

Your Faith Is Showing
Luke 17:11-19

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Luther preached a sermon on this text in 1533. It is a very good sermon. Therefore, today's sermon will contain portions from Luther. I thought about preaching only his, but his sermon would run about 40 minutes. I have it here, if you'd rather have me preach it all? Given Luther's sermon was translated into King James style English, you should be able to tell which portions are his.

At the end of this Gospel lesson, you hear how the Lord glorifies faith. For he ascribes to their faith, and not to Himself the fact that these ten lepers had been made well. "Thy faith," he says to the Samaritan, "hath made thee whole." He does not say, I have made you well; instead he glorifies faith. By doing so, he is urging us to boldly follow his example and to believe in God with total trust; he wants us to be certain, that whatever we believe, we shall receive through Christ. If we believe that through Christ we have forgiveness of sins and eternal life, then that's the way it will be. If we believe that for Christ's sake God is gracious and merciful to us, then he will be gracious and merciful. In other words, we should credit everything to faith, not to God, who, of course, is the one who does it all. He wants everyone to learn this truth, that if we do not receive something which we need, then it is not God's fault, but the fault lies solely with our unbelief; for if we firmly believed, then we would certainly receive it.

So, the first lesson from today's Gospel is to know that we should commit ourselves to God and trust him for everything, for he will supply it. On the other hand, anyone who does not believe in God, nor trusts him to give us every blessing, should realize that he won't receive anything.

The second lesson is the horrible example of the ten men who had such wonderful faith to be healed, but only one of them acknowledges this blessing and thanks our Lord Christ for it. The other nine fall away from faith again and don't even bother to thank Christ for their blessing.

This negative aspect should teach us to be thankful and to be on guard against such shameful blasphemy of ingratitude. For our Lord God has every right to insist on receiving the honor of gratitude that we owe him for all his blessings.

This we should do gladly and willingly, because, in any case, it is something that does not require any pain or trouble. How much effort does it take to turn to God and say, "Oh Lord, you have given me good vision, skillful hands and feet, and countless other blessings, for all of which I thank you from the bottom of my heart, for they are all gifts from you."

Take another example: what does it cost you to thank your father and mother, your boss, or your friend when they have done you a favor? It certainly won't cost you an arm or a leg, but merely the acknowledgment of the favor and an expression of your gratitude. By this simple act, people can tell that you appreciate their kindness.

This is what the Samaritan does in our text. It does not cost him anything, just a few words, and

yet, it pleases our Lord so much that it fills us with awe. Here is great evidence of the Samaritan's faith.

So dear friends, is your faith showing? Do you expect God to do great things and act accordingly, as did the lepers in our text? They ask Jesus for mercy. He tells them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And what did they do?

It was then that their faith was showing. They believed Jesus at His word and went. It was in the going that their faith was showing, for they did exactly as Christ instructed, faithfully trusting that they would be healed on the way. That is exactly what happened.

One of them, a Samaritan, when he saw that he was healed, returned to give thanks to Jesus. His faith was showing, realizing that it was Jesus who had healed Him, he returned to give thanks. The priests could wait.

Is your faith showing? Today we celebrate Thanksgiving. Most families will take some time specifically to give thanks. Is your faith showing? Does it take a national holiday for you to give thanks to God? Do you take the time to go around the table and say what you are thankful for on any other day?

Is your faith showing? Even though it is a national holiday to give thanks, your thanks will receive short shrift. Why do I think that the giving of thanks will be cut short? Cause you have to get your plate and get back in front of the TV after all, it is a Division game, Vikings at the Lions.

Is your faith showing? Do you expect God to do great things to you and for you?

You know what, I'd say your faith is showing. You do expect God to do great things. You are here today because you recognize that your place in the world, all that you have, all that you are, and all you will ever be, is a gracious gift to you from God.

Your faith is showing because of your presence here, for you know that your spiritual well-being is the most important aspect of your life. As you have been united to Christ's death and resurrection in baptism, you know that the new life you live is the life He gives you.

Your faith is showing because you came today, expecting great things from your God. You expected to receive incredible gifts from His gracious and merciful hand.

Your faith is showing, for you confessed your sins, expecting to be forgiven. And indeed you are!

Your faith is showing, for you are still awake during this sermon, believing that God will bless and strengthen your faith through His Word to you by the mouth of His under-shepherd.

Your faith is showing, for while it appears to be only a thin wafer of bread and a sip of wine, you believe that Christ's body and blood, the same body pierced and the same blood shed for you for

the forgiveness of sins upon the cross, is delivered to you in this meal. Your faith is showing, for you believe that this is the most important Thanksgiving dinner – that Christ gave took bread and then wine, gave thanks, and gives it to us to eat and drink. Your faith is showing, for you believe that faith will be strengthened to life everlasting and to salvation as you eat and drink of this divine meal.

Your faith is showing, for you give thanks to God for all the great and mighty wonders He has done for you and to you, and will continue to do for you, in Christ Jesus. Amen.