

## The Extravagance of Autumn's Challenges

*In this season of autumn abundance, it is important to value theologically what touches our senses and hearts as well as what challenges our thinking.*



In Michigan, our eyes also take in the explosion of full green fields heavy with crops to be picked. We see the farmer and immigrant laborer in the heat of the day

or the cool of the morning pulling in the ripe sweet corn for our tables. Field workers are busy lifting the multi-sized heavy pumpkins and stacking them up like mountains of orange. Will they become our pumpkin pies or those scary creatures protecting our homes on Halloween eve?

Along our rural roads or within our city stores, we see an extravagance of harvest foods beautifully and bountifully arranged for our purchase. How important it is to remember that all was once a seed sown hopefully by the farmer who waited upon its ripening and its reaping. Lord, as we taste your harvest, help us to remember those who have grown it, and where it has come from.

We can easily connect Harvest's exuberance with the Creator's love. A Christian Aid worker in London creatively worked with Psalm 8 and offers an incredible image of our Creator God.

*God, when we think about your creation, we're amazed; we walk through a masterpiece every day.  
Your imagination has created such beauty. We can never come to the end of your wonders.  
We praise you, painter of creation's harvest.*

Yet, it is not only appropriate to think of God creator as this exuberant gift giver. There are challenges of justice and obligations for us that follow. Mary Grey, in harvest reflections for *Just One Year: A Global Treasury of Prayer and Worship*, speaks directly to this concern.

What is very clear is the traditional character of Harvest Festival must change. The task is two-fold:

- our own responsibility to rediscover roots in the rhythms of sowing and reaping so as to **celebrate the ingathering of the fruits is one aspect**
- but the political struggle to **enable vast numbers of the poor communities around the world to experience the reality of harvest** just to survive is now an urgent Christian priority.

**Lord, we lay down our selfish demands, we accept our responsibility to take care of your creation! Amen**

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