

BEING THANKFUL **Text: Luke 17:11-19**

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Thankfulness is the Faith Force Multiplier that pleases God!

Introduction:

1. **Have you ever done something for someone but they never said thank you?**
—*How did that make you feel?*
2. **Has anyone ever done something for you—but you forgot to thank them?**
—*Maybe a friend? or a Parent? or even God? —How it made them feel?*
3. **There was a man who was laid off from his factory job back in the early 70's**
 - a. He couldn't find work and eventually the money ran out and he was living in car and when the car ran out of gas he stayed in it.
 - b. He was in the midwest and it was this time of year and really cold at night
 - c. He just wanted a warm meal so bad that he walked into a warm dinner the next morning
 - d. And without any \$ he ordered coffee and breakfast and just sat and savored it.
 - e. when the owner gave him the bill for breakfast the man lied and said he must've forgot his wallet and would pay him back.
 - f. A few minutes later the owner of the dinner returned and picked up a \$20 bill off the floor and said, oh you must've dropped this. Gave it to the man who paid his bill with it and put the rest in the gas tank and left town
 - g. It wasn't until he was long gone that he realized—that owner didn't find a \$20 on the ground, he did that on purpose to help him without embarrassing him.
4. **He said a prayer to God and made a vow that as soon as he could get back on his feet he would help someone in need.**
 - a. Eventually he found a job... then he started his own business..
 - b. and one Christmas eve he went through a fast food drive through and gave the girl \$100 and she started crying. she was able to get her kids presents because of his kindness
 - c. That man went on to give away over a million dollars before he died.

“Gratitude is when memory is stored in the heart and not in the mind.” –Lionel Hampton

I. THE COMMAND OF THANKFULNESS

A. DID YOU KNOW IT'S GOD'S WILL FOR YOU TO BE THANKFUL?

1. **The Bible tells us to be thankful in all circumstances (1 Thes. 5:16-18 ESV)**
(NLT) Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.
2. **But How is that Even Possible?**
 - a) How can you be thankful when you lose your job? or get sick?
 - b) or experience the sorrow of broken relationships or betrayal?
 - c) I know we can be thankful for the blessings—but what about the losses?
3. **But Look at this verse again—It Does NOT Say Be Thankful FOR All circumstances... It says: Be Thankful IN All Circumstances!**
 - a) What a Difference 1 Word Makes!

B. BUT IT IS GOD'S WILL THAT YOU ARE THANKFUL!

1. We all face many life circumstances—Good and Bad...

"A time to break down, And a time to build up; A time to weep, And a time to laugh; A time to mourn, And a time to dance; A time to gain, And a time to lose; (Ecc. 3:3)

2. We Are Called to Give Thanks IN all Circumstances and seasons of life
 3. And we ALL need to work on this!
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II. THE RARITY OF THANKFULNESS

A. TEN LEPERS CRIED OUT TO JESUS (Luke 17:11–14)

1. It's hard for us to imagine how horrible leprosy was...
 - a) it caused peeling skin, ulcers, sores
 - b) A Flesh Eating Bacteria which made a person a dead man walking
 - c) It was an incurable, slow motion death sentence
2. JESUS HEALED THEM BY JUST SAYING THE WORD...
 - a) But It was when they Obeyed What Jesus Said that they were healed!

B. BUT ONLY ONE RETURNED TO SAY THANK YOU (v.15-16)

1. NOTICE: Giving Thanks is *'giving glory to God'*
2. If God Doesn't Get the Glory then Who Does?
3. If God Doesn't Get the Credit for the good things He Gives then who does?

C. WHY WOULD JESUS SAY: Your faith has made you well? (v.17-19)

1. It Takes Faith to be Thankful... to Give God the Glory!
2. And Because He returns and gives God the Glory He is Blessed Again!
3. with an even greater blessing!

"Gratitude is an offering precious in the sight of God, and it is one that the poorest of us can make and not be poorer but richer for having made it." (A.W. Tozer)

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and the Faith-force Multiplier for Praising God!***

III. THE TRAGEDY OF UNTHANKFULNESS

A. HERE IS THE MAN WHO OWED AN UN-PAYABLE DEBT

1. A Debt that couldn't be paid in a hundred lifetimes
2. But the King Had Mercy on Him—and Forgave the Entire Debt
3. An incredible act of grace, mercy and kindness by the king

B. HERE IS THE TRAGEDY OF AN UNTHANKFUL HEART

1. Even Though He Has Been Forgive an unsayable debt...
2. He goes out and chokes a man who owes him far less!
3. Does this strike you as a happy person?

