write for your copy of *“The Rapture of the Church.”*



THE PLAN



*There is, in life, a bright design —
My soul declares it so.*

*There is a vision, still by me
Unseen, but yet I know.*

*Another mind, another heart
Has hoped on my behalf.
Another eye has seen in me
That which I know not half.*

*A surety within my breast,
More sure than can be shown,
Convinces me that I am here
For reasons yet unknown.*

*But daily on my heart there dawns
A fairer, fuller light,
A brighter morning, more aglow
With clarity and sight.*

*Til here upon my earthly way
At this mid-point I find
I can more clearly now compare
The road ahead, behind.*

*The poignant, striking contrast here
I can now mark with ease.
The path that seemed so liquid then
Was really charted seas.*

*How could I then have doubted that
One far more sure than I:
More wise, more true, more filled with love
Was watching from the sky,
And working with relentless power
To open there for me
The high road of His hope, His plan
That I could not foresee.*

*My Lord, my God, I know that I
Have not as yet attained,
But help me now more sure to walk
Amid the unexplained.
To show that God ordains on earth
The making of a man,
Which process is the prelude here
To His eternal plan.*

*And when that moment golden comes
When faith gives way to sight,
No hesitation shall there be,
No backward look, no fright,
No flicker of reluctance then,
For there I sure shall say,
“The mighty architect of time
Designed it all that way.”*

—by Dave Breese

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

“What a blessing you have been to us and countless others through the years. Your tireless and selfless dedication in the source of our Lord is indeed a model we should endeavor to attain. We love you and more importantly the Lord loves you more.” – Glen Rose, TX

“Want to thank you for the informative material you send us. We also enjoy the poems you write. We are looking eagerly for 'Christ's' soon return. May He, 'God,' bless you and your family and your ministry for 'Him.'” – Alexandria, MN

“We have again been blessed by the summer study in the book of Revelation. We appreciate your dedication to the work of bringing lost souls to Christ and then feeding them spiritual food to assist their growth and maturity in the Lord. Please know that you are loved and prayed for by so many of your brothers and sisters in Christ—like us!!” – Dayton, OH

“I am a new listener to your radio station for about a year. I wasn't always able to listen to your program because I had classes on Saturdays, but on occasion I was able to tune in and loved your program!!! I am also a new Christian and I am finding that walking in the Lord is a full-time job. I don't mind it at all because I thank Jesus Christ our Lord for giving me a chance to do it all over again, start anew, and then [for Him to] forgive me for my sins at the same time is incredible!” – Edgewater, CO

“Just keep **Destiny Newsletter** coming. . . it is one of my anchors to the faith. Thank you for it.” – Elgin, IL

“I am writing you again to let you know how grateful I am for you and the Bible-centered Christ-honoring ministry you direct because I believe Jesus is the only way to heaven and the only hope for this world. I pray your ministry will continue to change lives.” – Memphis, TN



WORTH QUOTING

“In some measure all that comes after you is going to be influenced and determined by the kind of life you make in your business of living. When viewed from such a height of vision, even the seemingly least important life gathers round it a glory which truly passes understanding.”

— *Laurence I. Neale, D.D.*

“Only that day dawns to which we are awake.” — *Thoreau*

“Much has been said about the relative value of happiness; but write it on your heart that happiness is the cheapest thing in the world - when we buy it for someone else.” — *Flemming*

“Mine honor is my life; both grow in one; take honor from me and my life is done.” — *Shakespeare*

“Unless man has the wit and the grit to build his civilization on something better than material power, it is surely idle to talk of plans for a stable peace.” — *Francis B. Sayre*

“Before you try to convince anyone else be sure you are convinced, and if you cannot convince yourself, drop the subject.” — *John H. Patterson*

“One man with courage makes a majority.” — *Andrew Jackson*

But especially,

“*And the Word (Christ) was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth*” John 1:14.

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED



Q. How much should I study prophecy?

A. The primary thing to do is to study the Bible, the Word of God. With a grasp of the teachings of the Bible, you will find that Scripture places great emphasis on the future. Normally then, you would pursue examining the passages in which the Bible talks about heaven, the future of earth and the events that will surely come to pass. You will then be looking at the prophetic picture and you may feel constrained to invest some special time in studying this. After all, we will live in the future, an infinitely longer time than we have lived in the past. It is mystifying that some could know the Word of God and yet have no curiosity about the things to come. This probably evidences a spiritual deficiency.

