

# Thanksgiving

written by Tim Jennings, M.D. | November 25, 2021



It is Thanksgiving, and this year, with all that has been happening in the world, I have been reflecting on my life, how I ended up where I am today. As much as my ego would like to take all the credit—to recount my long hours of study, my hard work, my personal choices—I realize that my choices are only a part of a greater reality. Who I am today, where I am today, is a result of many influences, many people investing their time and energy in me throughout my life and creating opportunities for me to choose and act to take my life down the paths that I have walked. So, this Thanksgiving, I want to remember some of those who have helped me become who I am today.

By expressing my thanks to others, in no way do I want to diminish the necessity of hard work and healthy personal choices—these are essential to a successful life. But my hard work and choices would be meaningless if I wasn't first and foremost under God's grace. So first, above all others, I give thanks to God.

*Almighty Creator of heaven and earth, thank you for being who you are—for your constancy, faithfulness, reliability, trustworthiness, never-failing compassion, love, and mercy. Thank you for how you have created reality to operate—upon your design laws of love. Thank you for life and for genuine freedom of conscience, the ability to think and do. And Lord of love, thank you for enabling me to choose you and for Jesus, whose life and sacrifice not only reveal you to us but who, as a human, overcame the power of sin and is your means of saving humanity and restoring*

*me to unity with you. Thank you, Father, for not giving up on me despite my many faults, mistakes, the times I have purposely rebelled, the messes I have made, the people I have hurt, and the times I have let you down. Thank you for always pursuing me, for never letting go. And loving Savior, thank you for the people you have sent into my life to teach me, correct me, challenge me, support me, help me, encourage me, hold me, counsel me, befriend me, and love me. To you, above all others, I am thankful and give you my heart, mind, life, and self. Thank you for making me a member of your family. I love you, Lord!*

I am also thankful for my father, who, though he was not a member of the church, was a hard worker and diligently provided for his family, disciplined me when I needed it, held me accountable, taught me a strong work ethic and to be responsible, and supported my mother in raising me in the church.

I am thankful for my mother who taught me the Bible, made Jesus the center of our home, sacrificed to ensure that I had a Christian education, and also held me accountable, taught me a strong work ethic, disciplined me when I needed it, and loved me as only a mother can.

I am thankful for the church I grew up in, its concern for children, and giving me a strong Bible knowledge, and for the Christian education that gave me a worldview centering upon God.

I am thankful for my teachers Chuck and Charlene Robertson, Charles Renard, Mr. Swinson, Jan Haluska, Wilma McClarty, Elaine Correnti, and many others, who not only educated me, but valued me as a person, saw potential in me, and counseled, challenged and encouraged me.

I am thankful for my high school friend Chan and his parents Dr. and Mrs. von Henner. Chan befriended me when I was new to the community and struggling with my own adolescent insecurities. He made me feel welcome. It was Dr. von Henner who was a role model to me and inspired me to become a doctor. I am so thankful for their impact on my life.

I am thankful for my professors in college, medical school, and residency who didn't believe in God and challenged me to examine my own beliefs. Their questions, objections, and criticisms drove me to dig deeper, study harder, and search more diligently, ultimately refining my beliefs and helping me eliminate distortions from my mind and grow in my confidence in and love for God.

I am thankful for Christie, my wife! Words are inadequate to describe her, the incredible blessing God has poured out upon me through her. I am a better man because of her, and I will be thankful for all eternity because God brought her into my life.

I am thankful for all of my family: my brother Bill; my sister Terri; and my step-son, Michael; his wife, Stephanie; and my grandchildren, Lennox and Dexter. What a blessing they have all been to me; the influence they have had on who I am today is immeasurable.

I am thankful for our Come and Reason Ministries board and team, who have given so much of themselves to bring this message to the world. And I am grateful for all of you, our ministry family and friends, for the correspondence you share of your challenges, struggles, and successes, how God has blessed in your life, and how this message has brought healing. I am thankful for your support, prayers, donations, encouragement, and love. I wish I could travel more and meet more of you, but please know that I am thankful for all of you.

And this is just a small sampling of the myriad people and influences that God has used to help me

become who I am today; there are so many others I could name. My life has been blessed by so many, and I am thankful.