

**Luke 17: 11-19; “Giving Thanks is Giving Glory”. A Sermon for Thanksgiving
Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on November 21st, 2021,
in the Afternoon Worship Service.**

This afternoon, I would like to bring to your attention the fact that giving thanks to God is giving glory to Him. This is what Jesus says here in verse 18. “Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?” And the text itself, in describing what happened here, says in verse 15 – And one of the Samaritans, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at Jesus’ feet, giving Him thanks. So, to give glory to God is to give Him thanks, and to praise Him. It is telling Him how great He is; telling Him how good He is. It is telling Him that He alone does wondrous and excellent things. Giving Him glory, expressing yourself to Him in this way, telling Him how much you appreciate Him for who He is and for what He has done for you, this glorifies Him.

At this time, therefore, I would like to set before you 3 reasons why you should give glory to God at this Thanksgiving season. These are things which you should praise and thank God for, personally, as a Christian, because Christ Himself has helped you, even as He helped this Samaritan. God has helped you spiritually in Christ, in giving you all the blessings in the heavenly places in Him. So, 1st of all – Give glory to our God that He has had mercy upon you, when you cried to Him. 2nd – Give glory to our God that when you have obeyed Him, He cleansed you. And 3rd – Give glory to God that it has been your faith that made you well. Let us consider these truths and think about how we might put them into practice in our personal life.

1st of all – Give glory to our God that He always will have mercy upon you when you cry to Him. (verses 11-13)

Jesus’ ministry was to all kinds of people who had very great needs. In this passage, we see that at one point in his ministry he came into a certain village near Samaria and Galilee, and there were 10 men who had leprosy who were standing a long ways away from Jesus, and they were crying out – “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!” It will be good if I can ask you the question – Do you know what leprosy is? Well, we don’t see it much anymore in our day, although it does exist in some places in the world. Leprosy is an infectious disease that causes really bad skin sores to break out, sometimes all over your body. It can cause nerve damage in your arms, your legs, and skin areas all over your body.

This disease has been around since ancient times. Outbreaks of it have affected people on every continent of the world. It isn’t entirely known how the disease spreads. And some forms of it are worse than others. But in Jesus’ day, there were many people who had it, and their doctors did not know how to cure it. And so, here were these 10 men. They had heard that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by, coming through Samaria. And the moment that He came into their village, there these leprosy men were, calling out for Jesus to help them. They knew that they had to stand a long way off from Him, because their disease was contagious. And yet they knew that they needed to cry out to Him that He might heal them. This is the way that it always is when you realize that you have a disease that no man can cure. You must cry out to God.

It glorifies God to hear your cry. Turn with me over to Psalm 34, verse 1-6. “I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.” “My soul shall make its boast in the Lord; the humble shall hear of it and be glad.” “Oh, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together.” “I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.” “They looked to Him and were radiant, and their faces were not ashamed.” “This poor man cried out, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.” This is always the way it is when you become a person of praise. It is an inviolable principle in the economy of God. If you resolve to praise Him and give Him thanks in everything, if your soul makes its boast in the Lord, when you seek Him, He hears you, and delivers you from all your fears.

If you look to Him, you cannot be sad and downcast all of the time, because when you do seek Him, He hears you and delivers you from all your fears. Even if you see yourself as poor and needy, when you look to Him, you will become radiant with joy. When you cry out to Him, He saves you out of all your troubles. He is the faithful, prayer-hearing covenant-keeping God to His people. In verses 17-19 of this same chapter 34 of the Psalms David says – “The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles.” “The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit.” “Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all.”

When we are greatly troubled by what we are going through, even if we have a broken heart over our own sin, or over the troubles that we have come into because of someone else’s sin against us, we must remember to cry out to God. And will you not learn to thank Him for His help when you receive it? Tell Him that He is faithful, even when you are faithless. Don’t let a root of bitterness spring up in your heart. Pursue peace with all men and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord. And, as it says in Hebrews 12: 15, you should look carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled. Sometimes the waters of your life may become bitter. But you don’t have to be bitter because you have Christ in your heart.

Turn to Exodus chapter 15, and verses 22-26. “So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; then they went out into the Wilderness of Shur: And they went three days in the wilderness and found no water.” “Now when they came to Marah, they could drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter.” “Therefore the name of the it was called Marah.” “And the people complained against Moses, saying, ‘What shall we drink?’” “So he cried out to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a tree.” When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet.” “There he made a statute and an ordinance for them, and there He tested them, and said, ‘If you diligently heed the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in His sight give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians.’” “For I am the Lord who heals you.” In the Hebrew it is – I am Jehovah Rapha, the Lord who heals you.”

Now, you will notice here that the children of Israel did not cry out to God themselves. That was a sin on their part that they did not cry out. They should have. But fortunately they had a man who was leading them, who did cry out. Moses cried out to God and the Lord showed him a tree. He took the tree, and he threw it into the waters, and they became sweet; that is, they became sweet enough to drink. What is this a spiritual picture of? The tree is the spiritual picture of what Christ would come to do; to suffer and die upon the cross, to bear our sins in His body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live to righteousness.

But it is also the picture of Christ healing the waters of your experience; taking that which would be bitter if He did not permeate your situation with His grace. Give Him glory that it is so! When it comes to any physical disease that you may may have, or any spiritual disease which plagues your heart, it is always good to come to Jesus to help you. For He is the Great Physician. Since He is both God and Man, He can heal any disease or any mental condition that you have, even if no doctor can help you. And if for wise and holy reasons He has given you a thorn in the flesh, He can also give you grace which is so sufficient for you, that you will see His power perfected in your weakness.

2nd – Give glory to our God that when you have obeyed Him, He cleansed you.

