

Where are the Nine?

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 24 November 2013

Preacher: Don Coleman

[0 : 00] If you have a Bible with you, I want you to turn to the Gospel of Luke.

Now we've been in chapter 9, remember? Working our way through the Gospel of Luke, and we've been in Luke for some time and got a ways to go.

So we've been working our way through chapter 9, but since Thanksgiving is coming up this Thursday, I've decided to fast forward a bit to Luke chapter 17.

So you can turn to Luke 17, find verse 11. Now I'm not skipping all those other chapters, we're going to go back and get those, okay? So don't worry.

Of course you're not worried, I don't think. You know we're going to make our way through that wonderful book. But our subject this morning needs to be Thanksgiving.

[1 : 06] And this is an excellent passage of Scripture, maybe one of those kind of defining passages in the Bible that deal with the subject of Thanksgiving. And so I'm going to read verses 11 through 19.

So if you've found it there, you can be looking at your copy of God's Word as I read the text. Luke 17, starting with verse 11.

Now it happened as he went to Jerusalem that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

Then as he entered a certain village, there met him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. And they did so because that was the law. They stood afar off. And they lifted up their voices and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

[2 : 06] 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.

That means they were healed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned and with a loud voice glorified God and fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks.

And he was a Samaritan. So Jesus answered and said, Were there not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?

And he said to him, Rise, go your way. Your faith has made you well. Your faith has saved you.

So our subject this morning is thanksgiving. And to get us started with that, even before we look at this passage, this text, which is an excellent one, to teach us some lessons, some principles, some truths about thanksgiving, before we look at the text, let me remind you of a little American history.

[3 : 18] Okay? It was on September 6th, 1620, that the pilgrims set sail from Plymouth, England, for the New World.

And what were they in search of? They were in search of freedom, liberty, social or civil liberty, certainly, but I think primarily they were in search of religious liberty.

The journey, of course, and we know this from our history, the journey was very harsh, very difficult for them as they crossed the sea, the ocean.

But in a little over two months, on December 11, 1620, they landed at Plymouth Rock, Massachusetts.

And just before disembarking, they signed the Mayflower Compact, America's first document of civil government, and the first, I think, to introduce the concept of self-government.

[4 : 22] The pilgrims' first year was also very difficult, extremely difficult, and most of us know that starvation and sicknesses claimed the lives of nearly half the colony.

But through prayer, trusting God, through God's provision, God's providence, God's mercy and grace, and through the help of the American Indians, the pilgrims survived.

They survived that first winter. And amazingly, the harvest of the following summer was bountiful. And so, they declared a three-day feast.

I think really we ought to have that tradition still today, don't you? Although, although really, when you get down to it, our feast begins on Thanksgiving. It doesn't finish until the new year. You know, it's just constant.

But anyway, they declared a three-day feast, and it started on December 13, 1621. And it was for the purpose of thanking God for all of His provision and His protection.

[5 : 27] Pilgrim Edward Winslow later described this Thanksgiving feast with these words. He wrote, Although it be not always so plentiful as it was at this time for us, yet by the goodness of God, we are so far from want.

It would not be until 1789 that America would celebrate its first kind of official day of thanksgiving to God by proclamation of our first president, George Washington.

And Washington said it was to be a nationwide celebration, quote, as a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many and signal favors of Almighty God.

Then in 1863, by proclamation, the proclamation of then President Abraham Lincoln, he set aside the last Thursday of November as a national day of thanksgiving.

And in Lincoln's proclamation of thanksgiving, he wrote these words, I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next as a day of thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the heavens.

[6 : 54] And each year for 75 plus years that followed Lincoln, each subsequent president of the United States has renewed that proclamation.

But it was not until 1941, under Franklin D. Roosevelt, that Congress permanently established the fourth Thursday of each November as a national holiday of thanksgiving.

A little bit of history. Now, with that history in mind, what would you say was the intent of the pilgrims their first thanksgiving celebration?

