



Times Remembered
Betty A. Young

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Nearly four hundred years ago, a great many of the people in England were very unhappy because their king would not let them worship and pray to God as they liked. The king said they must use the same prayers that he did and if they would not do this; they were thrown into prison or driven from their homes.

People band together and after much talking and planning they called themselves, Pilgrims and decided to hire vessels to come to America. They boarded the Mayflower with one hundred people on board. They were very crowded; it was cold and uncomfortable; the sea was rough and pitched the Mayflower about, it was a difficult time, and they were two months sailing over the water.

At last, the Mayflower came in site of land; but there was no grass, nor flowers or birds. They were very disappointed, for the month was November and there was nothing to be seen but rocks and sand and hard bare ground.

The First Thanksgiving

In November 1620, the Mayflower arrived; William Bradford and the pilgrims landed on a spot called Plymouth Rock that is now in Massachusetts. It was cold, there wasn't much shelter and people begin to get sick. They suffered so much during that first winter. The weather was bad with snow and the wind was icy.

There wasn't enough food to eat and they began to get sick. One after another became ill and soon half of them were sick. A man called Brave Myles Standish and others nursed them as best as they knew how; but before spring came half of the people died. Soon the sun shone more brightly, the snow melted and the leaves begin to grow, spring had finally arrived.

Some friendly Indians had visited the Pilgrims during the winter and Captain Miles Standish, with several of his men had returned to visit. One of the kind Indians was called Squanto, and he came to stay with the Pilgrims and taught them how to plant corn, peas, barley and wheat.

When it was autumn, the fathers gathered the grain and vegetables they had planted and found there was enough food to carry them through the long winter ahead.

"Let us thank God for it all," they said. "It is He who has made the sun shine and gave us rain that made the corn grow,"

and they thanked God for all their blessings.

Then they decided to have a great Thanksgiving party. The men went hunting and brought back wild ducks, geese and turkeys and there was venison from the deer and the women made corn bread and wheat into bread. There was also plentiful fish and clams from the ocean.

The friendly Indians and their chief, Massasoit came and enjoyed the harvest with the Pilgrims. They gave thanks to God for his goodness and sang and danced and celebrated for several days.

The Pilgrims forgot about their previous troubles and tried to think of all the good things of how God had blessed them. All this happened over four hundred years ago, and ever since that time Thanksgiving has been celebrated in our country.

How will you celebrate Thanksgiving? Whatever or wherever you are, let us not forget who makes all things possible... our God, who walks with us and blesses us each and every day. Give thanks to God not only on Thanksgiving, but every day for the freedom to worship and all the blessings he gives us throughout the year.

Every good and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

James 1:17 KJV.

Man has to decide between attending wife's funeral or ball game



America's Heartland
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An old fellow was watching the Super Bowl from front row seats near the 50-yard line when a man, passing by, asked if someone would be sitting in the seat next to him.

"No," he said. "That seat is empty."

"You have to be kidding me," the man said. "Who in their right mind would have a great seat like this for the Super Bowl and not use it?"

"Well, actually my wife was supposed to come with me, but she died."

"I'm sorry to hear that. But couldn't you find a friend or relative or even a neighbor to take the seat?"

"No," the fellow said.

"They're all at her funeral."

I'm constantly amazed by the loyalty and devotion so many people have to their favorite athletic teams. They wouldn't dare miss a game. If they can't be there in person, they'll watch on TV, even if it means paying huge monthly bills to cable or satellite companies to get all the ESPN coverage.

Here's the kicker: So many of those sports fans claim to be devout Christians who insist that their devotion to Christ is first and foremost. Yet, those Christians have no inhibitions about skipping church services if their favorite teams are playing.

Time was when missing Sunday worship was unthinkable. Nowadays, many Christians know far more about their favorite sports heroes than they know about Jesus.

They'll spend a couple hundred dollars or more for tickets, parking, food and drinks at a sports arena. Yet, they'll feel like they've done something incredibly generous if they toss a \$20 bill into the church offering plate.

If sports fans invested as much in local churches as they do for season tickets, the gospel would quickly spread to every corner of the earth. And if they would bring the same excitement to church that they take to the sports arena, worship services would be lively indeed.

The great victory in the history of the world came when Jesus defeated death, hell and the grave, and when we hear sermons about that, we should jump to our feet and cheer. In fact, we should absolutely shake the rafters with applause. What could be more exciting?

We chuckle about the fanatical sports fan who refused to miss a game for his wife's funeral. Perhaps you know someone just that serious about their favorite athlete, someone who talks constantly about that athlete and even wears his jersey.

If only we had more people who felt so strongly about Jesus.

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