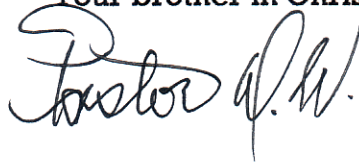


The Barnabas Letter

The season of autumn has arrived and with it, the holidays! Now then, in this month of November we have one major holiday and that is the feast of Thanksgiving. This holiday is usually thought of as a fairly secular time of food and family but the truth is that Thanksgiving Day was originally instituted in order that we, as free people, would set aside a day to give thanks to Almighty God for all of the many blessings and benefits that we enjoy. Yes, there is also the fact that the Pilgrim Fathers set aside a day of giving thanks and they even invited the local Indian tribe, but that celebration lasted three days and it was only sporadically repeated. The original idea for a national day of thanksgiving goes back to the era of the Civil War and the actual national holiday wasn't instituted until much later. In any case, this holiday is the beginning of what we now call "The Holiday Season" the day after Thanksgiving is supposedly the biggest Christmas shopping day of the entire year! But let's stop for just a minute and think things over. Why are we giving thanks? The economy isn't terribly good right now; many of our friends and neighbors are out of work. So then, why are we setting aside a day, just to give thanks? Simply put, we all have been richly blessed, yes we have! We have our families and we have our friends. We live in a country that is far and away the freest country on earth. But over and above all of this, we are loved by the Almighty God who has created us! At the end of this month the season of Advent will begin, this liturgical season is the season of preparation for Christmas. Why must we prepare? We must prepare because we must make

our hearts and minds ready, once again, for the coming of Christ our Savior King. We must always be in this state of preparation because; while we know that our King is indeed coming, we do not know the day or hour. At Christmas we celebrate our Lords first Advent, but during Advent we prepare, expectantly, longingly, for our Lords glorious return. Should our Lord tarry, we are well prepared to celebrate the gift of His first coming to save us from our own sinfulness. In a very real sense, Thanksgiving Day is the beginning of this journey. As we gather together this year, let us ask the Lords blessing for our country, our state, our town, our church, and our families. Let us rejoice in the love of God in Christ Jesus that has filled our hearts with joy unspeakable and full of glory and let us be truly thankful that this is so. Until next month: may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all!

Your brother in Christ Jesus;

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Pastor A. W.", positioned below the typed name.