Q. Why is the Bible long and complicated?

A. Any thing of value is long and appears complicated. God has chosen in His Word to give us the history of the world, the story of the nation of Israel and the message of the redemption of mankind. This may appear to be complicated, but we would hate to see anything left out for we might, therefore, miss something very important. One should not expect such a marvelous treasure of the revelation of the mind of God to be short and sweet. Some have tried to abbreviate the Bible which attempt, being foolish and presumptuous, was guaranteed to fail.

Q. Is God really good? If so, why do bad things happen?

A. When God made the world, He made it perfect. He controlled everything until He made man. He made

man a free moral agency and thereby gave Adam and Eve the power of choice. They chose to sin against God rather than to obey Him and so, the door was opened for every bad thing that has happened since. The Scripture says, “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men; for that all have sinned” (Rom. 5:12). Bad things happen because sin has corrupted the world.

Q. Yes, but couldn't God have prevented Adam from sinning and thereby saved the world a lot of trouble?

A. He certainly could have, but by so doing He would destroy His purpose in creation. That purpose was to “bring many sons into glory.” These strong sons, the heirs to the universe, will have been made strong by living in a world of sin, temptation and bad things. Without this, man would be a will-less automaton and that would be the worst thing of all.

Q. Jesus knows what we need before we do. Why then shall we pray?

A. We should pray because we are told to. The point is that the things that happen in the world are a combination of the working of the will of God and the will of man. The will of the righteous man is expressed to God in prayer and, therefore, the praying person has been given “the dignity of causality” in bringing things to pass.

Q. In the midst of this disappointing and dangerous world, how do we really know that God loves us?

A. In answer to this, many have pointed to the warm sunshine, the beauty of nature, the happy fellowship with friends and things like this. All of these may, however, fail. The final,

ultimate evidence of the love of God is the fact that He gave His Son to die for our sins on the cross. “But God commends His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8). Additionally, the Scripture says, “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (I John 4:10). The statement that God loves us is proved forever by the finished work of Christ on Calvary’s cross. The love of God is, therefore, never to be doubted.

Q. Couldn't God, because He owns the cattle on a thousand hills, have prevented me from going bankrupt?

A. Obviously, He certainly could, but about this the Bible teaches a very interesting doctrine. It says that manifold trials may come upon us, “that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found to praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ” (I Pet. 1:7). Out of the pit of financial collapse, many a Christian has emerged with a quality of spiritual life and an understanding of living that otherwise never would have been there. Bankruptcy may also prove that a person was in the wrong business after all. Dowden said, “Sometimes a noble failure serves the world as faithfully as a distinguished success.”

Q. Doesn't God call special people to be witnesses for Him?

A. God certainly calls and gives gifts for preaching, teaching, biblical exposition and like things. But Jesus was certainly speaking about every Christian when He said, “He that reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit to life eternal: that both he that sows and he that reaps may rejoice together . . . I sent you to reap” (Jn. 4:36,38). That includes everyone!

THINKING TOGETHER

BETTER THINKING, BETTER LIVING

by Dave Breese

Whatever may be the vicissitudes of our worldly society, we Christians are advised to never be overly concerned about anything. Great peace of mind is promised to us in the Word of God in every circumstance of life. The Bible says, *“Be anxious for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus”* (Phil. 4:6,7). No Christian in the world has been able to live without invoking that wonderful promise of peace. This, because the problems of life come to us all. We all must invoke the promise of “the peace of God which passes all understanding.”

Out of this, however, there arises a question. That is, “Is there any way of living above the fog, of having a life that is more transcendent than the one that I know?” “How can I keep from falling into the slough of despondency?”

There is an answer. This because, following the promise of peace, we have a program of personal thinking which God has given us. It might well be called “Better thinking for better living.” Paul says, *“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things”* (Phil. 4:8). Like an aircraft pilot operates from a checklist, so we have the checklist for higher capability. We can mount up with wings as eagles if we will follow the “better thinking for better living” formula that

we are given. The qualities of such a life are connected with the checklist of capability which is before us. Think about them.

... Whatever things are true. This is an understandable admonition because, of course, most of the things of our world are false. Almost all modern advertising is false. A high percentage of television is false. The content of most forms of modern education is built on false presumptions. The promises that people make to each other are generally false. Most panaceas touted to cure modern diseases are false. It seems almost that the world is filled with frauds, scams, con games and the like. One must force himself to keep his mind from dwelling on these things. So the Scripture says, *“Buy the truth, and sell it not”* (Prov. 23:23). The truth may be hard to find, but when we find it, we should never let it go.

