

Imagine...Thanksgiving Every Day
November 19, 2017
Lynn Haven UMC

Introduction

Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!"

When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed. One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan.

Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?" Then he said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well." (Luke 17:11-19 NIV)

What does it cost to say thank you? Two simple words that speak volumes about the condition of our hearts. This week we will explore what it looks like to practice thanksgiving in all circumstances.

Digging Deeper

As we dissect the message above, we observe:

A plea for help...

- These 10 men must surely be in despair over their lot in life. They are outcasts. Unclean, with not much of a future before them. Then, along comes this man Jesus, of whom they have undoubtedly heard miraculous stories of healing and provision. Should they be so bold as to shout out a plea for help? Do they really believe He can heal their afflictions? What else can they do but trust and believe that Jesus is the answer to their prayers? In the same way, as believers we trust that Jesus has the power to heal our hurts. But do we make it a habit to cry out for His saving grace? Luckily, Jesus meets His people where they are. He tells us that there is hope for the hopeless and healing for the hurting. Why does it take desperation to cry out to him and ask for this help? Why don't we start each day with praise and thanksgiving by crying out to him, asking him to enter into our world, our homes, our lives, and our hearts? What is one new thing you could do this week to show God you need Him and are deeply grateful for His mercy and love?

An act of faith...

- These men were told to go show themselves to be healed. Why do you think Jesus didn't just heal them right where they stood? Have you considered the level of trust one must have to simply walk away and believe that what someone says will happen will *actually* happen, with no immediate evidence to that end? Have you ever been challenged in this way? What was the outcome? How do you react in situations where you sense that God is calling for a leap of faith?

A call for thanksgiving.

- What makes the Samaritan turn back to praise Jesus? Why do you think the others did not do so? Weren't they all healed and made whole by what was done for them? Maybe the others were just being obedient rule followers by heading straight to the priests as they were instructed. Surely they were grateful for the promise of healing, but they sure missed a big opportunity to convey that message directly to Jesus. Are you guilty of doing the same? Is your life too busy to allow space for gratitude? Does a tendency toward rule following sometimes impair your ability to recognize everyday situations that warrant an attitude of gratitude? What can we do to train ourselves to pause to offer thanks where it is needed? Food for thought: What if you woke up tomorrow with only the things you thanked God for today?

Conclusion

Jesus, there are countless reasons for us to lift our voices in praise of You. We humbly bow before You, not to ask for anything, but to simply say thank you. From today until eternity, may Your praises ever be on our lips Lord. Amen

"If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is thank you, it will be enough." – Meister Eckhart