C. HERE IS A CASE-STUDY OF UNTHANKFUL PEOPLE...

1. **Unthankful people are unhappy people** [this is not a happy person]
2. **Unthankful people are Unforgiving** [He himself was forgiven...]
3. **Unthankful people are Unkind** [he cannot find any kindness in his heart...]
4. **Unthankful people Attack Others** [instead of helping he is attacking]
5. **Unthankful people are Selfish** [no sympathy for the other person]

It is not Happy People who are Thankful, it is Thankful People who are Happy

“It is only with gratitude that life becomes rich.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer

IV. THE BENEFITS OF THANKFULNESS

A. RESEARCHERS FROM UC DAVIS MEDICAL CENTER & UNIV. MIAMI

1. **“Thankfulness is the ‘forgotten factor’ in happiness research”**
—says researchers from UC Davis Medical Center and Univ. of Miami.
 - a) It’s Always interesting when Science catches up to what Bible said 2,000 yrs ago
 - b) They admit that Thankfulness has almost entirely been experienced in the realm of Religious Faith — but they are now researching it
2. **They Divided into 3 Control Groups, with Brain Scans before and after...**
 - a) **1st Group**: Told to keep a daily journal listing all the negative things in their life, the disappointments, wrongs, hurts, frustrations.
 - b) **2nd Group**: Told to just list regular events of the day neither positive or negative
 - c) **3rd Group**: Told to keep Gratitude Journal of 6 things day they were thankful for
3. **At the End of 2 Months they did brain scans again and interviewed them**
 - a) **1st Group**: The Fight or Flight area of the brain was enlarged and enflamed
The area of anxiety, stress, anger and fear
 - b) **2nd Group**: No Change in Mood or Brain Activity from Before
 - c) **3rd Group**: The Fight or Flight Area of the Brain had reduced and the Feel Good part of the Brain had grown!
4. **In Interviewing the Groups:**
 - a) **1st Group**: Was More Fearful, More Depressed and Hopeless
 - b) **2nd Group**: No Change
 - c) **3rd Group**: was Happier, More Positive, more energetic, more thankful!
5. **THEY WERE ABLE TO CHANGE THIER BRAINS IN ONLY TWO MONTHS**
 - a) They Felt Better, Slept Better, Had more Energy, with Positive Enthusiasm

[Study: Emmons, UC Davis; McCullough, University of Miami]

“Gratitude blocks toxic emotions, such as envy, resentment, regret and depression, which can destroy our happiness,” Emmons said. “It’s impossible to feel envious and grateful at the same time.” (Emmons)

It is not happy people who are thankful—it is thankful people who are happy

***“If you can’t be thankful for what you have,
be thankful for what you have escaped.” —John Wayne***

V. THE BEAUTY OF THANKFULNESS

A. JESUS WAS THANKFUL...

1. Before an amazing miracle when Jesus fed over 5,000 people
Jesus took the loaves and fish and He gave thanks (Matt. 15:36)
2. On the night Jesus was betrayed... He took the unleavened bread and fruit of the vine and gave thanks (Matt. 26:26–28)
3. After Jesus sent out 70 disciples to tell about the Kingdom of God
Jesus thanked God for the hearts who accepted truth (Lk 10:21)

B. BEING THANKFUL FOR THE RIGHT THINGS

1. The Seventy were sent and came back rejoicing...
But Jesus gave a lesson on what to be thankful for (Luke 10:17–20)
2. Not to rejoice in their power over demons—but in their own salvation
3. WHY? Well Judas did not learn this...
 - a) When Jesus sent out the Twelve Disciples w/ the 70...Judas was among them!
 - b) That means Judas was given power to cast out demons like the others!
 - c) But that wasn't enough—he was not thankful for his salvation...

*"some people are bitter, not because they do not have anything,
but because they do not have everything."*

C. WE CAN BE THANKFUL FOR MANY THINGS—

BUT MOST OF ALL THAT GOD SAVED US BY HIS GRACE!

1. We can be thankful that our names are written in Heaven in the book of life!
2. We can be thankful because this is a joy we share together!
 - a) rather than comparing and competing with who has the greater gifts or abilities
3. We can be thankful because Our Citizenship is in Heaven! (Philip 3:20, 21).
4. Thankful because we will be transformed (1 Jn 3:2) to See Jesus Who Saved us
5. Thankful because Heaven is beyond our greatest expectations (1 Cor 2:9)
6. We can be thankful because it will be worth it all and more (Rom 8:18)
7. We Can Be Thankful Because of God's Gift of Grace — in Jesus

"Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!" (2 Cor. 9:15)

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CONCLUSION:

1. (1 Thessalonians 5:18)

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