

From the Pastor's Desk: Don't Forget the Giver

"Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?"

-Luke 17:18

As a kid, one time my uncle had given me a nice dress shirt. It was a departure from my normal T-shirt and jeans, but it was alright. Being a teenager of course, I did not like it. In fact, I promptly returned it and got a dress shirt that I thought was better. Really I should have just been grateful to my uncle and kept the nice shirt he picked out for me.

How did I know to be ungrateful that day? Who taught me? Did I have to go to some sort of seminar to learn how to be ungrateful? Did someone have to show me the principles of ingratitude and demonstrate with examples? No. But as many of us know, ungratefulness comes rather easy and naturally.

As it did for the people in our story today. Today in our story, we are told of 10 lepers, who were banished from living among the community. For being lepers as such, they had lived outside the camp, because contact with other people would make them ceremonially unclean. That was Old Testament Law.



But suddenly, one day, hope came near, in the form of Jesus walking by. Verse 13 says they, "stood at a distance", as the Law required them to, and called out to Jesus, saying: "Jesus, Master, Have pity on us!" The Greek word used there, means mercy or compassion.

In a sense, the lepers represent the experience of us all. We are all banished from the presence of God, because of the uncleanness of our sin. Leprosy could destroy their limbs, but our trespasses, they can destroy our souls if they are not forgiven. We too, have every reason to call out for mercy, noting that God alone can rescue us.

In the end, only one came back to thank and praise God. The rest kept on walking. That is what our flesh nature is all about. It takes the easy way, always. But you and I can be different. We can yield to the Holy Spirit in our lives, and let thankfulness flow from our hearts! Amen.

Prayer: Thank you Jesus, for every little bit of grace and mercy in our lives. We are thankful for all that we have, and ask that you forgive us for wrong attitudes. In that manner, we shall not forget you, the Giver. Amen.

--Pastor Chris