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# The Messenger



“... How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!” Romans 10:15

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## The Sin of Ingratitude

by Dempsey Collins

While on His way to Jerusalem Jesus graciously healed ten leprous men. Luke 17:12-19 teaches us: *As He entered a village, ten leprous men who stood at a distance met Him; 13 and they raised their voices, saying, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!” 14 When He saw them, He said to them, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.” And as they were going, they were cleansed. 15 Now one of them, when he saw that he had been healed, turned back, glorifying God with a loud voice, 16 and he fell on his face at His feet, giving thanks to Him. And he was a Samaritan. 17 Then Jesus answered and said, “Were there not ten cleansed? But the nine - where are they? 18 Was no one found who returned to give glory to God, except this foreigner?” 19 And He said to him, “Stand up and go; your faith has made you well.”*

Jesus asked, “Where are the nine?” Though He did not tell these men to return and thank Him for the kindness done, it’s obvious Jesus expected it. How disappointed Jesus was in these men and how disappointed He is in us when we manifest the same spirit of ingratitude.

II Tim. 3:1,2 teaches ingratitude is a sin, *But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. 2 For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy.* In this passage the Holy Spirit classifies ingratitude among the most heinous deeds. Wickedness has many friends and ingratitude is one of them. Romans 1:21 teaches ingratitude as the beginning stage of moral depravity. *For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations and their foolish heart was darkened.*

A terrible thing had happened among the Gentiles. A complete reversal had occurred. Instead of thanking and honoring God as creator and sustainer as they ought to have done, man in his foolishness honored himself and much lesser things such as birds, beasts of the field, and even bugs. Rather than honoring the creator, man chose instead to honor the creature and in time the stars and planets. This in turn led to the moral depravity we read of at the end of Romans Chapter 1 – men burning in lust for other men, women burning in their lust for other women, and many other moral crimes against God such as envy, murder, deceit, malice, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, unloving, unmerciful, etc. This wickedness began as a result of man choosing to not honor and thank God. Herein lies the great tragedy of ingratitude; i.e. an ungrateful heart robs God of the honor and glory due Him and gives that honor and glory to something totally undeserving.

The evil fruits of ingratitude can also be seen in that it destroys relationships. In Luke 17:17-19 the nine who did not return to give thanks may have returned to family relationships but they hurt the most important relationship of all. When we do not return in thanks to God, it also hurts our relationship with Him and in time

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will destroy that relationship. (Rom. 1:21) How disappointed we are when we extend some kindness and the person being helped does not even acknowledge the deed. Ingratitude will hurt your relationships with others and eventually destroy your relationship with God and your fellow man.

God hates the sin of ingratitude and so should we. How can we gain the victory over this terrible crime against God and our fellow man?

Gaining the victory over ingratitude begins with respecting God's very plain command to be a thankful people. Eph. 5:20 *Always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father.* Phil. 4:6 *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.* We should pray often and every prayer should include thanksgiving. There is always something to be thankful for. Col. 2:7 *"having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude.* Col. 3:15-17 *Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. 17 Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.*

From these New Testament passages, it should be obvious that God expects our life to be overflowing with thanksgiving unto Him. Keep in mind the apostle Paul was a prisoner in Rome at the time he gave these instructions to be thankful.

God commands us to be grateful and has every right to expect thankfulness in view of who He is and what He has done. Psalm 24:1 *The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof.* We live on God's earth, breathe God's air, eat God's food, enjoy His sunshine, His rain, use the body He has graciously given to us and enjoy countless other blessings. All of these may be correctly labeled the grace of God toward us. But far beyond the physical blessings are the spiritual blessings we enjoy through Jesus Christ.

How much more we owe God when we consider the great sacrifice that has been made in the giving of His own Son so that we would not perish but have everlasting life. Eph. 1:3 *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.*

Gratitude alone should cause a man to give his life to God. I John 4:19 *We love, because He first loved us.* We can also see the great importance of being thankful when we consider the example of Jesus. Mat. 15:36 *and He took the seven loaves and the fish; and giving thanks, He broke them and started giving them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people.* At the feeding of the 4,000 men, besides women and children, Jesus gave thanks. Matt. 26:27 *And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it all of you".* When He instituted the Lord's Supper, Jesus gave thanks. Jesus understood the importance of giving thanks and so must we. I Peter 2:21 *...leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps.*

*(to be continued)*

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## **News and Notes:**

Remember to check the prayer list for those with ongoing spiritual weaknesses and physical illnesses.

*"...Pray for one another...The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."* James 5:16