

WERE NOT ALL TEN CLEANSED?

Luke 17:11-19

The character Lord Amiens sings these cynical lyrics in Shakespeare's play *As You Like It*:

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude. . . .

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
That dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot:
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not.

The words cut at our hearts because we have all done good things for people and waited in vain for thanks. Though we tell ourselves that expecting thanks is selfish, we still hope to hear "Thank you."

Certainly no one deserves to hear "Thank you" more than God who has given us everything. Yet we often take his blessings for granted and forget to thank him. After doing a miraculous healing, Jesus experienced ingratitude firsthand. He also received thanks from an unlikely source.

Group Discussion. What causes ingratitude?

Personal Reflection. Who have you neglected to thank and then thanked belatedly? Why was there a delay?

Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem where he knew he would be crucified. The Gospel of Luke records substantial teaching and some miracles along the way. He “traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee” (Luke 17:11). Because Samaria was an area that Jews normally avoided, Jesus was entering a place of potential conflict. *Read Luke 17:11-19.*

1. Mentally put yourself along that road into the village as Jesus approaches (vv. 11-12). You hear the cries of ten lepers. What do they sound like?

2. Still standing by that road, how do you react to the voices of the lepers?

3. How did all ten men show trust in Jesus? Consider what they did both *before* Jesus reached them and *after* he spoke to them.

4. Describe ways in which the Samaritan was different from the other nine (vv. 15-16). Notice both his actions and his inner attitude.

5. There are two “loud voices” in this passage (vv. 13, 15). How were both loud voices expressions of faith?
6. If it is appropriate to say that the Son of God could be surprised by anything, what appears to surprise Jesus in verses 17-18?
7. When have you learned about gratitude to God from an unlikely person?
8. Why do you think the other nine lepers neglected to return and thank Jesus?
9. When are people most likely to remember to thank God?

10. When are people most likely to forget to thank God?

11. When is it easiest and when is it most difficult for you to remember to thank God?

12. How will you remind yourself this week to live in a greater spirit of thankfulness?



Consider the many blessings from God that you overlook or take for granted. Thank God for them, and ask him to bring others to mind. Pray for a more consistently thankful heart.

NOW OR LATER

Begin to make a list of what you can thank God for: other people, spiritual blessings, material blessings, family background, positive circumstances, problems that have helped you mature, the ability to forgive others—anything the Lord deserves your thanks for. Pray your way through the list even as you keep adding to it. It may be helpful to one day make a list of things that begin with the letter *A*, the next day with the letter *B*, and so on. Keep your list where it is easy to find.

Study Psalm 18 (see also 2 Samuel 22:1-51), David's prayer of thanks that he sang "when the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul." Make David's prayer of thanks your own for all the various ways the Lord has delivered you.