What was their intent? Well, according to, again, Edward Winslow, it was to be thankful to God for His goodness, His bountiful goodness.

That was the primary intent of the pilgrims' first thanksgiving feast. I would say, I would also ask you, what was the intent behind George Washington's declaration of a nationwide thanksgiving day?

[8 : 05] Well, in his words, to acknowledge with grateful hearts the many favors of Almighty God. And what was the intent behind Abraham Lincoln's proclamation of a nationwide thanksgiving day?

Well, according to Lincoln, again, it was to be a day of thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the heavens. In fact, Lincoln further described why or the need for such a holiday as thanksgiving.

He introduced his proclamation of thanksgiving with these words. He said, The year that is drawing toward its close has been filled with blessings to these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed, that we are prone to forget the source from which they come.

Pretty clear what the intent was on the part of the pilgrims, on the part of George Washington as he declared a day of thanksgiving.

It's pretty clear what the intent was on the part of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln and others. The intent was to lift up our thanksgivings to God.

[9 : 21] To God. Now, certainly we are to be thankful to one another and we have been created and commanded by God to offer our thanks to others. We're to be thankful people and gracious people and have a spirit of gratitude when we relate to one another.

But first and foremost, our thanksgivings are to be offered up to God. And of course, not just on this particular holiday, but we're to have a spirit of thanksgiving every day of the year, of course.

But I would ask you, what has this holiday become in our day? What has it become to America today? And not just America at large, but God's people, the church in America.

Ask yourself that question. My intent this morning is not to be a killjoy. I'm not trying to throw a wet blanket on this wonderful holiday. But it begs us just to know a little bit of our history.

It begs us to ask the question, where are we today in this? I would remind you, and it grieves me to say it, but I think Paul's words in 2 Timothy 3.1 come closer to describing our culture today.

[10 : 46] It ought to grieve us. It ought to break our hearts, but it would be awfully difficult to deny this. Paul said to Timothy, he said, but know this, that in the last days, perilous times will come.

Now, when we hear the word perilous, we very naturally think of difficult times, hard times, times of disaster, times of problems and troubles, but Paul goes on to describe these perilous times. He's speaking of a spiritual kind of peril, and he goes on to say, for men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, that's part of the list, unthankful, but it's not the end of the list, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, that means malicious gossipers, without self-control, brutal, savage, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, or conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form or appearance of godliness, but denying its power.

I believe that's a reference to the gospel, the power of God into salvation, denying its power. Having a form of godliness, but denying its power.

Unthankfulness is part of that list. I mean, it's a horrendous list, perilous list. It is a description of what the world, in Paul's day, what he said the world would fast become and has become in our day.

[12:55] unthankfulness. And so just taking that one word out of the whole list and, you know, what a list. Unthankfulness is one of those leading indicators that a nation has turned its back on God.

And again, I'm not talking about a spirit of gratitude to one another. I mean, that's part and parcel of the whole. I mean, that's a, it's symptomatic of the real problem and that is that we have ceased as a nation to thank God.

The one true God. The God of the Bible. That's how we started as a nation. And for many, many years that was the norm. That was who we, who we were.

That identified us as a people. because we, we were constantly acknowledging the one true God, the God of the Bible and we were offering up our thanksgiving to Him.

That's what precipitated a national holiday as such. It started with the pilgrims and George Washington saw the importance of it and presidents after him and Lincoln and Roosevelt and, but over the years we have ceased to be a thankful people.

[14:21] A thankful people and it's an indicator that we have turned our backs on God. Now, the passage we're looking at this morning is not one that I think speaks necessarily to people at large.

It speaks to the church. it speaks to us because we of all people in this nation should be the examples and leading the way in, in our, our, our spirit of thankfulness and praise and worship of God for all of His rich bounty that He has, has seen fit according to His providence to lavish upon us and who could deny that, that, that His blessings as a nation have not been lavished on us.

and we need to lead the way in that. So we need to, I think, be reacquainted with, re-challenged by what the Bible has to say about thankfulness, about a spirit of gratitude, about praise, about worship.

and really I kind of bring all these together because in a sense the, the words are interchangeable.

