

An Attitude of Gratitude

By Rodney Nulph

November is usually characterized by the traditional holiday known as “Thanksgiving.” Thanksgiving is such a wonderful time of the year for me and brings a nostalgic feeling that is second to none. Thanksgiving is a time where I can slow down just a bit and reflect more on God, His creation and the wonderful family with which He has blessed me! Thanksgiving Day is a time when many stop and give thanks to the “One from whom all blessing flow,” and rightfully so! However, I often wonder if it is the case that we have become so enthralled with all of life’s activities that we fail to regularly express thanksgiving each and every day.

The narrative of the ten lepers recorded in Luke 17:11-19 is a clear example of how, as humans, we can become so absorbed with our blessings that we fail to express thanksgiving to the “Giver of all good things” (cf. James 1:17). The narrative is pretty straightforward. Jesus, on His way to Jerusalem, passed through Samaria and Galilee and entered a certain village. Upon entrance, ten lepers met Him, crying out for mercy. Jesus, full of compassion, commanded the lepers to “go and show themselves to the priests.” As they went, they were cleansed. One of the ten lepers, upon seeing he was cleansed, took time to stop and “glorify God” and gave thanks. This thankful leper had an attitude of gratitude, one that should characterize each of us every day! What would an attitude of gratitude look like in a truly thankful heart?

First, an attitude of gratitude is one that **recognizes**; “And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back...” (Luke 17:15a). This man, although overwhelmed with joy and awe, took the time to “turn back” as he recognized the source of his blessings. Sadly, we often are so busy, taking care of our blessings and attempting to get more blessings, that we fail to turn back and recognize the Giver. It is my prayer for each of us that we will turn back this Thanksgiving Day and every day and recognize just how great God really is! As the Psalmist of old so rightfully wrote, “Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness” (Psalm 48:1)! An attitude of gratitude is one that **recognizes!**

Secondly, an attitude of gratitude is one that gives **reverence**; “...and with a loud voice glorified God” (Luke 17:15b). Not only did this poor despondent leper recognize the Giver, but he also revered Him as well. The idea of “glorifying” God here refers to “adoring or worshipping” (Perschbacher 106). Christians, let’s not forget to worship and adore the name of God on Thanksgiving Day and every day, for He alone is truly worthy of our soul’s adoration! As the Psalmist so eloquently wrote, “Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be

thankful unto him, and bless his name” (Psalm 100:4)! An attitude of gratitude is one that gives **reverence!**

Thirdly, an attitude of gratitude is one that **responds**; “And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan” (Luke 17:16). This thankful, appreciative man opened his mouth and thanked Jesus. Hearts that are truly full of gratitude are attached to mouths overflowing with thanksgiving. My prayer for each of us is that we will take some time Thanksgiving Day and everyday to give Him thanks for all He has done for us! David’s plea should be our plea as well; “O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise” (Psalm 51:15)! An attitude of gratitude is one that **responds!**

My hope and prayer for each of us this day and every day is that we will take the time to be truly thankful. May we each display an attitude of gratitude by **recognizing, reverencing and responding** to the Giver of all perfect gifts! May it never be said of us, “Where are the nine?” Thank you God for blessing us richly!

Works Cited

Perschbacher, Wesley J. *The New Analytical Greek Lexicon*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1990.