



James 1:2-4 (NKJV)

² My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,

³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.

⁴ But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

The Pilgrims endured a long and dangerous trip across the Atlantic Ocean. Before setting foot on American soil, they wrote and signed the Mayflower Compact. They had fled persecution in England but they also made in clear they had come to America to further the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the winter of 1621 one half of the pilgrims died due to hardships, starvation and disease. After Squanto's teaching on how to plant and grow they experienced an abundant harvest and they celebrated the first Thanksgiving in the New World. It would have been a time of joy mixed with grief. They rejoiced in God's provision but grieved the loss of their dear family members.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NKJV)

¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray without ceasing, ¹⁸ in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit the Apostle Paul wrote this about 1,570 years before the Pilgrims celebrated their first Thanksgiving Day. They were indeed obeying Scripture to rejoice and give thanks in everything. May you have a blessed and joyful time of giving thanks on Thanksgiving Day.

I thank God for you. Yours in Christ,

(Newsletter coming next month)

Count Your Blessings

Johnson Oatman Jr.

Edwin O. Excell

**When upon life's billows you are tempest-tossed' when you are discouraged,
thinking all is lost,**

**Count your many blessings, name them one by one, and it will surprise you what
the Lord hath done.**

Chorus:

**Count your blessings, name them one by one; count your blessings, see what
God hath done.**

**Count your blessings, name them one by one; count your many blessings and see
what God hath done.**

**Are you ever burdened with a load of care? Does the cross seem heavy you are
called to bear?**

**Count your many blessings, ev'ry doubt will fly, and you will be singing as the
days go by.**

**So amid the conflict, whether great of small, do not be discouraged, God is over
all;**

**Count your many blessings, angels will attend, help and comfort give you to your
journey's end.**