

Where Are the Nine

by Jim Cymbala

The sermon emphasizes the importance of gratitude and thanksgiving in our lives, and encourages us to acknowledge God's work in our lives and praise Him for His mercy and forgiveness.

Duration: 15:28

Scripture: Leviticus 13:45-46, Matthew 6:33, Luke 17:11-19, Romans 1:21

Topics: "Thanksgiving"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being thankful to God. He highlights that when people are not thankful, they lack grace in their lives. The preacher encourages the congregation to be grateful for God's mercy and forgiveness, as well as the times He has rescued them from difficult situations. He warns against ingratitude and urges the congregation to praise and thank God for His blessings.

Transcript

Now, on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he was going into a village, 10 men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance.

It was supposed to be 100 paces. And called out in a loud voice, Jesus, Master, have pity on us. That was their entire prayer.

Master, Jesus, have pity on us. Six words. When he saw them, he said, go, show yourselves to the priests.

And as they went, they were cleansed. One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him.

And he was a Samaritan. Jesus asked, we're not all 10 cleansed? Where are the other nine? Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner? Then he said to him, rise and go. Your faith has made you well.

Couple of subtleties about this story that you should remember. First of all, leprosy, which is a word used in the Bible for this devastating disease that we know as leprosy and other problems like that, made you an outcast. In fact, what's interesting, it seems like the nine who were Jewish were hanging out in the same posse as the Samaritan.

And Jews and Samaritans had nothing to do with each other. But it shows that leprosy brings everybody together. When you're suffering, you don't care who the other guy is.

You relate. They had to stand according to the commands in the Old Testament and yell out unclean, unclean, when they even got near other people. They were outcasts.

They couldn't come to the temple. They couldn't marry. They couldn't offer a sacrifice.

These 10 people, lepers, started yelling out at a distance to Jesus. Jesus, Master, have pity on us. Jesus then said, go to the priest.

Why would he say that? Not to get healed, but in the Old Testament, when you were cleansed of leprosy, you had to go to a priest to show yourself so that he could approve that you were cleansed and could enter back into the social life of the community. You also could offer a sacrifice because now you were cleansed. He didn't say go to the priest to get healed.

He just gave them, since he saw them trust in him, he gave them a command, go, show yourself to the priest. As they were going, they were cleansed. There's a point there for all of us.

Sometimes, remember later the Lord said, your faith has made you well. Sometimes the way God works for some of us in certain situations, he doesn't speak a word of healing or deliverance or answer immediately. He just tells you to do something.

He says, if you trust me, then do this. And as you're doing it, the answer comes. The blessing comes.

The miracle comes. That's what happened here. He never said a prayer for them.

They're the only ones who said a prayer. But later, in talking to the one who came back, he said, your faith, what faith? The faith that they all had by saying, Jesus, Master, have pity on us. And when he said go, they obeyed.

They weren't cleansed, but here they were going to the priest as if they were cleansed. And in going, they were healed. What stands out here, of course, though, and the main story literally in the Greek, it's very strong what Jesus said.

He says literally this, where are the nine? So one comes back to him, and with a loud voice, throws himself at Jesus' feet, and begins to give glory to God. Why? Because on the way, he saw he was cleansed, and he knew who had done it, and he came back to Jesus, and threw himself prostrate, and began to praise God out loud. The point is made in the Greek, in the New Testament there, the language, and translated, he praised God out loud.

He was overwhelmed with thanksgiving. Jesus received that thanksgiving. But he asked this question.

Weren't there 10 that were here? Weren't they all cleansed? I only see one of you. Where are the other nine? Why didn't all 10 come back to thank me? Why didn't all 10 come back to praise me? Now, I don't know why that number is given, one out of 10, is that symbolic of something? I want you to notice this interesting fact. He said at the end, go, your faith has cleansed you.

Your faith has healed you, right? But not just him, the other nine had faith, too. Or they wouldn't have been cleansed. They wouldn't have obeyed.

So Jesus is saying, go, your faith has made you well. But that speaks for the other nine. The only trouble is, he couldn't say that to them.

They weren't there. They weren't there to give thanks. Isn't that something? You can have faith to obey God, and be healed, but you don't have the grace to come back and say thank you.

Isn't that not amazing? You can get an answer from God, of such a miraculous nature, but you don't come back to say thank you. Of all the sins in the world, some said the hardest to endure is ingratitude. The Bible seems to indicate in Romans chapter one, this is where the world started to go off track.

The early creation, as civilizations developed, before they made idols, before they were given over to horrible sins, men with men, women exchanging the natural use of their body with other women, before all of that happened, there's this telling little sentence, and they would not give thanks to God. There's something about not giving thanks which shows our hearts are very hard. When people are not thankful, they have very little of any grace in their life.

When God is working in your life, you are one thanksgiving machine. You are just praising God. Can we say amen to that? Thank you, Jesus, thank you, Lord.

So let me close, because I want to do something with you today. I was convicted of it as I was praying here at 12 noon with the group that comes, my little congregation at 12 noon on Tuesdays. It's a growing congregation.

That sin of ingratitude is in a lot of us. We go from one problem to another, but we very rarely take time to just give God thanksgiving. Or as the New Testament has in one place, and as they were fasting, they were ministering to the Lord.

How would you minister to the Lord? He doesn't need anything. Ah, you were ministering in thanksgiving, in worship. I love you, thank you, God.

Now notice, this man who came back, Christ hadn't died on the cross. He didn't know what it was to have his sins forgiven. He hadn't been changed from a Muslim into a strong Christian man.