The ultimate truth available to man, of course, is the Word of the living God. About this Jesus said, *“Thy Word is truth.”* The Bible, therefore, is a precious treasure of truth that brings understanding, which is a key to all of the things. All improvement in life is built on an understanding of truth.

... Whatever things are honest. The poet said,
“Hold ‘ere this truth
before your eyes

That all the world is lies and lies.”

Looking for a truly honest person in our time can be a frustrating task. About virtually everyone we meet, we should ask the question, “Would you buy a used car from this man?” The world is sure that politicians, TV promoters, vinyl siding salesmen, and even religionists are dishonest people. Their intent is not to help, but to deceive and exploit.

They should be held in contempt and avoided. Some should be prosecuted.

... Whatever things are just. Injustice, of which we have warning in the Word of God, saturates our world. The idea of fairness is known to all but practiced by few. The world says to itself, “Take advantage of your advantages, no matter what the consequences for others.”

... Whatever things are pure. A glass of water needs only to be 1% impure and it is undrinkable and perhaps poisoned. Purity is, therefore, a 100% thing or it is nothing. Young people are especially warned, “Keep thyself pure,” and this admonition must be the law for everyone.

... Whatever things are lovely. It is often a good thing to grow roses in the back yard so that we can get at least a small glimpse of loveliness. Out in the world things are becoming more hideous, grim, monstrous and repugnant. The absence of loveliness in “the real world,” is what makes works of art so attractive and valuable. This because they often represent the world as it ought to be, whereas we live in the hideous world that is.

... Whatever things are of good report. It is difficult today to garner the truth from anyone’s testimony. Reports that come to us from across the world are all subject to the bias, the spin that a liberal press puts upon them. An honest, good report today is a lucky acquisition rather than an expected piece of news. Listen to the reports from everywhere, but take them with a grain of salt. Many have been damaged by evil reports that should have been denounced at their source.

... if there be any virtue. The Scripture says, *“Add to your faith virtue”* (II Pet. 1:5). Virtue is good-

ness that is habitual. It is moral quality which we have a right to expect from others. The disappearance of virtue in our society is a sad development. Nevertheless, virtue is there, rare and precious.

. . . if there be any praise.

Few things are more artificial than the praise, the promotion, the prestige of those who are considered noteworthy by our world. The Hollywood star, the sportsman, the politician, all are usually praised with words that started with a hired publicity man. Things that are worthy of praise, true heroes or heroism, all of these are in a severe shortage today. The Bible says that we are to exercise "*honor to whom honor*" (Rom. 13:7). And therefore, praise is a worthy vehicle. There is, of course, no one worthy at all of the kind of praise that is deserved by our Lord Jesus Christ. To praise the Lord, therefore, is the beginning of a facility of mind which will

be valuable in all things. It is called discernment. It is true discrimination (which is a very useful word which has fallen into bad usage).

The point of all of this is that the Scripture says concerning these virtues that we are to "*think on these things.*" More than once the Bible indicates that we should control our minds and be masters of our thoughts. Concerning heaven and eternal things, the Scripture says, "*Set your affection on things above*" (Col. 3:2). That means, of course, that we should be masters of our mental direction. We are to let the same mind be in us which was also in Christ Jesus. This cannot be done if we have but a series of inchoate, floating thoughts which keep us confused and take us nowhere. There can be little personal development in the life of anyone apart from a reining in of the diverse, uncontrolled thoughts of the mind. Setting our affection on the proper things is, therefore, the course which the Word of God advocates.

This is a very needed thing today. There is entirely too much small and wasted conversation, even amongst Christians. There are too many superficial conversations and too many small and even disreputable thoughts. Too often our talking together concerns subjects which are forbidden in Scripture, concerning which the Bible says, "*Let it not be once named among you*" (Eph. 5:3). Too many verbal interactions move between the stupid and the prurient whose final result is the corrupting rather than the enhancing of our mental powers. The Christian who wants to live better and become a more stately, respected person must start by cleaning up his mind and letting that cleansing move out into his language. He must rescue himself from mental deterioration and, for many, the time is short.

Better thinking leads to better living. To miss this is to live an inferior life. The one who would live better must first think better.

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FOR YOU**
by Dave Breese



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Carol and I join in thanks to God for you. Your prayers for our family and for this ministry have produced marvelous spiritual dividends in the form of many won for Christ and the Gospel going out across the world. The opportunities we now face are greater than ever. Please continue to pray for us in these wonderful days. Your gift to this ministry is appreciated more than words can tell.

Faithfully yours,

David W. Breese, President
Christian Destiny, Inc.