



Being Grateful

Luke 17:11-19: Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!" 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, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" Then he said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."

The Samaritans arose as a race after the Assyrians conquered the northern kingdom of Israel. The Samaritan religion had both pagan and Israelite worship. The Jews on the other hand were descendents of Abraham and Israelites who strictly followed the laws of God that came through Moses. The relations between pious Jews and Samaritans were always tense and hostile. Although ten lepers were healed of their leprosy, only one returned to thank Jesus and he was a Samaritan. The Samaritan experienced the undeserved love of God and responded with faith and obedience. The other nine lepers who were probably of Jewish origin did not bother to return and give thanks to God. That is why Jesus was surprised because he would have expected his own people who knew the laws of the God to be more grateful compared to the Samaritans.

During the ministry of Jesus on earth, Jesus found that the people from a different race welcomed the good news of the gospel and behaved much better than his own people. For example, consider the story of the tax collector and the Pharisee. The tax collector had a more broken and repentant heart compared to the



Pharisee who looked down on the tax collector and bragged about how he excelled in his spiritual duties. Again, in the story of the Good Samaritan, we see that the Samaritan cared more about the hurting man on the Jericho road compared to the Levite and the Priest.

As Christians we ought to be grateful to God for the things he has done for us. We should not take God for granted otherwise he will not be pleased with us. We should not be like the other nine lepers who got what they wanted and went their own ways. This sort of love is of the utilitarian kind where people seek God merely to utilize him for their own benefit and there is no true relationship. We tend to be nice to God so that we can get a temporary fix for our problems. Once our problems are solved, we go our own ways. As soon as another problem pops up, we run to God again. The scripture tells us that we ought to present our requests with thanksgiving [Philippians 4:6](#). When we start thanking God, we will soon come to the realization of how marvelous God has led us all these years from calamity. The people of Israel erected a memorial for God and called God as their 'Ebenezer', which means, "thus far the Lord has helped us". Yes, He who led us thus far is still able to lead us both now and forever.

The people of Israel forgot about how marvelously he had led them out of Egypt. Instead, they started complaining all along the way until they reached the Promised Land. When the great walls of Jericho stood on their way, an angel of the Lord stood near the wall with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua knowing that it was an angel of God approached the angel and asked, "Are you for us or for our enemies?" The angel replied, "Neither" [Joshua 5:13-14](#). The angel said this because God does not belong to any side in a battle. God is the one who determines the outcome of the battle. As David said, "the battle is the Lord's" [1 Samuel 17:48](#). God is not bound



by time and he was bothered by the people's desperation to get to the Promised Land as soon as possible. God desired that the Israelites started seeking Him and not the things that he was about to give them. The Israelites had to march around the Jericho wall praising the name of God several times. Finally, the walls of Jericho came down not by the power or by the might of the Israelite army but by the powerful hand of God. The Israelites had to stand still and know God.

If we want to go forward and move closer to the Promised Land, we must go back and remember all the good things that God has done for us. Otherwise, we might have to march several times around our problems until we look unto the Most High God.

We should be grateful for the wonderful privilege of knowing Jesus as our Lord and Savior considering the millions who have died without knowing him.

We should be grateful to our loving Lord who though he was rich became poor for our sake.

We should be grateful to Jesus who became sin though he had done no violence nor was any deceit in his mouth.

We should be grateful to our Lord Jesus who himself bore our iniquities and carried our sorrows.

We should be grateful to our Lord Jesus who laid down his life while we were still sinners.

We should be grateful to our Lord who defeated death and rose again on the third day.

We should be grateful for the new life that we have in Jesus Christ free from guilt and the shame of sin.



We should be grateful for the peace that we have in Jesus that all the wealth in this world cannot buy. While Jesus lived on the earth he did not accumulate any wealth to leave behind for his disciples who had left their jobs to follow him. But he had something more worthwhile and long lasting to offer his poor disciples. Before he was taken up into heaven he said to his disciples, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid” John 14:27.

Apostle Paul said, “But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him” Philippians 3:7-9. Yes, the true blessings that God gives us may not be in terms of dollars and cents but it is certainly in terms of peace and the new life that we have in our Lord Jesus.

Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,

And mortal life shall cease;

I shall possess, within the veil,

A life of joy and peace.

Amazing grace, John Newton, Olney Hymns (London: W. Oliver, 1779)

Love,

VICTOR