

BUT WHERE ARE THE NINE?

By Keith Greer

“Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. And they lifted up their voices and said, ‘Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!’ 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. 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? But where are the nine?’” {Luke 17:12-17} In keeping with the theme of thankfulness, let’s consider some things that gratitude will cause us to do.

Act. *“You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.” {John 5:39,40}* How can God help those who are unwilling to accept His help? The Lord encountered this same problem when He came to earth. *“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!” {Matthew 23:37}* One who does not act is not truly thankful.

Glorify God. *“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” {Ephesians 3:20,21}* Whenever God blesses us, no matter what part we may have played, He deserves all the glory. If we understand that all of life’s blessings come from God’s mighty hand—how can we not glorify Him because of the wonderful love He shows us?

Be Humble. *“Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.” {1 Peter 5:5,6}* God has given us many good lessons on humility. Why would God even be concerned or care about such insignificant beings? He is very great, and we’re so small. It’s truly humbling to consider how helpless we are without God to help us through the difficulties and dangers we encounter as we travel down life’s pathway.

Give Thanks. *“And when he had said these things, he took bread and gave thanks to God in the presence of them all; and when he had broken it he began to eat. Then they were all encouraged, and also took food themselves.” {Acts 27:35,36}* Paul was on a ship that was in the middle of a great storm. He had not eaten food for two weeks. But even under these terrible circumstances he took time to thank God for so generously providing food. Do we become so busy that we neglect to thank God for His abundant blessings?

Remember what God has done. *“Can a virgin forget her ornaments or a bride her attire? Yet My people have forgotten Me days without number.” (Jeremiah 2:32)* Sadly, after the Lord healed the ten lepers, nine of them forgot their previous condition and did not even bother to thank Him! It is tragic that many who have been forgiven of past sins, entered into God’s family, and now address Him as “**Father**” soon forget the many blessings he has bestowed on them.

Ingratitude is a terrible character trait for any Christian to have. How much do we as God's people have to be thankful to God for? **Physical blessings:** Ability to work, spouses, children, grandchildren, things gained in our lives, etc. **Spiritual blessings:** Forgiveness of sins, redemption, hope of heaven, love of brethren, etc. Are you grateful? Do you ever pray to God for the sole purpose of thanking Him for your blessings? Could we just take all these things for granted because we are so consumed with our own lives and needs? Or are you more like the nine lepers? ***