There's no true worship without a spirit of thanksgiving and praise and, and, and there's no, no praise that is not, not filled and saturated, full with a gratitude, a thanksgiving that is offered up to the Lord for all of his rich bounty, but especially his salvation.

So this is a lesson for the church. We need to learn this lesson, a lesson on thankfulness. And so this text, I think, is an excellent place to find this lesson.

[16:10] Here were ten men, and they were lepers. All ten of them. And all ten of these lepers were healed.

No question about that. No question about their condition, their desperate condition, hopeless condition in their day. No question that they were all healed miraculously.

All ten received a blessing beyond their wildest dreams. But only one was thankful. I mean, it's a very clear illustration, isn't it?

Very stark. Ten were healed. One was thankful. And therefore, only one of them heard Jesus say, Arise, go your way.

Your faith has made you well or whole. Or again, the word is saved. Now, what can we learn from this passage about thankfulness?

[17:14] A number of principles. Number of them. In fact, I'm going to give you a bunch. But they're going to come to us under two headings, okay? Two headings.

Two things, or in the sense of two broad categories, that teach us a lesson on thankfulness. And here are the two broad categories.

Number one, we're going to learn the placing of thankfulness in our priorities. The placing of thankfulness in our priorities. Where does that fit in our priorities?

And then number two, the perfecting of thankfulness in our practices. The practices of life. Those two categories.

So let's look at the first one. The placing of thankfulness in your priorities. Where do you place it? Where does it fit in? Among all your other priorities, the priorities of life.

[18 : 15] The things that we have concluded, each one of us individually, have concluded are the most important things. Where does thankfulness fit in the priorities of life?

What are your priorities? Maybe that would be the first place to begin. Just pause and think about your life, and what you're striving for, and working for, and moving toward, and what you bring everything to bear on to reach.

What are the priorities of your life? You know, a lot of people have a wrong set of priorities. I mean, you know, really, some people are kind of like a dog chasing a car down the street.

I mean, you have to ask yourself, what is he going to do with the car when he catches it? Eat it? It's become a focus of his life, a priority of his life, and he's chasing after it.

And he is duty-bound to catch that thing, even though he never does. Usually the car catches him first, but there's probably a lesson there as well. But it seems that we have a tendency to place nearly everything, you know, at a higher level or on the scale of importance, a higher level importance than we have placed our relationship with God.

[19 : 31] And I'm talking about that communion with him, that relationship of worship and gratitude and praise toward him. Everything seems to take a higher place than that.

It's not that we're, you know, don't ever give a thankfulness of thought. It's just that we don't ever really get around to thank again. And it's because we have a misguided set of priorities in life.

And so many of those things that people are striving for and looking for, many of those things in the final analysis are not even important. In fact, kind of like the dog, you know, when you achieve those certain priorities in life, you find yourself often wondering why you ever wanted those things in the first place.

They seem so trivial. But let's just think not about specific priorities like, you know, money and like job, career and other things that might populate your list of priorities in life.

But let's think maybe in a different direction and think about some of those kind of standard priorities of life that may seem to be good things. And yet even they are out of balance with the priority of praise, the priority of thanksgiving toward God.

[20 : 57] For example, and in fact, I'll give you four of them here. In the first place, we have more provision than we have thankfulness.

We have more provision from God. And, by the way, seek more provision from God than we are willing to offer up thanksgiving in exchange.

More provision than thankfulness. What do we see here in this passage? All ten were healed. All ten of them. Jesus didn't leave any one of them out.

All ten were healed, but only one was thankful. Ten people were healed of leprosy here, a hopeless disease of that day. But only one knelt at Jesus' feet in humble gratitude and thanksgiving.

