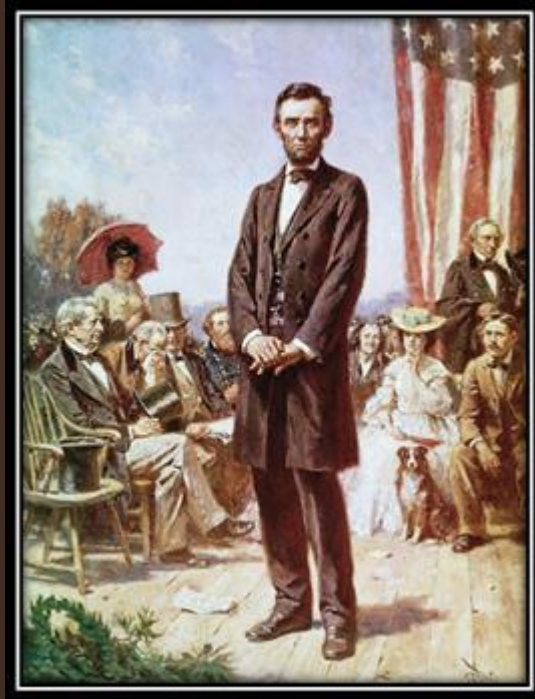




Thanksgiving



I wonder how many are aware that it was Abraham Lincoln who issued the proclamation in October of 1863 making Thanksgiving a national day of observance. President Lincoln, in the midst of the Civil War, invited his **“fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those that are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens.”**

How remarkable that under those circumstances, which involved much suffering and sorrow, the man who would become perhaps our greatest leader encouraged the people to reflect on all the great blessings of God. In his proclamation, he reminds Americans that God’s blessings **“are of so extraordinary a nature, that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever watchful providence of Almighty God.”** Among the “extraordinary” blessings Lincoln goes on to name, though, are ones we might consider quite basic: that civic order had been maintained during the war; that farmers still harvested their fields; and America remained at peace with other nations. In drawing attention to these simple truths, Lincoln highlights how habit makes us prone to take such blessings for granted. Practicing intentional Thankfulness, then, gives us new eyes to see the everyday miracles of our existence.

At the end, he calls for the nation to remember the widowed, the orphans, and the sufferers. Thankfulness must go hand-in-hand with giving of one’s self to others.

As we affirm at Pepperdine: “Freely Ye Received, Freely Give.”

Jeff Pippin
Senior Vice President & Chief Investment Officer
Pepperdine University

Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.
(1 Thessalonians 5:18)