

## Saying & Living Thank You

There is an ancient legend about two angels who gathered people's prayers in a basket. Wherever people bowed in prayer the angels stopped and gathered the prayers into their baskets. Before long one of the angel's basket grew heavy with the weight of what he had collected, but that of the other remained almost empty. In the heavy basket were put prayers of petition. "Please give me this . . . Please let me have that." Into the other went the prayers that said simply, "Thank you."

People are usually ready enough to pray for what they want, but very few remember to thank God when He grants their requests. Far too many people simply ignore this simple act of courtesy . . . of expressing their gratitude to others or expressing their gratitude to God. There is something within the spirit of many people that resists the simple act of saying, "Thank you."

Jesus was walking with his disciples along the border between Samaria and Galilee. They were entering a village when they came upon ten lepers, both Jews and Samaritans.

Somehow when these lepers saw Jesus they knew he could help them.

"Jesus, Master," the lepers cried out, "Have mercy upon us."

Instead of laying hands on them or speaking a word of healing to them, he said to them, "Go show yourselves to the priests."

This is interesting. The Old Testament required the cured leper to have his cure validated by a temple priest. But these men had not yet been healed.

Jesus was requiring an act of faith out of them. They were to begin their pilgrimage to show themselves to the temple priests even before their healing was complete! That is faith.

But something marvelous happened Luke tells us as they were making this journey. Their skin began to show signs of healing. Within moments their open wounds closed and disappeared. They were suddenly and wondrously healed.

No longer would they be outcasts in their community. No longer would they be rejected even by their own families. They were clean. Can't you just see them jumping, shouting, & praising God?

What a celebration that must have been--these men with decaying and disfigured bodies suddenly discovered that they had been made whole.

They were surely delirious with joy, and yet *only one of them went back to Jesus to say, "Thank you."*

That one was a Samaritan. This was important to Luke, whose Gospel was directed to Gentiles. It was a Samaritan who returned to give thanks.

"Were not all ten cleansed?" Jesus asked. "Where are the other nine? Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?" And he said to that grateful Samaritan, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."

Jesus knew that these lepers were not completely healed until they had learned to say "Thank you."

One of the greatest characteristics of someone who has been saved of their sins is they have a genuine heart of GRATITUDE!

In all that they do they display and live of

Thankfulness for All God Has Done!

We are morally and spiritually inadequate if we have not learned to say, "Thank you" to the one who is the source of all you have and all you are.

### 1<sup>st</sup> Saying Thank You Is

### A Statement of Our Character!

Everyone may feel gratitude but to go to the trouble of expressing that gratitude is a sign of character. It says something about the kind of person you are.

That is what disturbed Jesus. These nine men may have been jumping and shouting with bodies that were now whole and strong, *but they still had leprosy of the heart*. There was still *decay and disfigurement within*.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Saying "Thank You" Is A Statement Of Grace

The greatest barrier to saying, "thank you" for many of us is our pride. Sadly, we don't like acknowledging our dependence on anybody--even God.

We fancy ourselves to be self-made persons. We like to think that we have no one to thank but ourselves. How blind we are.

How can we thank God for our deliverance from sin and death when we are convinced that we are already pretty good people who deserve everything God has given us?

We don't see our sickness, so how can we thank our Physician?

John Newton felt profound gratitude when God rescued him from the guilt of his life as a slave trader. That's why he wrote "Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me . . ." It's a hymn of gratitude as well as praise.

If we could see ourselves as God sees us in our incompleteness and imperfection, then we would cry out with joy that the God of all creation accepts us and loves us as we are, and gave his Son in our behalf.

Saying "thank you" is a statement of character;

it is a statement of grace.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Saying "Thank You"

### Is A Statement of Worship

That is why we are here today.

It is what our hymns, our offering and every part of our worship are about. It is our humble way of saying, "Thank you."

That is why worship is not optional for the Christian.  
about.

It is what being a Christian is all

That's why we are here. To say, "Thank You . . . Thank You . . . for healing us and loving us and watching over us."

It's a statement of our character. It's a statement of our faith.

And it is a reason for our worship. I hope you will take time this day to stand before God and simply say, "Thank you . . . Thank you . . . Thank you."