Now, let's just then apply that to the provisions of God in our own lives. He's richly blessed us. Every single one of us.

[22 : 07] He has poured out, lavished out upon us His blessings. Certainly there are spiritual blessings in heavenly places that God has lavished upon us.

Beginning with His love and continuing with our salvation and all of the rewards. He has lavished us with spiritual blessings. But think about all of the physical things that God in His providence and in His wisdom and sovereignty has allowed us to enjoy.

But God's provisions far exceed our thankfulness. Now, I'm not so sure that I could say, matter-of-factly, that our thankfulness, our gratitude, our spirit of gratitude could ever match God's provision.

I don't think in these bodies, in this life, that we could ever bring our gratitude up to the level that it should be to match, to be in concert with His great blessings upon us.

But should we not try and seek to bring our thanksgivings up to the level that it should be? Did you see the priority of thanksgiving in relation to His provisions?

[23 : 24] Our provisions are much more than our thankfulness. Second, we have more prayer than thankfulness. It's kind of interesting when you think about it.

More prayer than thankfulness. Look at verse 13. What happens there? And they lifted up, the Bible says, they lifted up their voices. That is, they're praying. They're praying. And they said, Jesus, Master, have mercy upon us.

This is a prayer. Right? I mean, they're praying to the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, He's there physically in His body. And today, He's not here physically in His body with us.

But we still prayed to Him. They prayed to Him. We prayed to Him. All ten of these lepers prayed to Jesus. But only one prayed and followed it up with thanksgiving.

Gratitude. Praise. Now, prayer is a priority, isn't it? I mean, who would deny that? You'll never hear me say that prayer is some lesser priority.

[24 : 27] It's a great priority of life in our relationship with God. But I would say this to you, that prayer is for a time. Our time.

This life. But praise and thanksgiving and gratitude and worship is for eternity. And so, the question is, should we start making it a priority here as it should be?

Certainly mixed in with our prayers. It's part of our prayer life. Part of our devotion and communion to God. And it causes us to analyze our own prayer life.

And see how much of it is filled up with gratitude and thanksgiving toward God. But we, I'm afraid, have more prayer than we have thankfulness. We ought to work on that.

This is a lesson on thankfulness. And so, His provision far outweighs our thankfulness. We need to be working on that thankfulness.

[25 : 31] Our prayers and our need for God through prayer is much greater than our thankfulness. And we need to work to move our thankfulness to be more equal with, by measure, with our prayer.

Third, we have more practice than thankfulness. And what I mean is obedience to certain ritual, or excuse me, religious duties.

Religious disciplines, spiritual disciplines. We have more practice. There seems to be more obedience to religion and certain religious duties than there is prayer.

Praise and thankfulness. Jesus said to the ten healed lepers, He said, Go, show yourselves to the priests.

And off they went. Off they went. And this, of course, was a very legal thing. It was important. I mean, before a cured leper could rejoin society in that day, in Jewish life, that leper had to be examined by the priest, had to be approved by the priest.

[26 : 46] And not just simply to rejoin society, family and culture and society, but also even to participate in the worship. They had to be approved by the priest.

Had to be examined and scrutinized and approved by the priest. And so, this is what Jesus is telling them to do. Nothing wrong with that. So, off they went to show themselves to the priest.

Off they trotted to obey God by doing this religious activity. But the application here for us is, I think, pretty clear.

Obedience. Even obedience to God's clear laws and commandments concerning worship.

Obedience without thankfulness is a dead work.

It has no life in it. In fact, thankfulness is the evidence and evidence of true faith.

[27 : 49] Again, I'm talking about our thankfulness to God. A genuine, heartfelt thankfulness, gratitude, praise. That is evidence of true faith.

It is a proof that the truth is in you to begin with. Let me give you one more. When it comes to the placing of thankfulness in your priorities, we typically have more provision, more prayer, more practice than we have thankfulness.

