

Church of God Sunday School

THANKSGIVING



In America, the fourth Thursday of November is celebrated as the Thanksgiving holiday. Did you ever wonder how this began?

When we think of Thanksgiving, we often think of Pilgrims. Who were the Pilgrims, and why were they so thankful? The Pilgrims did not always live in America. Before coming to live here, they lived in the country of England. In England the Pilgrims could not worship God as they believed they should.

In September of 1620, a ship called the *Mayflower* left England for America. On board were about 102 passengers (besides the crew). These people were moving to America to start a new life. We know them as the Pilgrims.

Three months later, the *Mayflower* landed at Plymouth Harbor, and the Pilgrims left the ship. There they began to build new houses. The first winter was very hard. Almost half of the people died that winter due to sickness, the lack of good food, and not having the proper shelter.

An Indian named Squanto became friends with the Pilgrims. He taught them how to raise corn and other vegetables. He also taught them how to fish and hunt.

By the fall of 1621, the Pilgrims were blessed to reap a good harvest. To show their thankfulness, the Pilgrims decided to have a feast. The Pilgrims were also thankful for the help they had received from the Indians. So, they invited the Indians to come to their thanksgiving feast. It was a very special dinner.

When we think of a Thanksgiving dinner, what foods come to our mind? Turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy, and pumpkin pie are some of the foods people often eat on Thanksgiving Day. What do you think the Pilgrims had to eat? It was quite different from what we might expect. Their feast might have included wild turkey, deer, dried corn, and codfish.

In 1863 President Abraham Lincoln made a Thanksgiving Proclamation. This was an invitation to all Americans to set aside the last Thursday in November as a day of thanksgiving and praise to God. This became a national holiday.

Thanksgiving is truly an American holiday, but it is more than that. Giving thanks is much more than having good manners, saying a prayer before our meals, or seeing how much turkey we can eat on a holiday.

Did you know that we are commanded to give thanks in the Bible? God considers it important that we have a thankful heart. Here are a few examples:

- "In every thing give thanks" (1 Thessalonians 5:18).
- "Offer unto God thanksgiving" (Psalm 50:14).
- "Be thankful unto him" (Psalm 100:4).
- "Sing unto the LORD with thanksgiving" (Psalm 147:7).
- "Be ye thankful" (Colossians 3:15).

Why should we be thankful to God? We are God's children. He is our Heavenly Father. God gives us everything we need: food, water, air, shelter, clothing. The greatest gift from God is the gift of salvation. God sent His Son, Jesus, to die on the Cross so that we could be saved from sin, live for Him, and one day live with Him in Heaven.

Have you thanked God for any of these blessings? It is easy to take the goodness of God for granted. You do not have to wait until Thanksgiving Day to tell God you are thankful. Why not take a moment now to thank God for all that He has done for you?

~~~~~  
**MEMORY VERSE:**

*"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God . . . ."*

*—1 Thessalonians 5:18*

~~~~~



I knew a man whose name was Horner
Who used to live on Grumble Corner;
Grumble Corner in Crosspatch Town,
And he never was seen without a frown.

He grumbled at this, and he grumbled at that.
He growled at the dog. He growled at the cat.
He grumbled at morning. He grumbled at night,
And to grumble and growl was his chief delight.

He grumbled so much at his wife that she
Began to grumble, as well as he.
And all the children, wherever they went,
Reflected their parents' discontent.

If the sky was dark and betokened rain,
Then Mr. Horner was sure to complain.
And if there was not a cloud about,
He grumbled because of a threatened drought.

His meals were never to suit his taste—
He grumbled at having to eat in haste.
The bread was poor, or the meat was tough—
Or else, he hadn't had half enough.

No matter how hard his wife would try
To please her husband, with scornful eye
He'd look around, and then with a scowl,
At something or other, he'd begin to growl.

One day as I walked down the street,
My old acquaintance I chanced to meet;
Whose face was without the look of care
And the ugly frown that had drifted there.

Thanksgiving Street

"I may be mistaken," perhaps, I said
As after saluting, I turned my head!
"But it is, and it isn't the Mr. Horner
Who used to live on Grumble Corner."

I met him next day, and I met him again;
In melting weather and in pelting rain,
When stocks were up and when stocks were down,
But a smile, somehow, had replaced the frown.