All he knew was he got a healing. That's all he knew, and he was thanking God. Just think what God has done for us in this building, in the balcony, downstairs, and behind me.

You would think we would be praising God all day long, all night long, all the time thanksgiving would be coming out, even when we pray. Remember, as I said at 12 noon, Philippians 4, 6, be anxious for nothing. Don't worry about a single thing.

But in everything with prayer and supplication, with? In other words, you can't hardly do anything with God and have any communication with God unless there's a spirit of thanksgiving sprinkled in thanksgiving. Oh, I praise you, God. Oh, I love you, God.

Oh, we thank you, God, for all that you've done. So here were people who had faith to receive a healing, but didn't have the grace to come back and say thank you. I wonder where they were.

I'll give you some guesses. But they were moving on to the next problem. Because if you're a leper, you don't have a job.

Now that you're cleansed, you gotta start thinking of how am I gonna make a living? Oh, here's another problem. Yeah, that's great, I'm not a leper, but how am I gonna make a living? Isn't that the way a lot of us are? God doesn't even do one thing for us? Instead of coming back and thanking him, falling prostrate, getting a little loud, some of us scream and get loud about almost everything except praising God and thanking him. But that man did it, and Jesus never forbid him or said, keep it down, it's not respectable to praise me so loud.

Listen, when you've been cleansed from leprosy, you're gonna praise God real loud. And when you've been a sinner and God saved you, you're gonna praise God real loud, real loud. When all your sins are gone, and there's no record of wrong against you, and you're not gonna praise God, you're not gonna thank God.

Or he might have gone to his family and friends, said, look at me, look at me, I'm cleansed. Look, look at my arms, look at me. I'm not a leper anymore.

He showed other people, talked to other people, but never went back to the one who did it for him. Isn't that very commonplace for us? We talk to others, but we never take time to go back and all alone tell Jesus, oh, Jesus, thank you. Jesus, thank you.

Oh, we praise you, Jesus. We thank you, Jesus. Or maybe when he got there to the priests, hey, how'd you get cleansed? We know you, the nine of you.

How'd you get cleansed? Oh, we met this guy named Jesus, and he told us to just walk towards you, and then he cleansed. No, he didn't do that. He didn't do that, you're good Jews.

By keeping the law and being good, that's how you got healed. Don't attribute it to this guy. He's a carpenter, he's not even a rabbi.

He's not even a rabbi. Instead of thanking God for everything we have, we sometimes look at it as if we're gonna take some of the credit. I just was reading in part of my devotions today, I've been pondering this verse in Ephesians 2, verse one, and you were dead in your trespasses and sins, but he made you alive.

You were hopeless. You were hopeless in West Virginia. You were hopeless in Brooklyn.

You were hopeless in Santo Domingo. You were hopeless wherever you were. You didn't have a chance to be pleasing to God, but in his mercy, he quickened you and made you alive.

He drew you by his mercy. He washed away all your sins, and we're not gonna thank God, and we're not gonna praise God tonight. We're not gonna take time to praise God.

Just if it wasn't for Jesus, where would Samar be tonight? What would he be doing? If it wasn't for Jesus, where would you be tonight? And then on top of that, all the mercies he's shown us. How many times have we fallen in a ditch, and he picked us out? Lift up your hand if he ever picked you out of a ditch since you've been a Christian, since you've been a Christian, and we're not gonna thank him, we're not gonna praise him. Praise God.

Praise God. So Jesus was stunned by the ingratitude of nine, and he said, that's great that you're here praising me, but where are the nine? Where are the nine? I don't want him to say that about me. I don't want him to say, where's Jim Cimballa? After all I've done for him, he won't give me thanks.

He won't take time to just minister to me. He's just gonna bring one problem after another, and when you got a lot of problems, and you're a leader, and there's a lot of responsibility, you can have a lot of things coming at you, just like you have in your life, and if you're not careful, you're just saying, help me, help me, give me, give me, and you never say, gracias, senior, por todo, senior. I thank you for everything you've done for me.

I got problems I'll talk to you about in a little while, but before I tell you anything, I just wanna praise you, and love you, and thank you, Lord Jesus. Everybody put your hands together out loud. Give him Thanksgiving with your mouth while you're clapping, we praise you.

We praise you, we praise you, we praise you. To God be the glory. Lift up your hands and open your mouth, and just give him Thanksgiving in praise.

Do it in English, do it in Spanish. Do it in Creole, do it in an African tongue. Come on, lift your voice and give him praise.

Don't let him say, where are the nine? Where's Brooklyn Tabernacle? Why aren't they thanking me? Why aren't they praising me? All that I've done for them, we praise you. All the times you picked us up, oh, you healed us. You redeemed us, you forgave us, you supplied for us.

When we had nothing, you gave us what we needed, Lord. No one else wanted us, you took us in. When mom and dad turned against us, you were there and you loved us.

We praise you, and then we praise you, and then we thank you on top of that, Lord. Lord, gracias, Senior, por todo, Senior. We praise you, Jesus, thank you for everything.

Thank you for everything, and now, Lord, help our days to be interrupted by 500 thanksgivings. While we're riding on the subway, when we're having lunch, while we're talking to a friend, just stop in the middle of it, and God, hear our thanksgiving. Give us a spirit of gratitude.

Te amo, Senior, we love you. We love you, Jesus. You've been so good.

Best thing that ever happened in our lives. Best friend we've ever had. Amazing Savior, full of grace.

Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation tonight and tomorrow, but deliver us from the evil one. For thine, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for now and forever.

And all the people said. Amen.

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