

Minister's Annual Preaching in 1988

Jim & Doris Morentz, ed. *Minister's Annual Preaching in 1988* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987),

The Secret of Thanksgiving

Luke 17: 17-20

The point is in what Jesus saw in one man's gratitude – the presence and the strength of his faith. The other nine were also made well, and we can't rightly say they weren't grateful. They surely must have been, but this man saw his healing as a gift from God. And the blessing of that gift caused his once miserable heart to break out into a doxology of thanksgiving. ¹

There are **two lessons** that can enhance our gratitude and can also deepen our appreciation of those blessings. **The first is to see the grace of God.** That tenth leper in Luke 17 saw the difference between simply being healed and being blessed by God's grace. Because he was so sensitive to the gift he had been given, he recognized the mercy it was. ²

No one is really defeated or impoverished until he or she begins to say that his or her troubles are not deserved, that instead blessings are deserved. The one who surveys personal misery and asks "Why me" will also be the one who forgets that he or she doesn't deserve to be blessed either. Gratitude really translates our achievements into blessings when we remember the loving mercy of God. ³

Like that tenth leper, we come to God simply to give thanks. We don't comprehend why he has chosen to give us gifts, to fill our lives with good things. We only know that he has and does.

The second lesson is that there is a giver.

The tenth leper saw the hand of God in his healing.

Why have we been so blessed? It is not because we are worthy of it. Even when we achieve something through our own hard work, even then we know that the talent, and even the ambition, came from God.

It is grace of God that we achieved what we achieved.

Deut. 8: 17- 18 say that:

너희가 마음 속으로 이 재물은 내 능력과 내 손의 힘으로 모은 것이라고 생각할 것 같아서 걱정이 된다. 그러나 주 너희의 하나님, 너희의 조상에게 맹세하신 그 언약을 이루시려고, 오늘 이렇게 재산을 모으도록 너희에게 힘을 주셨음을, 너희는 기억해야 한다.

¹ Jim & Doris Morentz, ed., "Thanksgiving" in "Minister's Annual Preaching in 1988" (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987), 368.

² Jim & Doris Morentz, ed., "Thanksgiving" in "Minister's Annual Preaching in 1988" (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987), 368.

³ Jim & Doris Morentz, ed., "Thanksgiving" in "Minister's Annual Preaching in 1988" (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987), 368.

Do not say to yourself, "My power and the might of my own hand have gotten me this wealth."
But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, so that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your ancestors, as he is doing today.

It is the thankful heart that puts joy into this day of Thanksgiving.

God gives us freedom of body and soul. He gives us the family that upholds us and fills us with love. He gives us peace and satisfaction in the midst of the turmoil and pressures of life. He gives us a sense of accomplishment that says our labor and our love are worthy contributors to society. He permits us to serve in his kingdom, and even says that the gifts we bring will help someone else be grateful to him. He says our gratitude can change the lives of others and enable them to share his love.⁴

I have experienced this while I was serving the homeless church.
as it is stated in 고후 9:10-15

Our thanksgiving must spill over to others.

⁴ Jim & Doris Morentz, ed., *“Thanksgiving”* in *“Minister’s Annual Preaching in 1988”* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987), 369.