

Read: Luke 17:11-19

Thinking Leads to Thanking

Luke 17:15

One of lepers, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Abby was sitting next to her mom when her grandparents came up and placed a present on her lap. Her eyes lit up as she checked the wrapping for the best attack point. Then she ripped into it—paper, tape, and ribbons flying this way and that! Finally, she found the toy they bought for her. Quickly, she scooted off to play with it. Her mom called her back, “Hold it! Didn’t you forget something?” Abby froze in her tracks with a blank expression. Abby’s mom tried to nudge her memory, “What do you say?” Suddenly, Abby remembered and replied, “Thank you, Grandpa and Grandma!” She gave them a quick hug and ran off.

We all have something in common with Abby. Gratitude is not something we are naturally born with. Never has a parent said, “Oh, I’ll just give my child another year or two... they’ll learn how to say thank you on their own!” We have to be taught how and when to say, “Thank you.” Like Abby, we sometimes just plain forget. We take for granted all the good things God has given us and forget to say, “Thanks!”

In Luke chapter 17, Jesus hears ten men crying out for his help. They were so sick, no one wanted to get near them. Because he is God, Jesus was able to make all ten of them better. One of them returned, fell facedown at Jesus’ feet, and thanked him. Jesus asked, “Where are the other nine?” All ten cried out to Jesus for his help. But only one remembered to say thank you.

Every day we live is a reminder of how Jesus healed us, cleaned us of sin’s sickness. He took away our disease of sin, he took away our lonely separation from God. His cross cleansed us so that we run to God and he declares us healthy in his sight again! You’ve been given a clean bill of health today!

Jesus doesn’t need our thanks. He deserves our thanks. For what? Take a moment and think of all the reasons you have to thank him. Then take another moment tomorrow. And the day after. That makes every day a day to run back to Jesus and fall at his feet and say, “Thank you!”

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- How many sick men did Jesus make better in Luke chapter 17? How many came back and thanked him?
- The ten men weren't the only ones who were sick. From what did Jesus heal us on the cross?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- Who's the most thankful person in your family? Ask him/her why that is. What can you learn?
- Take a moment to think of someone you may have forgotten to say "Thank you" to. What might you want to do right after this devotion is over?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- *Discuss.* Thanksgiving is one day a year. But giving thanks to God ought to be every day of the year.
- A lot of parents tell their children, "Count your blessings." So do it! Make a top ten list of things you are thankful for using your ten fingers.

Closing Prayer:

Now thank we all our God with hearts and hands and voices,
who wondrous things has done, in whom the world rejoices;
who from our mother's arms, has blessed us on our way,
with countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.

(Christian Worship 597:1)