

27 February 2022

Luke 17:11-19 – Thankfulness in Short Supply

On the way to Jerusalem he was passing along between Samaria and Galilee. ¹² And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance ¹³ and lifted up their voices, saying, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.” ¹⁴ When he saw them he said to them, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went they were cleansed. ¹⁵ Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; ¹⁶ and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. ¹⁷ Then Jesus answered, “Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? ¹⁸ Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?” ¹⁹ And he said to him, “Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well” [Or “your faith has saved you”]

Opener

Question 1: On a scale of 1 (low) and 10 (high), how would you rank the extent to which you have a grateful and thankful heart to God and others? Why have you given yourself this score, and what types of things prompt you to give thanks, and not to express thanks and praise?

Taking blessings for granted

Jesus heals ten lepers but only one returns to give thanks

Question 2: The lepers called Jesus, “Master”. What is the meaning and significance of this term (see also Luke 5:5)? To what extent do you view Jesus as your “Master”? What does this mean to you on a day-to-day basis?

Question 3: What might the manner in which the ten lepers were healed tell us (a) about Jesus’s nature, and (b) the relationship between faith and divine healing?

Question 4: Why do you think the nine healed lepers did not return to thank Jesus, and one, the Samaritan, did? And what might be the particular significance of the one who returned being a Samaritan?

Question 5: To what extent do you take your blessings for granted, like the nine? And to what extent do you find yourself reserving your thanks to God for what you see as major or unusual things and ignoring minor / everyday things?

Faith and Thankfulness

Jesus expresses surprise that only one returned to give thanks

Question 6: How might the extent of our thankfulness be an indication of the depth of our faith (see for example Psalm 100 and Ephesians 5:20)?

Question 7: The Samaritan expressed his thankfulness with passion. Verses 15-16 say he returned, “praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks”. To what extent do you give thanks and praise to God like this, and why / why not? Do you think it matters that we praise God like this?

Question 8: To what extent is your state of thankfulness / gratitude quotient linked with the degree to which you are beset with other difficulties at any point in time? What does the Bible have to say on this?

Question 9: As a result of his giving thanks, the Samaritan received a specific double blessing (v19). What was this? How might we receive a double blessing when we give thanks to God?

Benefits of thankfulness

Being thankful honours and glorifies God but can benefit us as well

Question 10: What do you think might be the benefits to ourselves and our families / communities of being thankful to God? To what extent do you share your testimonies to encourage others?

Question 11: What do you think might be the downsides and risks of not being thankful to God (see for example Romans 1:21ff)? Give examples.

Being intentional about thankfulness

The Samaritan sets an example in being intentional about thanking God

Question 12: How might you become more intentional in developing a grateful heart? How might you make it an ingrained daily habit?