Verses 14-16 say – “So when He saw the lepers, He said to them, ‘Go, show yourselves to the priests.’” “And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed.” “And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God.” You will notice here that the Lord Jesus did not need to physically touch these men to heal them. He merely gave them commandment to go show themselves to the priests, and as they went, they were cleansed. They

were healed of their leprosy immediately. This is the same way that it is when any person obeys the gospel. When a person will obey the gospel concerning Christ, and when they will receive His good word to them concerning what He has done for them as sinners, they are immediately cleansed of all of their sins. But it is also important that they will come to a church of God's people. It is important that they talk with the leaders of the local church; to have their cleansing verified by a pastor and God's people. Do not be afraid of them. Those who know the Lord who have a real love and concern for the reality of your being cleansed and healed of the great disease of sin. They are concerned for your highest welfare. They are helpers of your faith, but they are not priests. The Lord Jesus Himself is your Great High Priest.

Go and show yourself to the priests, was the Old Testament commandment concerning the cleansing of any leper. What the priest did in that day was the picture of what Christ would fulfill by His High Priestly ministry. In Leviticus 14: 1-7, it says this – “Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ‘this shall be the law of the leper for the day of his cleansing: He shall be brought to the priest.’” “And the priest shall go out of the camp, and the priest shall examine him; and indeed, if the leprosy is healed in the leper, then the priest shall command to take for him who is to be cleansed two living and clean birds, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop.” “And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water.”

“As for the living bird, he shall take it, the cedar wood and the scarlet and the hyssop, and dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water.” “And he shall sprinkle it seven times on him who is to be cleansed from the leprosy, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose in the open field.” Let us understand that this procedure of examination by the priest represents what Christ personally does as the High Priest of His people, for any polluted sinner who has sores and wounds of sin, and has been made clean by Him. Only Christ can cleanse you from guilt and shame and heal the wounds and sores of sin.

Let us give thanks to God that Christ fully represented in His Person and His sufferings, the things which were pictorially represented by the two living and clean birds, the cedar wood, the scarlet and the hyssop. The two birds represent the two natures of Christ, the human and the Divine in His one Blessed Person. And because of this, our faithful High Priest was fully equipped to accomplish our redemption. His, like the cedar pictures in metaphorical language, was the power of an endless and indestructible life. He was God the Son, and He took upon Himself our nature except without sin. The two birds therefore represent His going to the cross as the God-Man; where, He by His sufferings, dipping the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed.

In other words, the value of His sufferings and the efficacy of His sufferings was established by His being God the Son, and yet He must needs really and actually suffer in our place, in order to bear our sins, and in order to purchase our redemption, in order to His being able to cleanse us by His blood. Hebrews chapter 9, verses 11-14 – “But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.” “Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.” “For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”

The scarlet represents these sufferings of Christ and the blood that He shed to cleanse us. The hyssop plant leaves, tied to a stick, dipped in the blood of the sacrifice, were used by the priest to sprinkle the person who had been leprous. This was to represent the cleansing power of the blood of Christ. In the priest's actions he would take the living bird, the cedar, the scarlet, and the hyssop and dip them all in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water.

Christ came by water and blood. He came as a clean vessel, pure in His heart and mind, and righteous in all of His words and actions. And He died for our sins and our cleansing, and rose again, so that we would be set free from sin and be able to be cleansed; not only initially, at the time of our conversion, but all through our life when we become polluted with any sin.

This is why this Samaritan man, when he saw that he was healed, returned and with a loud voice glorified God! He was free from his dread disease. He was so thankful to be healed, and He simply had to express his thankfulness, and his joy; his holy exuberance, over being made clean again. He fell down on his face at Jesus' feet, and he gave Him thanks. Let me ask you if you have given thanks in this way to the living risen Christ, the one who rose from the dead to give you a clean heart and a new heart? Oh, when you know that you have been made clean, you should want to do this very thing that this Samaritan man did.

3rd – Give glory to God that it has been your faith that made you well.

Verse 17 says – So Jesus answered and said ‘Were there not ten cleansed?’ ‘But where are the nine?’ ‘Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?’ ‘And He said to him, ‘Arise, go your way.’ ‘Your faith has made you well.’ It is a very sad thing, is it not?; that Jesus had healed ten leprous men, and only one came back to thank Him for what He had done. He makes specific mention of this for a reason, I think. It is so very important, if our faith is real, that we do thank God for all that He has done for us, and all that He is presently doing for us, and for all that He will do for us in the future, because of His faithfulness. It glorifies Him to do so. This is what Jesus is saying here.

But what Jesus is saying here, goes much deeper than that. Some people are more interested in the healing of their body than they are the healing of their soul, and the cleansing of their heart. It was this man's saving faith that made him well. Jesus healed 9 other men, but were they saved? Perhaps they were, but if so, they should have come back and thanked the Lord Jesus for what He had done for them. Were there not 10 cleansed? But where are the nine? If you are a person who has saving faith; that faith in Christ will make you well spiritually. Are you more thankful for the spiritual healing than the physical healing? You should be. For you do not know what bodily ailments and physical difficulties that you will face in your life.

But you do know God's promise of what He will do for you in the midst of all your afflictions. Psalm 34, verse 19 – ‘Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all.’ And in Psalm 103, verses 1-4 it shows you how you can give thanks. It says – ‘Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name!’ ‘Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: Who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, who satisfies your mouth with good things, so that you youth is renewed like the eagle's.’

God faithfully watches over you, all through your life, and does all of these good things for your soul and body, and finally, when you die, He heals you completely and forever! This should make us want to return, over and over again, to thank Him with a loud voice and glorify God, and give Him thanks. O how I pray that each of you will do this in this Thanksgiving season.