

Materially speaking, there is no place in the world as rich as the United States. No country has such easy access to both luxuries and the basic necessities of life. Even the poorest of Americans have more than most people throughout the world.

Consider how freely we access something as basic as clean water. I move a lever, and as much water as I want pours out.

Or think of the food. I have (and eat!) so much more than I need, and sometimes even more than I want.

And this doesn't include the electronics, the communication, and the entertainment. We can add to that the ability to travel almost anywhere without worrying about being ambushed or hitting a landmine, and free access to an astounding deposit of natural resources.

And consider the freedoms we often take for granted: that the police can't barge into my home without a warrant, or that I can speak my mind for or against any political leader or system, or that I can worship God in the tradition I prefer. These blessings and freedoms are the envy of many other populations.

In the mix, however, are some things in our society that are not as pretty. The crimes committed against children, born and unborn. The lack of respect for authority, as well as the abuse of authority. The

forgotten. The lost. The selfishness. The social attacks against believers, and the social attacks by believers.

How can a nation so blessed find itself entangled with some of the most unsavory characteristics? According Romans 1:21, this happens when people forget to do two things: to glorify God and to thank God. It happens because we forget the source of our blessings. It happens when we neglect the Creator while devouring the creation.

This week, our nation takes a day to thank God for our blessings. Unfortunately, some don't think about giving thanks the rest of the year. But at least once a year, most of us stop and thank God for the blessings we ought to be thankful for all year.

This holiday we call Thanksgiving was set aside for the very purpose we read in Romans: to glorify and thank God. It wasn't begun as a day away from work, a day for parades, a day to enjoy food and drink, a day for football or hunting.

While all of these can have their place, the focus is on God, and on His blessings. This holiday is our lifeline; it is the hope for our society--that we haven't completely lost our willingness to thank God for what we have been given.

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