

**THIS IS ONEIDA  
BE THANKFUL, BE OBEDIENT, BE BLESSED**

We recently had the privilege of having a great man who runs a great ministry on our campus. Mr. Robby Speer from a ministry called Sports Reach shared with us in chapel, and the following is an article written by Robby for his December newsletter that I want to share with you.

“Christmas is getting here much earlier than it used to” is what I have been hearing more than ever before. Folks are starting protest groups about stores opening up earlier on Thanksgiving night, while others are making Black Friday a family tradition.

It does seem that we have lost some of the emphasis of Thanksgiving, that of being thankful. But the question is: why is that important?

I don’t believe in accidents. I believe that God puts things together for a purpose. So I would like to share a few thoughts on how I believe some things work together.

Thanksgiving is a time of thankfulness. Psalm 100:4 says, “Enter into His courts with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise! Give thanks to Him, bless His name.” We seem to be challenged to think more about what to be thankful for. Everyone has some things to be thankful for, but a believer in Christ has even more. Not only can we be thankful for all that God has given, but we should be even more thankful for who He really is.

I have always found it so interesting that the precursor holiday to Christmas is one that celebrates thankfulness. Here comes the rub! During this time of year, we are made more aware of the needs of others. Why is it that we only take this time of year to recognize the year-’round needs of others? It’s truly a shame to think that we only take one time of year to stop and take others into consideration. We have many that are in need, and it seems that during Christmas many are willing to try to help others.

As followers of Christ, we need to be the ones leading this. The world will try to drag us into the celebration of the Christmas season, but neglect the purpose for our celebration.

We celebrate the birth of our Savior because we are thankful for what it really means. Therefore, because we are thankful, we are more willing to be obedient to reach out to others. Thankfulness leads to obedience.

There is one more step that occurs--blessings. When we are obedient to God, we are blessed. Deuteronomy 28:2 says, “All these blessings will come on you and accompany you if you obey the Lord your God.” Matthew 6:33 also says, “But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you.”

Let me say that all blessings may not come immediately. There are also times where there is some adversity that occurs when we decide we will obey. Many may not like our obedience, but God does. God is faithful and does bless our obedience.

So what comes next? Thankfulness for our blessing! “Wait, am I seeing a pattern?” Yes! A pattern that says when we are thankful, we want to be obedient. When we are obedient, we are blessed and when we are obedient we are once again thankful!

Be thankful, be obedient, be blessed! Merry Christmas!



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