

Hyun Jin Moon's Family Peace Association: Being Thankful This Season (Part 2)

Howard Self
November 22, 2021



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Being Thankful This Season

At this time of year, we are reminded of the importance of gratitude. We realize that there is much to be grateful for when we count our blessings and acknowledge the work and sacrifices of those who came before us. Below, you will find a story and a resource recommendation to supplement your Thanksgiving week. We hope you find them meaningful. Have a happy Thanksgiving with your family and friends!

[STORY OF THE DAY](#)



America

By Richard Perea

In growing from a child to an adult, we develop an understanding of who we are, how things work, and what is right and wrong. In effect, we gain a world view which frames the parameters for beliefs, perceptions, and actions. This framework becomes the standard by which we measure all things; it is the lens through which we perceive the world. It shapes our decisions and direction.

There comes the point in each person's life when you realize that the world is not perfect. What we do with that realization can become a formidable force for our character development. ([Read on!](#))

RESOURCE OF THE DAY



PragerU

Thanksgiving Video

Review by Yoshitaka Goto

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IN CASE YOU MISSED



Gratitude in the Month of November

By Karilee Aoki

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Looking for America

Nov 20, 2021 | 0 comments



By Richard Perea

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There comes the point in each person's life when you realize that the world is not perfect. What we do with that realization can become a formidable force for our character development.

Who is responsible or to blame for the imperfect world? We can blame our parents, society, a flawed education system, the government, religion, and so forth. But, unfortunately, a great deal of effort is wasted in constructing blame trees and finding someone or something to blame for society's ills.



The recognition that the



world is imperfect is not unique to our generation. It is a timeless struggle to make the world a better place. Our disappointment or rage with it must not become the justification for irresponsible or destructive behavior.

Instead of constructing blame

trees, wouldn't it be better to plant responsibility trees beginning with ourselves? What can I do? How can I help my family? How does my family contribute to society, society to the nation, the nation to the world?

The United States of America is not perfect. Still, it has become a nation of all peoples, a leader in advances in industry, technology, civil rights. America, in its relatively short history, became the most prosperous country in the world. People come from all over the world to live here, to find a better life. Even her harshest critics acknowledge this. I have traveled and worked in different countries and am always happy and relieved to come back home. What makes America so different?

It is an inquiry that each of us should explore. In "America," a 1968 song written by Paul Simon, a young couple is on a road trip, and the singer reflects, "I've gone to look for America." In his simple lyrics, Simon expresses a longing to understand this country. I feel that it is time to search for America again. In 1968, like today, America was rife with division, racial conflicts, questioning, and searching, especially for its young people.

The heightened sensibilities that come from living in a contentious time can awaken the yearnings for something better.

The United States of America was formed amid the Age of Enlightenment. In the writings of the Founding Fathers, you can see the influence of the thinkers of that era. The Enlightenment thinkers elucidated ground-breaking realizations that reframed the understanding of man's role in the world and the role of government. The language of the Declaration of Independence reflects this. We find this in the phrase:



"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

These words hold significant meaning and implications. The rights of men come from their Creator, not from any institution. Simply put, every person is born with the right to live, be free, and pursue a fulfilling life. Our government should protect those rights for each person, for all people. One of the foremost Enlightenment thinkers, John Locke, recognized that each person has the intrinsic capacity to discern right from wrong. He wrote in *Why Men Reason So Poorly*:

