

Scripture: Luke 17:11-19

I. The healing of the lepers is a lesson in gratitude. (11-19) The story begins with ten lepers calling out to Jesus for mercy. Leprosy in Jesus time was a fatal incurable disease. Since it was very contagious the Law of Moses demanded that the Lepers live away from folks and to shout unclean when they came near.

1. Nine lepers exhibit an ungrateful attitude. (17-18) *And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where *are* the nine? ¹⁸ There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.* **Dr. Wiresbe:** You would have expected all ten men to run to Jesus and thank Him for a new start in life, but only one did so—and he was not even a Jew. How grateful the men should have been for the providence of God that brought Jesus into their area, for the love that caused Him to pay attention to them and their need, and for the grace and power of God that brought about their healing. But before we judge them too harshly, what is our own “GQ”—“Gratitude Quotient”? How often do we take our blessings for granted and fail to thank the Lord? Too often we are content to enjoy the gift but we forget the Giver. We are quick to pray but slow to praise. Let’s assume these men fulfilled the law and were allowed back in the Temple and the community. Their religion is restored. They still need to give the glory to God.

3. The Samaritan teaches us the power of a grateful heart. (15-19) *And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, ¹⁶ And fell down on *his* face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where *are* the nine? ¹⁸ There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. ¹⁹ And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.* Notice Jesus says to the Samaritan thy faith had made you whole; not the proper sacrifice and offering. When the Samaritan loudly praised God and fell on his face at his feet; he was acknowledging his unworthiness and how he appreciated the grace. When we get saved we should have that same attitude. The key words are “your faith hath made thee whole.” You are not only physically clean; you are spiritually clean as well. Too often we come to the Lord and say fix me. Jesus says to accept my offer of salvation; become yoked to me and I’ll change the whole you.

II. There are three levels of gratitude.

1. There is the sacrifice of praise. *Hebrews 13:15 By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of *our* lips giving thanks to his name. Psalm 116:17 I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD.* Dr. Macdonald calls this the basic level of gratitude. We praise God for what he has done. We do not take it for granted but it really is like thanking someone for doing something nice.

2. Finding something to be thankful for in every situation. *1 Thessalonians 5:18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.* For example this is where thank God for us knowing he is with us in the trial. When a loved one dies we are honestly grateful they are no longer suffering. God may even use an illness as an opportunity to lead the sick person to the heaven. For example the reason the Lord lead me back into helping with addiction recovery was a response to a conviction the Lord placed on my heart as I was watching the movie to save a life which Caleb used on a youth retreat following the death of my nephew Jeremy.

3. Being grateful for something you wouldn’t choose to experience. *Ephesians 5:18-20 ¹⁸ And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; ¹⁹ Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; ²⁰ Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;* **Dr. McDonald** *This is the place*

where we go by faith where we can say, “Thank you God. This is the thing you are using in my life. You’ve allowed it because you love me, and I trust You. Thank you for even this!” When we allow the Lord to bring us into that kind of thankfulness, we will experience a depth of joy we never thought possible. The key is to be filled with the Spirit causing the thankfulness to be produce joy in us by God. That is the graduate level of gratitude. Job gives us a wonderful example of this. You will recall he lost his servants, his wealth , and all of his children in one day. **Job 1:20-22** Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, ²¹ And said, Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. ²² In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly. Notice Job worshipped the Lord, trusting His sovereignty and even blessed the name of the Lord. This speaks of maintaining an attitude of gratitude. I need to praise Him even when I do not understand Him.

III. We must realize gratitude is a choice. Psalm 107:8, 9,16,20,29 **Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, And for his wonderful works to the children of men!.....**For he satisfieth the longing soul, And filleth the hungry soul with goodness.....For he hath broken the gates of brass, And cut the bars of iron in sunder.....He sent his word, and healed them, And delivered them from their destructions.....He maketh the storm a calm, So that the waves thereof are still. The psalmist cries oh that man would realize it was God who satisfied the longing soul, who broke the gates of oppression and prison, who healing the destructive wounds of sickness or spiritual destitute and calmed the storms in our lives.

IV. Gratitude is the attitude that sets the altitude for our living. Psalm 100:4 **Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name** God invites us into His presence. This leads to

1. The ability to know God’s will. Colossians 1:9–12 **For this cause we also, since the day we heard *it*, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; ¹⁰ That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; ¹¹ Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; ¹² Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light .** The phrase made us meet means made us worthy. We all know this is grace. We are not deserving of heaven or any other blessings but god has saved us and provided the power and strength to live the Christian life. **1 Corinthians 2:9-10** **But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. ¹⁰ But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.** To know God through the Spirit is something we should be thankful for. **Dr. Wiresbe puts it so well:** We need spiritual intelligence if we are going to live to please God. We also need practical obedience in our walk and work. But the result of all of this must be spiritual power in the inner man, power that leads to joyful patience and long-suffering, with thanksgiving.

2. The privilege of prayer Philippians 4:6 **Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.** Do you see the combination, prayer with thanksgiving. Lord I may not know what you are doing in my life but I am thankful that you are not leaving me to go through it alone. I am thankful that you are using this trial to grow my faith. I have the open invitation to enter his gates; to enter His courts. **Hebrews 4:16** **Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.** The key to maintaining an attitude of gratitude is prayer. God has given us an open invitation to His presence. When I am confused it so hard to trust Him and many times we don’t want to talk to Him. It is hard to feel blessed.