

## Thanksgiving Day in America - The Secret Riches of Thankfulness

By Michael Bresciani Regardless of who started the annual day of thanksgiving it remains a holiday in which is hidden some of the secrets of all wisdom and it is a time when the very best of our humanity is invoked. Over three decades ago I sauntered into a book store in the city of New Orleans to shop through new titles and get caught up by intriguing cover artwork on the latest literary offerings. As I started to leave I glanced up behind the cashier and there I saw a picture that stopped me cold in my tracks. It has been reproduced millions of times by now I suspect because I've seen it in virtually hundreds of homes and shops and publications around the nation since then. The picture was of an old white haired gentleman sitting at a small wooden table with his head bowed praying. He was obviously thanking God for the humble meal on the table. Before him was a small bowl of soup or stew. A small piece of bread was there and a spoon. His face was lined with deep furrows but his brow was relaxed. His eyes were closed but the look of serenity and thankfulness was an amber and topaz sunset at the close of quiet autumn day. I froze in place and stared at the picture and let it speak the thousand words that a good picture is said to be worth. The first word the picture spoke was humility. In nearly a lifetime of study I've discovered that humility is one of the least understood of the highest human qualities. Its secrets remain obscure to most probably because pride, who is humility's mean sister, gets all the attention. Pride is pompous, loud, railing and beautiful in a world where class and pizzazz counts for a lot, she always demands center stage. Humility is generally associated with meekness and in this world is not sought after by many. Meekness and humility have a wisdom connected to them that is often unrecognized because they are always in the wings and if they appear for a brief moment they are likely to be mocked and ridiculed. More often than not humility is mistaken for weakness. Because Jesus Christ shared glory with his Father before he came to earth his willingness to come here and his arrival in a lowly manger could possibly be the greatest act of humility the earth has ever seen, but it wasn't. He had one more act of humility to show the world. In innocence as the prophet Isaiah said he went as a sheep to the slaughter. (Isa 53:7) His death on the cross was in lieu of his ability to call legions of angels to deliver him and virtually destroy the world. The meekness the world so readily mocks is the stuff that alone can save the world and to all who see this; salvation is the result. What looks like weakness was in fact the power of God to save a world that is bent on pride even as it flirts with death. In a recent Hollywood offering one movie started out with the words "The meek shall eat the dust of the earth" blazoned across the screen. It was obviously a perverse take off from the well known passage of scripture found in Matthews's gospel (Mt 5:5) "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." The most powerful act of mercy this world will ever see was accomplished through the greatest act of humility ever seen. Here is wisdom. What conqueror, what educator, what philanthropist can make such a claim. It is the rest of the story that goes un-noticed, unheralded and never mentioned if at all possible. The one who humbly died on the cross returns as judge and ruler, but not alone. The meek who inherit the earth come with him to claim their inheritance. Rather than eating dust they will be rulers with him forever. (Rev 20:6) Being thankful for everything is the mother of meekness and in God's economy it counts for a lot. Jesus almost never commended anyone in the New Testament and it is said that he would not hear testimony of man because he knew what was in man. (Jn 2:25) The only exceptions to this fact turn out to be, you guessed it, acts of pure humility. The first is when a widow threw a few pennies into the temple treasury and Jesus said she threw in more than all the rest because it was all she had. Like the little bowl of stew and the tiny piece of bread in the picture, it wasn't the feast spread lavishly across a table that warranted the old man's thanks. In God's eyes it was the old man's thankfulness that was lavish. The only other person commended in the Bible for a great act of humility and godliness was another person offering thanks. Jesus healed ten people in a group of lepers but only one came back to thank him. Jesus told that person to go in peace because his faith had made him whole. There is no doubt the wholeness Christ spoke of had nothing to do with his physical malady. The leprosy was already gone when the man returned to give thanks. Here is the other secret hidden deeply in the power of thankfulness and meekness: it heals. Here are the best kept secrets of thanksgiving you will ever find. First, your thankfulness regardless of what is on your Thanksgiving Day table is a giant and lavish spread in the eyes of God. Essentially your thankfulness is his thanksgiving feast. Secondly when this nation remembers to thank God for all his blessings he will remember to heal us. Don't worry; I'm not espousing that people are born again because they are thankful or that it suspends all the other requirements or commandments of God. What I am saying is that humility and meekness displayed in an act of genuine thankfulness is an entry level doorway to the healing of our nation. Who would not agree that we need healing in these troubled days in America? I have said all of that to say this; happy Thanksgiving America and don't forget to be thankful. &nbsp;

### About the Author

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