And third, we have more persuasion than we have thankfulness. Being persuaded about Jesus, even, and His nature and His character.

Verse 14. So, when He saw them, He said to them, Go show yourselves to the priest. Now, watch this. And so, it was that as they went, they were cleansed.

As they went. They weren't healed right away. They weren't healed and then they went. It was as they went. As they were obeying what Jesus told them to do. As they went, they were healed.

[29 : 01] And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned and thanked Jesus. See, there's a difference here between the one and the other nine. Not just in their choice about thanksgiving.

That the one came back and thanked the Lord and the others did not. There's not just a difference there, but there's a difference spiritually as well. Difference in their persuasion concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

Only one of the ten came back to thank Him. Why not the other nine? Well, the other nine, I think it's clear, believed in Jesus' power to heal.

They were persuaded about that. How do we know that? Because they obeyed Jesus' instruction even before the healing took place. They were persuaded that Jesus could heal them. And apparently it was implied that if they would go, they'd be healed.

And so they believed Him. That sounds okay so far. Or as far as it goes. But the point is that the nine had a faith in Jesus.

[30 : 09] They had a certain persuasion about Jesus. A certain kind of faith or type of faith. But this faith was not in Jesus as Lord, Savior.

But it clearly was a faith in Jesus as a miracle worker. That He could do what they needed Him to do. That He could heal them.

And there are a lot of people today who have this kind of respect, this kind of persuasion about Jesus. They're not saved. They may have a certain persuasion about who He is.

About what He has done. About what He's able to do. And they may have a certain persuasion to the point that they pay homage with their lips. Some people are just simply persuaded about the identity of Jesus.

But they have never fully trusted Him as Lord and Savior. And the evidence is their lack of gratitude and unthankfulness. I once talked to a man some years ago.

[31 : 12] I'll never forget him. I've used him as an illustration many a time because it was just such a profound thing to me. I was visiting with him about the Lord. I shared the gospel with him.

And he had a testimony. He said, oh yes, preacher, I know Jesus. I'm a Christian. And I said, well, tell me your story. And he said, I have for many years been a lumberman.

And that is, I'm the kind of guy that goes out and cuts the trees down and hauls them in to the sawmills and so forth. And he says, I was out there in the woods one day all by myself.

And I had my equipment. And I had that piece of equipment where I'd grab onto the logs and load them up on the trailer. And I'm just trying to get some of that done.

I was out there all by myself. And something malfunctioned with the equipment and it turned my loader upside down and pinned me underneath it. And there was no one there.

[32 : 11] I couldn't contact anybody. This was prior to cell phones, by the way. And he said, I just prayed. I just prayed, God, if you'll get me out of this jam, I will serve you the rest of my life.

And he said, see there. And he said, I was able to get out. Somehow, you know, I was able to wiggle my way out. And God delivered me from that tight spot, that jam in my life. And I've trusted him ever since.

He, you know, that was his salvation testimony. Nothing about his need for a Savior, his sinful life. Nothing about repentance. Nothing about trusting Jesus as his Lord and Savior.

And his life was certainly no testimony to his life for Christ. He just had that experience in his life way back when.

And he was persuaded that Jesus delivered him, that Jesus had the power. And so he just pretty much just paid him lip service. That's not real salvation.

[33 : 13] And that's, in a sense, indicative of the other nine here. More persuasion than thankfulness. And it's important that you not only be persuaded about who Jesus is, but that you persuade him to the point of repentance and trust in him as Lord and Savior.

And that, I believe, is what this one man did. And the evidence of it was his gratitude, his thankfulness to God. The placing of thankfulness in your priorities.

The second thing I want you to notice from the text is the perfecting of thankfulness in your practices. The perfecting of thankfulness in your practices.

The one man in our story is an example, I believe, of perfect thankfulness. The perfection of thankfulness. And so very quickly, I just want to give you five quick elements of perfect thankfulness.

