

Daily Devotional October 22, 2020 Gratitude, Don't Hide it!

11 Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. 12 As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy^[a] met him. They stood at a distance 13 and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!" 14 When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed. 15 One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. 16 He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan. Luke 17:11-16 (NIV)

In Luke's Gospel, there is a brief story not found in the other gospels, that occurs as Jesus and his disciples are on their way to Jerusalem. The area that they were traveling through was inhabited by Samaritans. As it happened, some lepers had heard that Jesus was in the area. Jesus' fame had spread throughout the region, and even the Gentile people were seeking Jesus out. These Samaritan lepers set out in search of Jesus and when they found him they begged him to: "Have mercy on us."

Notice that Jesus did not run away from these men, in fear for His health. More importantly, He did not hold back mercy from them because they were Samaritans and not Jews. Jesus extended mercy to them. He offered all ten of them healing and told them to go see the priests. In the time of Jesus, the priest, and not a doctor, would have certified the healing. When they arrived at the priest they were found healed and their relationship with the community was restored. They were now free to move about their village or anywhere else in the region without having to give the warning or hear it from others, "Unclean! Unclean!"

The most amazing detail of this story beyond the actual miracle of Jesus' healing, is that after hearing this great news, Luke tells us that one of the men went in search of Jesus so that he could express his gratitude to him. When he found Jesus, "*He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him.*" What a beautiful picture of thanksgiving for a life that had been saved!

Luke provides us this story as an essential reminder of the importance of gratitude. When we experience good things in our lives we often respond with immense joy. Unfortunately, we do not always remember to say thank you. Gratitude is a deliberate expression. It is not always something that we remember to do, and this is apparent when we are aware of the absence of the other nine who went to Jesus seeking out healing.

I want to encourage you today to be intentional about gratitude. We have so much to be thankful for. I know, I know, you're probably thinking "How can I be thankful when I'm trapped in my own home by Covid?" When we experience good, (and trust me, there is still much good happening within and all around you), we must be deliberate about expressing our gratitude. Saying thank you increases our joy and the joy of the one who receives our gratitude. I implore you, today, start your prayers with gratitude. Offer God your gratitude for the many blessings in your life. It is good to give thanks and it helps us to have a better perspective on everything else we are facing.

Prayer: Thank you, God, for all your blessings to me and my family; for the strength you give me each day and for all the people around me who make life more meaningful. Thank you for your amazing power and work in our lives, thank you for your goodness and for your blessings over us. Thank you that you are Able to bring hope through even the toughest of times, strengthening us for your purposes. Thank you for your great love and care. Thank you for your mercy and grace. Thank you that you are always with us and will never leave us. Renew our spirits, fill us with your peace and joy. We give you praise and thanks, for You alone are worthy! In Jesus' Name, Amen.