

The Unintuitive Necessity Luke 17:11-19

The Scriptures: The act that caused the Fall was driven, not by greed or lust or anger – but by ingratitude.

Romans 1:21 – “For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.”

I have found that there is something about need and desperation that re-center us. When we struggle we realize one thing that is often illusive in good times – that we are helpless and dependant – that we can't make it without God.

The Bible calls us to give thanks in all circumstances (Ephesians 5:20, 1 Thessalonians 5:18). It isn't because God feels/becomes insecure when He doesn't get credit – He is already perfect and perfectly satisfied within Himself.

It is that we are desperately hopeless apart from His Grace and intervention. To say 'Thank You' to God is to remind yourself that He makes life work for you – that He is the Supplier of your needs and that He is in control even though you are not.

1. Thanksgiving is a Discipline

Being grateful isn't something the Bible tells us to feel before we act – it is something we are called to do.

Colossians 3:15 – Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.

2. Thanksgiving is a Lifeline

In Christ you have Someone to thank – Offerings of Praise and Thanksgiving are evidences that we live in relationship with God – that we are not alone... cold universe. They are expressions that our faith is real, that our God is present, and that we are safe in the Gospel. And by offering them our relationship with Him remains vital and not stale and ‘religious’ without life.

3. Thanksgiving is the one true binding Activity of the New Community

Our friend in the passage realized that He had no health or life apart from Jesus – and so it was worth returning to say ‘Thank You.’

When you think about it, why should **he** go to a priest? He wasn’t a Jew and he didn’t worship in the Temple of the Jews – nor was he respected among them. In fact, he had more contact with the Jews as a fellow leper than as a healthy person. He also knew that this official he didn’t respect and couldn’t approach wasn’t his healer. And if he interpreted Jesus’ command to go to **his** priest, he knew the same – that he hadn’t healed him. So he runs back to Jesus – the only One who can truly pronounce him clean.

And that is what Jesus does – only He pronounces him more than physically/socially clean – He forgives him. The literal translation for verse 19 is, “Your faith has saved you.” The idea behind the language is that of rescue from death. So Jesus promises the guy that even though his body will one day break down, his soul is safe.

THIS THANKS TO EARL CROWN: That word for ‘Rise’ means ‘Resurrection’ – It is a participle (one of those ‘ing’ words) – so essentially Jesus ‘resurrects’ this guy, not only in body, but in soul – and He calls him to live out a resurrected life. Thanks Earl!

What happens when we live a Thankful Life?

1. Vs. 15 – “...*came back, praising God... voice.*” – We Give God Glory

Hebrews 13:15 – “Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise – the fruit of lips that confess his name.”

To give God Glory is to understand that God is God and that He is Good – that what we have and enjoy and receive, all come from His Hand. We ‘confess his name.’

Revelation 11:17 – “... We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign.”

2. Vs. 16 – “*He threw himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him...*” – We Give God Ourselves

This is what happens here. Our friend – a man who had stood at a distance from Jesus and others (because he had to) lunged at Jesus’ feet (because he could). The barrier that existed before he was healed had been lifted.

And this is really what a Thankful life is at its essence – it is giving back to God what He has given to us – for our friend, it was his clean, healthy, whole body. This is worship (Romans 12:1).

What is it that keeps our souls soft and tender to the work of the Gospel? It is thankful hearts.

The secret to a contented life is a thankful heart – Philippians 4:6-7. You will never have all you want, but to be thankful is to declare that in Jesus you still have everything, and that you believe He will never abandon you in your dark hours.

Dad's second favorite hymn (a chorus):

“Thank you, Lord, for saving my soul.
Thank you, Lord, for making me whole.
Thank you, Lord, for giving to me,
Thy great salvation, so rich and free.”