Number one, perfect thankfulness is singular. It's singular. You notice here that this man was one of ten when he was a leper.

[34 : 29] But this man was one of one when he returned to give thanks to Jesus. One of one. And so the lesson for us is that perfect thankfulness is singular.

It's singular in a couple of ways. It's singular in that no one can do it for you. And you cannot do it for anyone else. It's a personal thing. It's a singular thing. It's not a group activity.

Now, I understand that as a church, and we can even go broader than that, as a nation, we can lift up, be grateful to God. In a corporate sense of the word.

But that can never happen, really, until the individual is thankful, where there is singular thankfulness. But it's also singular in that this man came back to give thanks to God, thanks to the Lord Jesus, regardless of what the other nine did.

This man was thankful even in the midst of the majority of unthankfulness.

[35 : 36] And so their lack of thankfulness, the other nine, their lack of thankfulness, did not stifle his thankfulness. It did not hold him back. Because thankfulness, perfect thankfulness, is a singular thing.

Number two, perfect thankfulness is a sudden thing. It is sudden.

Verse 15 indicates that the very moment this man realized that he had been healed, what did he do? He turned back and gave thanks to Jesus.

Now, suppose with me, you're a Christian, and you've died, and you've gone to heaven, and you find yourself standing there at the pearly gates. Now, it's not going to happen that way, okay?

But there you are. You're standing at the pearly gates, and the angel Gabriel is there. He's the one that is admitting people into heaven, all right? And Gabriel, standing there, he says, we've just received a new directive from the commander-in-chief.

[36 : 42] And here's what you must do. All those wishing to enter heaven must first write out a thank-you note to the Lord, listing by name, specifically by name, all unthankful blessings you've received while on earth throughout your entire life, and you can't miss anything.

You've got to get it all on there. I don't know about you, but I'd be in quite a pickle. I can barely remember things from last week, much less my entire life.

And you say, well, preacher, I'm glad it's not that way. It's not going to be that way, that you don't have to do that to get into heaven. Well, that's right. Thank the Lord we don't have to do that to get into heaven. But the point is well made, isn't it?

The Lord wants us to be prompt in our thanksgiving. Always be up-to-date. We talk a lot about making sure our confession is up-to-date, confession of sins.

Likewise, our thanksgivings, our gratitude to the Lord for His abundant blessings, should be always up-to-date. It's something that we don't allow space to come between.

[37 : 49] We need to be sudden in our thanksgiving, prompt in our thanksgiving. Now, we're talking about perfect thankfulness. It's singular. It is sudden. And third, it is spiritual.

Perfect thankfulness is spiritual. It's a spiritual thing. It's something that comes from the heart. This man was on his way to fulfill the legal requirement given by God to go and show himself to the priest, but he turned back first, didn't he?

He turned back. His desire then was much deeper than just some kind of religious duty. His desire went beyond the ceremony because he wanted Jesus first.

He wanted to come to Jesus first. He said to himself, I know who this man is. The moment he noticed he was healed, he wanted to turn back immediately. The Bible says in verse 16 that he fell down on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks.

So perfect thankfulness is a spiritual thing. It's something that comes from the heart. That's why it is so closely linked. Not linked. It's part of our worship.

[39 : 02] In fact, true worship would be empty without thankfulness and gratitude. What is it that really fuels our worship of God?

And it's all that he has done for us. And our hearts that are so moved with gratitude. Number four, perfect thankfulness is strong.

It's something that's strong. It's not a weak thing. It's something strong. Notice verse 15 says that this man glorified God with a loud voice. He shouted his gratitude, his glorifying the Lord at that moment.

Most churches, the only loud mouth is behind the pulpit. A few out there as well sometimes. Wes, thank you. Thank you.

I gave you a pause there. You took... Psalm 32 verse 11 says, Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, you righteous, and shout for joy.

