



"And now I am no more in the world,  
but these are in the world..." (John 17:11).

Use this recent news story to help your students see the relevance  
of this week's lesson from the Standard Lesson Commentary®  
or Standard Lesson Quarterly®.

### **A COVENANT OF THANKSGIVING**

Ever since President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed a national Thanksgiving Day during the Civil War, Americans have observed it—just as we did this past Thursday. For those of us who are Christians, our feasting each year is the continuation of a covenantal act first engaged in nearly 400 years ago by the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag tribe at Plymouth. At that feast, the two groups united in a covenant of friendship that lasted for more than a half-century.

### **THANKSGIVING FOR A COVENANT**

When Jesus met with his disciples to observe the Passover, he was preparing them to remember a covenant which he would institute just a few hours later in his sacrificial death on the cross. Jesus' death initiated a covenant of friendship unique in all human history—friendship between God and humanity. In giving thanks for the elements of the Passover meal, Jesus taught us to give thanks as we share in the simple feast that has united Christians for 2,000 years.

1. Does the historical context in which Lincoln made his proclamation (a country torn apart by civil war) seem strange to you? Explain. How can giving thanks unite people in a divisive climate even today?
2. How is Thanksgiving Day (as Americans celebrate it now) similar to the way the Pilgrims observed it? What are some differences?
3. List some things for which you offered thanks to God this past Thursday.
4. Which of the blessings for which you gave thanks were unique to Americans? . . . to Christians?
5. How does the Lord's Supper help you give thanks for God's covenant with us through Christ's death?

—Charles R. Boatman

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