

What Happened to Thanksgiving?

As I have told many people, I enjoy the month of October because of my birthday and because of Halloween. This year had an added bonus of getting to watch my Baltimore Orioles go to the Playoffs.

What's next after Halloween? For me, the enjoyment of the rest of the fall season as we head to Thanksgiving. But that's not what happened when I got to Starbucks at the beginning of the month. You see, during October, there was an abundance of Thanksgiving blend coffee at my favorite Starbucks. After Halloween, the store was on to the Christmas drinks and the Thanksgiving drinks were an afterthought.

When I showed this to my younger brother, Anthony, he shouted, "That's not right! They can't skip Thanksgiving like that!"

As funny as his outburst was, Anthony was right. Each year retail stores blur the lines between holidays and Christmas shopping and decorations arrive earlier and earlier. But what can we do about it? After all, I'm not exactly asking you to abandon your Christmas shopping.

I believe we have to stop ourselves and make our voices heard via our wallets.

First, we have to acknowledge that it's time to slow down and not let the hustle and bustle of the holiday season keep us from remembering to be thankful for the good times and the difficult times. God teaches through everything.

Next, remember, that's while it's great to get deals on gifts; we don't have to sacrifice our family time to do it. I know some of us will be working on Thanksgiving and that cannot be helped, but we can resolve to spend quality time with our families.

This might be a little more radical, but perhaps we can curtail the holiday spending until the actual holiday season. What does that mean? Simply put, your list can wait. If we remember that Thanksgiving and Christmas aren't about the material things, then I think we can afford to hold off opening our wallets until we've had our family time.

Again, I'm not against retailers, spending money, or having nice gifts. What I want is for us as Americans and Christians to slow down, pray, and remember why we actually celebrate holidays at this time of year.

Is it because we get super deals and can get cool bonuses at work? Not for me. It's because I have things in my life for which I am thankful and because I want to celebrate the arrival of our Lord, Jesus.

What about you? What exactly are you celebrating this year? Will you join me in taking back Thanksgiving?



Saying grace before carving the turkey at Thanksgiving in the home of Earle Landis

in Neffsville, Pennsylvania. Photo by Marjory Collins. Farm Security Administration - Office of War Information Photograph Collection (Library of Congress).