[40 : 12] Shout for joy. Perfect thankfulness and praise and worship is strong. It doesn't always have to be shouting at the top of your lungs. But there are times when that's appropriate.

And it was for this man. I mean, he had been healed of this hopeless disease. And he shouted his thankfulness, his gratitude to the Lord. And sometimes our worship, our thankfulness should be strong.

It should be intense. At times maybe even loud. Number five, perfect thankfulness is selfless. It's selfless. And this perhaps is the most important thing. Where was this man when he was thanking Jesus? It was on his face.

At Jesus' feet. That means he was on the ground, face on the ground. At Jesus' feet. By the way, Luke makes the point that this man was a Samaritan.

[41 : 17] There's a lot that I could say about that here this morning just by way of exegesis. But it meant he was not a Jew. Well, in a sense he was a half Jew. But to the Jews that meant he was no Jew.

And not just a Gentile, but worse than a Gentile to the Jewish people of that day. And so he was unique. That is the implication being the other nine were Jews.

And so the nine self-righteous Jews went off to fulfill the law. Because that's what they were all about, you know. Fulfill the letter of the law.

They had no real spirit of the law. They were unthankful. Well, I think maybe even thinking that they got simply what was due them.

Because they're Jews. But the one, the Samaritan, could not help but realize his unworthiness.

[42 : 18] He's a Samaritan. And for Jesus to even speak to him was something out of the ordinary that day. He realized his unworthiness.

And that brought him to his face before Jesus. You see, it's when we realize that we are nobody. Really. It's only then that we become somebody. Somebody to Jesus. Jesus said in verse 17, Were there not ten cleansed?

But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner, the Samaritan?

And then he said, Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well. The word there, by the way, for well, I think in the King James, it's the word whole.

[43 : 20] The word is the Greek word sozo, and it means salvation. And so Jesus not only healed this man, he saved him.

He saved him. He was a nobody. A nobody. A nobody. He didn't deserve even to be given the time of day from a Jew.

That's just the way the culture was in that day. But even worse, in the spiritual sense, he was nobody. A sinner. Unworthy. But his selfless faith, that's what this was.

In his gratitude, in his thankfulness, he was expressing a selfless faith. That made him somebody. Somebody very special. Because Jesus saved him. Where does this intersect your life?

[44 : 25] These principles concerning gratitude, thankfulness to God. Where does this intersect your life?

Can you see yourself in the one? The one man who returned to give thanks to God? Or do you see yourself in the nine?

I'm not making a case here that if you've not been thankful as you ought to be, that that is proof that you're an unbeliever. Believers, Christians can be some of the most unthankful people.

Shame on us. That's a point of sin. Sin that we need to deal with. Deal with in the right way. In the biblical way is repentance.

Well, confession and repentance. I wonder, you know, if we could be so honest with ourselves. So honest that we would allow ourselves to analyze our life.

[45 : 43] And be honest about the lack of thankfulness to God. But it also applies, of course, or intersects with the life of the unbeliever.

As it did with this man. He was lost. And Jesus, by his grace, did a wonderful thing in his life.

He not only healed him, but he saved him. And the result was this man's gratitude. Worship.

Where does it intersect in your life? Does it intersect our church? Does it intersect our nation?

I think so. Especially in these days, in this holiday. We're mindful of a nation. Because all around our nation, people will be celebrating this coming Thursday.

[46 : 59] Watching football. Yeah, I'll probably be doing that too. Eating turkey. All the other things.

I'm convinced that some families get together on Thanksgiving to just strategize Black Friday. In fact, some in America will be camping out at Best Buy on Thanksgiving Day.

So they can be the first one in the door on Black Friday. Best Buy is probably open on Thanksgiving this year. It's kind of a reality check, isn't it?

Are we truly thankful people? Not thankful in some generic way. Thankful to some generic God.

But for us, it's singularly thankful to the one true God. Who's lavished us with his love.

[48 : 07] Saved us. Adopted us into his family. Something to thank him.

Thank you.