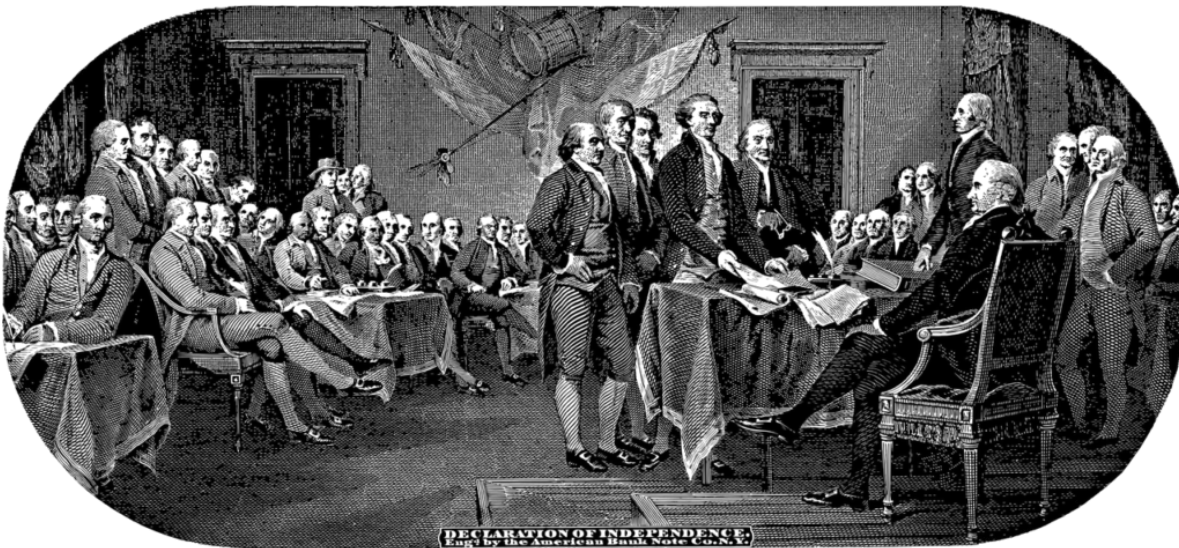
“Every man carries about him a touchstone, if he will make use of it, to distinguish substantial gold from superficial glitterings, truth from appearances. And indeed, the use and benefit of this touchstone, which is natural reason, is spoiled and lost only by assuming prejudices, overweening presumption, and narrowing our minds.”

The founders sought to foster an environment that allows for the growth of the human spirit. They placed man’s pursuit of his God-given, or if you prefer, nature endowed rights as the priority. They reasoned that the role of government is to protect each person’s right to become a fully realized human being, a complete child of God. This is the basis for the value of each individual. The conceptual framework of the founders places the onus on each person’s rights and responsibilities. It is not the role of the government to dictate or define right and wrong but to nurture and protect those rights.

Has the American experiment been perfect? It has not. The growing pains have been at times severe. During the Civil War, the nation almost splintered and collapsed. Abraham Lincoln said in his Gettysburg Address:

“Our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and dedicated, can long endure.”

The “American experiment” has been tested in every generation, and by extension, so has the human experience.



The Founding Fathers had the presence of mind to realize they had the historic opportunity to shape a new kind of nation. The nation they founded has influenced the world. Their work is far from complete. Doesn’t every generation have the opportunity to shape and steer history? Rather than decry past flaws, isn’t it more effective to learn from the past, both the good and the bad, and give our best in the time we have to make it better? What shall we do with our time? I’m looking for America, not only what it is and has been but, more importantly, what it can become.