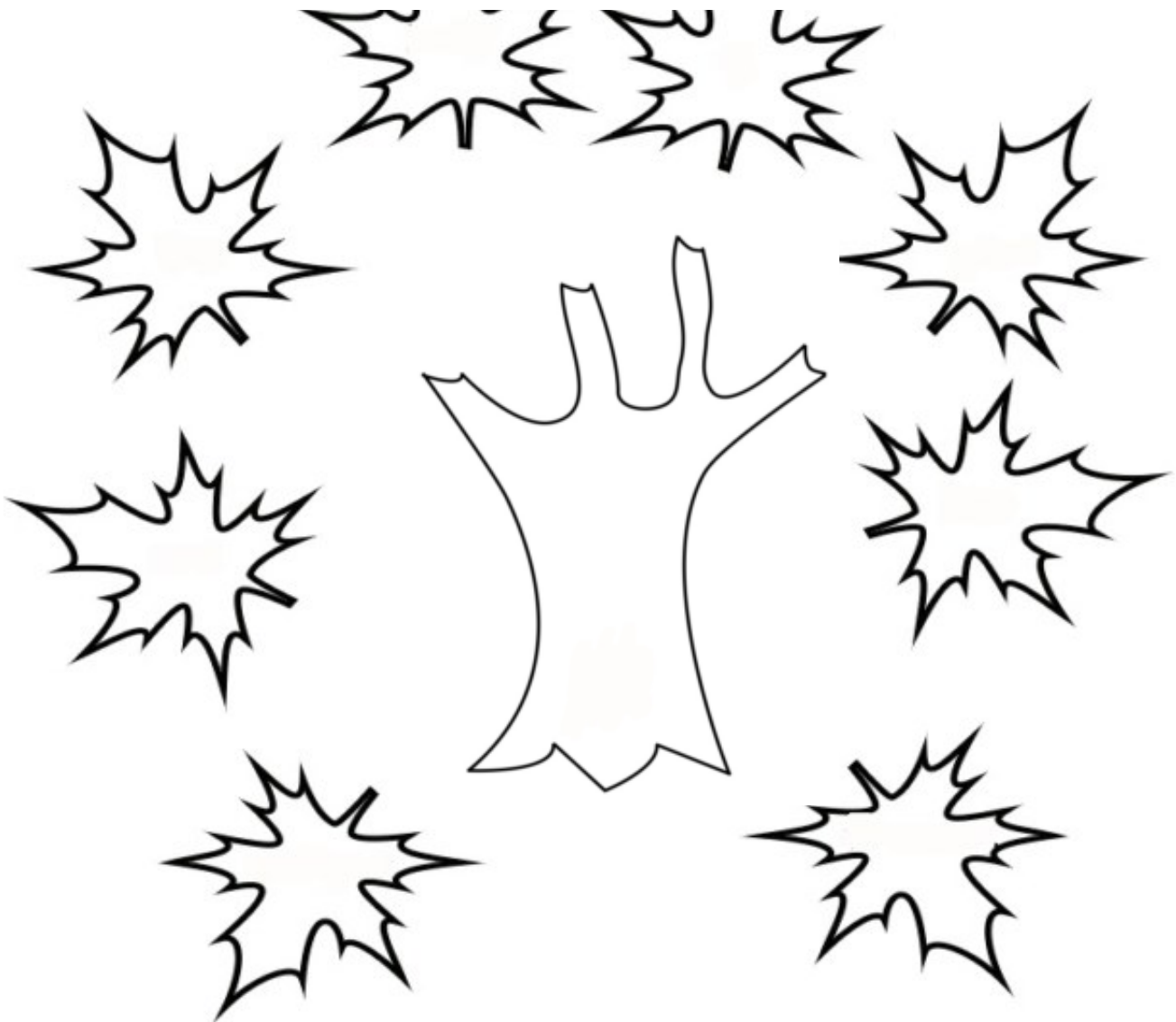
It puzzled me much, and so one day,
I seized his hand in a friendly way and said,
"Mr. Horner, I'd like to know
What can have happened to change you so?"

He laughed a laugh that was good to hear;
For it told of a conscience, calm and clear.
And he said with none of his old-time drawl,
"Why I've changed my residence, that is all."

"Yes," said Horner, "it wasn't healthy on
Grumble Corner.
And so I've moved: twas a change complete,
And you will find me now
On Thanksgiving Street."



What Are YOU Thankful For?



Write eight things that you are thankful for on the leaves around the tree.

Can you think of more than eight?



O Give thanks
unto the Lord.
Psalm 136:1