

## **Thanksgiving** **Luke 17:11-19**

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good. *His love endures forever.*

Give thanks to the God of gods. *His love endures forever.*

Give thanks to the Lord of lords: *His love endures forever.* Psalm 136:1-3 (NIV)

Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NIV)

Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. Philippians 4:6 (HCSB)

Leprosy was a terrible disease in the ancient world. It affected the totality of a person's life.

**You could see it.**

**You could hear it.**

**You could smell it.**

**You feared it.**

**You hated it.**

All of this helps to explain the reaction of the one man who came back to find Jesus. Not only is he thankful to Jesus, he gives the credit to God.

This passage of Scripture has some very good and meaningful lessons for us regarding thankfulness and our need to live with gratitude toward God. However, this passage does not sit alone as an isolated, nice story that has no connection with anything else in the Bible.

According to Luke 9:51, Jesus is on His way to Jerusalem. Jesus is going there to die on a cross. In other words, Jesus is going to Jerusalem to pursue some events that will change everything. The Old Covenant is about to be replaced with the New Covenant. The sacrificial death of Jesus will render the temple sacrificial system obsolete.

When Jesus sends the lepers to the priests He is doing at least two things:

1. Jesus puts their faith to the test by telling them to act as if they had been miraculously healed by a simple word from Him.
2. Jesus is giving notice that the temple system will no longer be valid because He is greater than the temple. He told them to go to the temple and see a priest in compliance with the OT but none of that was needed. The healing occurred at the word of Jesus and it was easy.

### **Home Group Discussion Questions:**

1. What are you thankful for?
2. How's your "gratitude meter?" Do you lean a bit more toward being grateful or grumpy? Have you noticed a pattern as to when you lean more toward one way or the other? If you are really daring...ask your spouse if he or she thinks you lean more toward grateful or grumpy.
3. When is it hard to be thankful? When is it easy to be thankful?
4. Can you think of anything that was difficult and seemed like a bad thing but now you are thankful for that circumstance because of what God accomplished in you or through you?
5. What do you think is the connection between trusting God and being grateful?
6. How might thankfulness be an antidote to a critical spirit?

This week – begin or end each day by saying thank you to God for at least one thing. Then tell God what that one thing meant for you. Gratitude can be a spiritual discipline that, if developed, can lead you to greater depth in your relationship with God.