



Expressing Gratitude

By Jeff Bedwell on January 26, 2021

READING: Luke 17

Ten lepers are drawn together by their disease that has separated them from others and from the lives they had previously known. In desperation, with perhaps the smallest grain of hope, they cry out to Jesus for mercy (vs.13). They desperately needed and desired what only He could provide.

Jesus' response seems almost too simple: "Go and show yourselves to the priests" (vs. 14). They were to do what the religious rules required: go to the priest and allow him to declare them clean. What a strange command to these men who still bore on their bodies the evidence of the disease that had plagued them. Nevertheless, all ten of them had enough faith in Jesus to start the journey toward the priest.

Interestingly, they were not healed before going to the priest; instead, they were healed as they went to him (vs. 14). Every step was a step of faith in the words of Jesus. Their example reminds us that seldom does God provide everything up front before He calls us to follow Him; more often, He simply says, "Go, trust and obey me." Following Christ is a journey of trusting and obeying Jesus one step at a time.

Surprisingly, only one of the lepers, a Samaritan whom the Jews would have despised, returned to Jesus to thank Him. He praised God with a loud voice - no concern about being too emotional or too loud when you have experienced a miracle! He then "fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving Him thanks" (vs. 16). How could he not when Jesus had just miraculously restored him to health?

Jesus makes note of the absence of the other nine (vs. 17). Were they not grateful for the healing? What prevented them from returning to Jesus to give thanks? We would assume that they felt great joy and hopefully great gratitude at their healing, but they never returned to express their gratitude to Jesus.

There is a difference between *feeling* gratitude and *expressing* gratitude! Jesus commended the one who expressed his gratitude to God.

If we have been saved by the grace of God through Jesus Christ, we have experienced the greatest miracle of all - salvation by grace! On top of this we have countless physical, material, and relational blessings that we enjoy in abundance. It is not enough to feel grateful; we need to express it - to honor God and for our own spiritual, emotional and mental health.

Spend some time today thanking God for all that He has done for you in Christ Jesus. Take a moment to express gratitude to at least one other person that God has used to be a source of blessing in your life.

PRAYER: "Father, today I thank you for..."

TOMORROW'S READING: Luke 18

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