

## ***Do you give thanks to God?***

(by George Battey)

Let me begin by reading the following passage of scripture:

*Luke 17:12-19 (NKJV)*

*12 Then as [Jesus] entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off.*

*13 And they lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!"*

*14 So when He saw them, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed.*

*15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God,*

*16 and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan.*

*17 So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine?"*

*18 Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?"*

*19 And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."*

Leprosy is a very terrible disease. These men had no hope of living very long because there was no cure for leprosy.

Not only were they destined to soon die, they were going to die in misery. Little by little parts of their bodies would rot and simply fall off.

Not only were they going to die miserable deaths, they were going to die alone. No one wanted to be around them because leprosy was contagious and these lepers had to live in isolation – away from everyone.

When Jesus healed them it was the most wonderful thing they could have ever imagined! This was a miracle. They didn't get well over the course of a few months or weeks. They were healed instantly – immediately.

Yet, only one of the ten came to give thanks to the Lord for what He did. Jesus was pleased with the one, but very disappointed with the nine who did not return to "give God glory."

## WHAT ABOUT US?

What about us today? Are we thankful to God?

Many times all we can think about are the bad things happening in our lives. Every day I hear people complaining about:

- *Their jobs*
- *Their bills*
- *The people they have to work with*
- *The president*
- *The price of gasoline*
- *Their health*

And the list goes on and on – there is no end to the complaining. And ... yes ... I must confess that I have done my share of complaining.

But this week is when our nation celebrates Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving is a time to pause and reflect, not on the bad things, but on how truly blessed we are. Everything we have is a gift from God and ... were it not for Him ... we would never have existed.

*Philippians 4:6 (NKJV)*

*6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with **thanksgiving**, let your requests be made known to God;*

The apostle Paul wrote these words while he was in prison in Rome. Can you imagine a prisoner in a Roman dungeon writing to others about being thankful?!

Listen to more:

*Philippians 4:11 (NKJV)*

*11 ... I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content:*

The apostle Paul learned to be content in spite of his circumstances. In other words, it did not matter what was happening to him. It did not matter how much he had or how much he did not have, Paul learned to be content regardless of what was happening in his life.

Most of the time we are content only when everything seems to be going well – which is a rare thing.

**Q:** How could Paul be content in spite of his circumstances?

He was able to do this because he kept his attention focused on God and the Lord Jesus Christ. He truly believed the promises of the Lord that if he put the “kingdom of God and his righteousness” first in his life, all the necessities of life would be provided for him (Mt 6:33). He truly believed that!

Paul truly believed that a better life awaited him after he died if he would simply remain faithful during this life (Phil 1:23).

He also learned to be content with necessities.

*1 Timothy 6:8 (NKJV)*

*8 And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.*

How many of us can truly say we are content with simply food and clothes? How many times are we unhappy because of the house we live in, the old car we drive or the fact that we don't get to eat out at nice restaurants very often?

We need to be a thankful people:

- *We live in a free country where we have the right to own and read the Bible for ourselves. In Islamic countries, the Bible is illegal.*
- *If we have one single old car that runs, we have more than most people in the entire world! Think of all the billions of people in the world who are poor and will never own a car in their entire lives!*
- *We have so much food many of us have weight problems. Many times even the poorest Americans are overweight. We are not starving like many people in the world.*

On Thanksgiving Day, let us truly be thankful to the Lord for all His goodness and let us show our thankfulness by serving and worshipping Him as He has directed us in His word.

## **GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION**

Five steps in God's plan of salvation:

- 1) **Hear** the word of God (Rom 10:17).
- 2) **Believe** Jesus is the Son of God (Mk 16:16).
- 3) **Repent** of sins (change from living a sinful life) (Acts 2:38).
- 4) **Confess** your faith verbally before men (Rom 10:10).
- 5) **Be baptized** (immersed) in water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Mt 28:19) for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).

*Mark 16:16 (NKJV)*

*16 He who **believes** and is **baptized** will be saved; ...*

*Acts 2:38 (NKJV)*

*38 Then Peter said to them, "**Repent, and** let every one of you **be baptized** in the name of Jesus Christ **for the remission of sins**; ...*

After being baptized, one must continue to be faithful (Acts 2:42; Mt 28:20; Rev 2:10).