

What Do You Forget to Thank God For?

- One most imp lessons we teach children, lesson I was taught & want teach my kids: always say thank you. When bday gift from aunt/uncle/gma – always call. Or we might write thank you card when gift. And when our child given something nice, what's first thing we do? Remind: "What you say?" Very imp say thank you – polite, courteous, shows appreciation. Never want forget say thank you.
- Today in gospel, 9 men forget say thank you to J. No call/card, no reminder: what you say? No show of gratd. And J notices that. **Vs. 17.** J notices ingratitude – which today I think should remind us of imp of thanking God for all blessings, and also cause us stop, think: what I/you forget thank God for?
- Here in Lk 17, J on journey. **Vs. 11.** Heading to Jeruslm: suffer, die sins world. And Lk devotes many chs to ministry/miracles of J on this journey to Jeruslm, incl the miracle today: **vs. 12-13.**
- Now to understand signif of this acct, have understand severity of this disease called leprosy. Terrible skin disease; like psoriasis or eczema, but many times worse. Painful, blistering, white sores would grow, spread across whole body (arms, legs, chest, back); lock up fingers/toes (might even lose f/t); spread up neck to nose, mouth. Think cold sores all over face. Get into throat, make unable speak. Loose hair. Embarrassed be seen. Whole body smell like rotting flesh. And hurt! Every movement you made was painful! When blisters on skin got big enough: break open, ooze out, spread disease. Why lepers always covered in bandages. Contagious. No known cure. Terrible disease!
- That's just phys aspect. Also social aspect: if had leprosy couldn't live w/ fam; couldn't even in town. Forced to live with other lepers in makeshift leper colony away from society. Lived in isolation, quarantine. Just think: could never spend time with spouse, children, friends. If someone you love got leprosy, had send them away. About all you could do for someone with leprosy, make them food, leave it somewhere for them pick up. Leprosy made you social outcast.
- Finally, religious aspect. Made you cerem unclean, so not allowed to worship at temple. Until healed, couldn't even come church. You had be cleared by priest before allowed back in; why Jesus told them show selves to priests. So: leprosy this terrible, painful, debilitating, contagious disease that cast you out society, cast you out church. Been called "living death." Just awful!
- So you can understand why these 10 lepers, when heard J coming, **vs. 12b-13.** And what happens next shows us pity, compassion, love of J. **Vs. 14.** Simple as that; Bible says it so matter/fact. But think what just happened here: walking/hobbling along road; suddenly pain goes away; suddenly doesn't hurt anymore! Boils shrink; rashes clear up; sores heal; skin rejuvenates before very eyes – I bet looked down at arms, peeled back bandages, watched as skin just healed itself in matter of moments! Miracle literally taking place on their bodies; they're watching it happen! Jesus completely cures them of terrible disease of leprosy!
- You know hold this story unfolds. **Vs. 15-16.** Remem: Sams, Jews normally didn't get along. But this Sam so overwhelmed with gratitude: throws self down ground, face first; clutches J's ankles; and with tears in eyes, says thank you! He remem thank God, while other 9 forgot.
- What you forget thank God for? When do you cry out to Lord for help, he answers your prayers, and you just keep on walking down road? Remem: J notices ingratitude. Even sounds annoyed when: **vs. 17-18.** J notices our ingratitude, too; and watches with disappointment when we just keep walking down road, thanklessly forgetting grace we've been shown. I guess we can relate. If you give someone large, generous gift, they don't even acknowledge you for it, prob feel annoyed, too. Imagine how God feels when we forget say thank you.
- What you forget thank God for? I know I'm guilty of praying prayers that heavy on asking, light on thanking. I disappoint myself most when: I make specific request of Lord; he grants request, answers prayer; I still forget to thank – that's worst. That ever happen you – where you forget thank God? I think we forget thank God all the time – for big things, and little things, everyday things. Remem how Luther put it in Cat: richly & daily...good & merciful. Sometimes we talk re counting our

blessings. Really, that's imposs task! I know I cannot list everything, or remem everything, or count up everything God does for me, gives me.

- But here's what I can do: have attitude of gratitude, bec when I have attitude of gratitude, when I acknowledge that everything good I have comes from God, and when I live life of genuine thanks to my Creator & Provider – that's my way of vs. **15b-16a**. I am no less blessed than this Sam leper; neither you; so we should be no less grateful.
- Esp when remem that leprosy is vivid symbol of sin. Just like leprosy is a terrible, incurable, deadly disease that ravishes whole body, so is sin – not physical disease but spiritual one! Sin corrupts, contaminates our whole selves, destroys rels with other people, separates us from God. Sin is fatal disease that condemns us to eternal death in hell. Even have Lenten hymn in hymnal: *“Come to Calvary's holy mountain... come defiled without, within; from infection and uncleanness, from the leprosy of sin”* (CW 106). Leprosy is vivid symbol of our sin.
- Which makes J's healing of these 10 lepers a vivid symbol of our salvation. Purely out of his grace & love, J saw our fatal condition, heard our cry vs. **13b**. And J cleansed us, from our sin, by his blood, shed on cross. J washed us clean; healed us, restored us, cured us, took away this terrible infection of sin! Took that disease upon himself. Isa 53: **“Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering”** (53:4). On cross J suffered the pain & isolation our sin, so that we could be freed from leper colony, and live with our Sav forever in heaven.
- Do we ever forget say thank you to J for that? Do we ever forget that he's healed us of our leprosy? What do you forget to thank God for? This Thanksgiving (& not only at Thanksgiving but everyday) we have so much to be thankful for. We can try count blessings, but we'd never finish adding them all up. Today, as we see J heal these 10 lepers, and as we realize that J has done no less for us, we have choice to make: will we just keep on walking down road, thanklessly, like the other 9? Or will we vs. **15b-16a** – for our salvation and for everything else? Think about that this weekend as you eat, shop, relax, visit with family. Everything good you have comes from Jesus. For all this we ought to THANK...certainly true!

Luke 17:11-19

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 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.

¹⁷ Jesus asked, “Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? ¹⁸ Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?” ¹⁹ Then he said to him, “Rise and go; your faith has made you well.”