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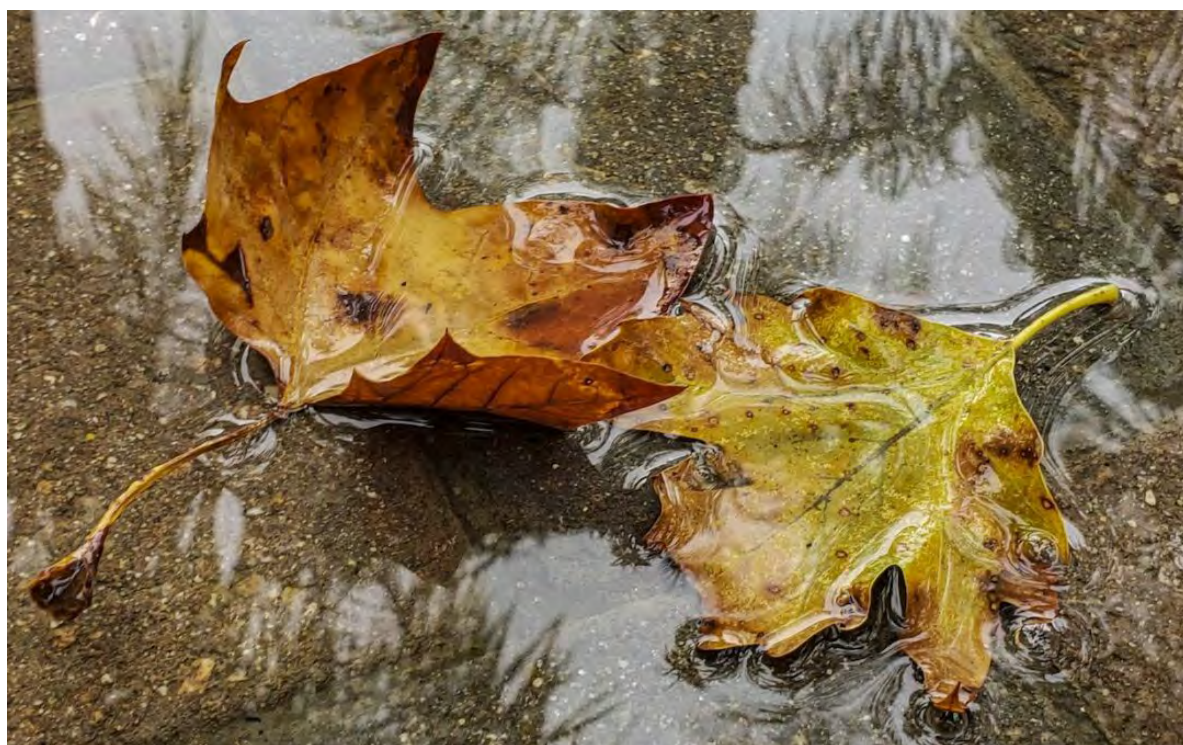
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Gratitude in the Month of November

Nov 20, 2021 | 0 comments



By Karilee Aoki

This year, November has arrived in full Seattle fashion — grey skies with a 100% chance of rain. We had many more puddles and more squishy lawns around than anyone expected. But I was so grateful. After a long scorching summer of drought and high water bills, I was very happy to see that glorious rain finally coming down, turning everything green once again.

There was more I was grateful for. On Veterans Day, our family had the opportunity to attend a local Veterans Day flag-placing ceremony, honoring all the brave souls who chose to give their service and even make the ultimate sacrifice to protect our country's God-given fundamental values and freedoms. It was cold and drizzly as I gathered my kids from their beds and drove them down that morning to the Evergreen Washelli Cemetery. It was our first time visiting such a place together, and my kids looked around in



wonder with many questions and excitement. After we received the single American flag they had left, we found the name of a veteran who had served in the Korean War and honored him.



When the commemorative ceremony began later on, I was surprised when I became emotional hearing the bagpipes playing “Amazing Grace.” I was thinking about how so many men and women who came before us gave so much, believing to the depths of their souls that they could offer a better future to us who were standing there. One of my sons saw the tears streaming down my cheek and asked me, “Mama, why are you crying?” I replied, “Don’t worry. These are happy and proud tears.” As a woman who was

born and raised in America and had the privilege to see many things while living abroad in developing countries during my teen years, I feel very grateful to come from a nation that is still fighting to uplift the God-given fundamental rights and freedoms of Americans as well as others around the world.

November is also the month of Thanksgiving. It is a time when families stop to reflect and give thanks for all the blessings God has given to us individually, but also as a family, community, and nation. We are reminded every year of the miraculous story of how this country began. The first men, women and children crossed the treacherous Atlantic Ocean to come to an unknown land, knowing they were risking a lot. It was from sheer determination and an unbreakable faith that they were able to face fear and uncertainty straight in the eyes, saying, “We are willing to give our lives to find a place to worship God freely.” Perhaps God was

moved and wanted to make sure they would find a way to prosper and spread His truth and love in this new land of opportunity. Although America is currently being



faced with huge challenges of identity and values, brave families all across this nation are once again beginning to step up and speak out about God’s truth, love and the fundamental rights and freedoms that we all are proud of.

From these examples and more, I am grateful for this month because of the reminders November gives to have gratitude – personally, as a family, and as a nation. As we come closer to closing out this crazy year of 2021, I am grateful I can choose gratitude for all the lessons, even the hard ones, and deeper reflections that God could show my family and me. Our cup can always be half-full, if we choose to see it that way.



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