

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church  
Quincy, IL  
Rev. Martin Eden

Thanksgiving Eve  
Wednesday, November 26, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

## **“Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Contentment”**

Philippians 4:6-20

Paul says, “Do not be anxious about anything.” Godly contentment is to be the pattern of life for the Christian. Last week, Malinda had me go to County Market to get something for a recipe. I thought about how fortunate we are to have both the means and opportunity to go to a grocery store. Most of the world does not live this way. I also noticed that the Mega Millions Jackpot is only at \$50 million. That jackpot would never create the euphoria that the \$980 million jackpot created a couple of weeks ago. Winning \$50 million is certainly not a newsworthy event in our society. \$50 million doesn’t make a headline.

As we look at our lives, at what point do we offer thanks to God? Would we humbly give thanks if all that we had were the bare necessities of food on the table (and shelter from the cold and rain)? Or would we only truly be thankful if the numbers for the \$50 million matched our beloved little ticket?

I would venture a guess that most of us fall somewhere in between. We all have more than just food on the table. But where does the reality of our life and godly contentment meet? I read this week that the average American (individual, not household) throws away 70 lbs. of clothing every year.

We pray, “Give us this day our daily bread,” and, in that prayer where Christ taught His disciples to pray, “Daily bread” is the only material thing we specifically request. Now, I believe that Luther is absolutely correct that “daily bread” includes so much more – as we responsively confessed earlier.

However, the notion of “godly contentment,” that is, being satisfied having only what we truly need in regard to all of these things is where are our thoughts and our hearts are to be. My guess is that none of you will win the \$50 million – I know that I won’t because I didn’t buy a ticket. And my guess is that none of you will go hungry this weekend – I have seen my refrigerator. I am not too worried.

But learning to be content whatever the circumstances, that is what this Thanksgiving Holiday is about for God’s people. God does provide. He has

provided. He will provide. And even if there comes a day when there is no food on your table, God will still have provided everything you truly need, because He sent His Son as the ultimate fragrant offering and acceptable sacrifice of which Paul speaks.

This Thanksgiving is very different in the Eden household. We actually celebrated with our big meal last Friday, just in case Oliver, my grandson, made an early appearance down in Kentucky. We could not invite our extended family as we have for the past 15 years. But we have so much for which to be thankful.

Thanksgiving, most years, is the biggest celebration we have as a family. Obviously, Christmas and Easter are more important holidays, however, because of my schedule, those are days when, after worship, I'm just really happy to have a nap. That is something for which I am thankful.

However, the day that I am looking forward to the most in the coming year is January 4. That is the Sunday when Oliver will be baptized right here.

Christ has given us the greatest reason to give thanks. We ask for daily bread, and we receive the Bread of Life. We ask for house and home; we

receive the Kingdom of God. We ask for clothing and shoes; we receive the white garment of Baptism and Christ's robe of righteousness. We ask for devout husband or wife and children; we receive adoption into the family of God and His Church. We pray for peace and health and the long life that comes with it; we receive the peace of God, the promise of the resurrection, and ultimately a new body which will endure forever.

The stated goal of our society is life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. There are those who claim to find happiness in all sorts of places. But the happiness offered by the world only lasts a short time.

The stated goal of the people of God is eternal life, freedom in Christ, and the pursuit of contentment. There is only one place to find that. No matter what our station in life may be, whether well fed or hungry, by the mercy and grace of God, we have everything we need in God's Word and Sacrament.

And as the Psalmist says, "O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; and His mercy endures forever." Amen.