

The Agony of Victory (Part VI) An Attitude of Thanksgiving

Luke 17:11-18

- Ten Lepers that Pray (v.13)
- Answered in unique way
- Obedience required
- Only then did they experience healing!
- Only 1 TAKES THE TIME to turn back and thank Jesus (v.15,16)

V. 17

And Jesus answered and said, “Were there not ten cleansed? But the nine — where are they?”

Here we see that Jesus was SURPRISED (so to speak) when those who received a blessing in response to prayer did not TAKE THE TIME to THANK HIM.

Strikingly clear throughout the Bible that THANKFULNESS AND GRATITUDE toward God are expected.

1Th. 5:18

... in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.

Eph. 5:19-20

(we are to be) ... speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father...

Col. 3:17

And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

Not only is it clear that GRATITUDE is suppose to be the attitude of our lives, but it is also supposed to be THE ATTITUDE OF PRAYER!

Col. 4:2

Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving...

Phil. 4:6

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

As we continue in our study of PRAYER, this is an aspect that we must learn, and apply...

“The mighty men of prayer in the Bible, and the mighty men of prayer throughout the ages of the church’s history have been men who were much given to thanksgiving and praise.”

-R.A. Torrey, How to Pray, p.70

- Daniel was a mighty man of prayer, and we read of him, “**and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God...**” (Daniel 6:10)
- David was a mighty man of prayer, and his psalms abound with thanksgiving and praise.
- The Apostles were mighty men of prayer, and it says about them that, “**they were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God.**”
- Paul was a mighty man of prayer, and how often in the NT he bursts out in definite thanksgiving to God for definite blessings and definite answers to prayer.
- **What about you?**

- Jesus is our example in prayer as in everything else, and as we observe His life we see Him model a continual ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE.

-Adapted from R.A. Torrey, How to Pray, p.70-71

A. [Matt. 26:27](#)

And when He had taken a cup and given thanks...

- Thanks the Father for every provision.

B. [Matt. 15:36](#)

... and He took the seven loaves and the fish; and giving thanks He broke them...

- Needed more, but before asking He **thanks** the Father for what He has.

C. [John 11:41](#)

And so they removed the stone. And Jesus raised His eyes, and said, "Father, I thank Thee that Thou has heard Me..."

- Starts His prayer by thanking the Father for hearing Him in the past.

In approaching God to ask for new blessings, we should never forget to return thanks for the blessings already granted.

- Stop and think.
- Be purposeful in giving thanks.

In fact, this is (I believe) the best way to approach God in prayer.

- Prayer=To Come To

Psalm 100:4

Enter His gates with thanksgiving, And His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him; bless His name.

- Entering His gates is "coming to Him"
- Idea of entering His realm or presence
- Entering His courts pictures the idea of drawing nearer

This should be done with an attitude of thanksgiving and PRAISE!

- Observed in the prayer life of Jesus
- And in the **corporate prayer** lives of Israel in the OT
- So important that there were certain priests whose assignment and job it was to give thanks to the Lord!

1Chr. 16:4

And he appointed some of the Levites as ministers before the ark of the LORD, even to celebrate and to **thank** and praise the LORD God of Israel...

1Chr. 16:7

Then on that day David first assigned Asaph and his relatives to give **thanks** to the LORD.

1Chr. 16:41

And with them were Heman and Jeduthun, and the rest who were chosen, who were designated by name, to give **thanks** to the LORD, because His lovingkindness is everlasting.

1Chr. 23:30

And they are to stand every morning to **thank** and to praise the LORD, and likewise at evening...

2Chr. 31:2

And Hezekiah appointed the divisions of the priests and the Levites by their divisions, each according to his service, both the priests and the Levites, for burnt offerings and for peace offerings, to minister and to give **thanks** and to praise in the gates of the camp of the LORD.

Neh. 11:17

...and Mattaniah... was the leader in beginning the **thanksgiving** at prayer...

HOW IMPORTANT IT MUST BE!

Psalm 50:23

“He who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving honors Me; And to him who orders his way aright I shall show the salvation of God.”

IN THE NEW TESTAMENT WE ARE STILL TO HONOR GOD WITH A SACRIFICE

Hebrews 13:15

Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.

We should approach God in this way.

- Not as some ritualistic/religious obligation...
- But in heartfelt/sincere response to who He is and what He has done.

This attitude of the heart makes for an effective prayer life.

A lack of gratitude means you have a bad attitude that needs to BE OVERTURNED... (cf. last week)

- A hindrance to prayer. “My house shall be called...”

R.A. Torrey:

“Doubtless one reason why so many of our prayers lack power is because we have neglected to return thanks for blessings already received. If any one were to constantly come to us asking help from us, and should never say “Thank you” for the help given, we would soon tire of helping one so ungrateful. Indeed, regard for the one we were helping would hold us back from encouraging such rank ingratitude. Doubtless our heavenly Father out of a wise regard for our highest welfare oftentimes refuses to answer petitions that we send up to Him in order that we may be brought to a sense of our ingratitude and taught to be thankful. God is deeply grieved by the thanklessness and ingratitude of which so many of us are guilty.”

How to Pray, p.75

REMEMBER THE 10 LEPERS...

Take this concept of gratitude and it being the attitude and approach of prayer and apply it to what we have been talking about for the last 6 weeks...

...PRAYING FOR OTHERS.

- Requires greater selflessness!
- Luke 18:11 “The Pharisee stood and was praying thus to himself, ‘God, I thank Thee that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax-gatherer.

NO BUENO!

The Example of Paul

CONTEXT: OTHERS

- A. [Rom. 1:8](#)
First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world.
- B. [1Cor. 1:4](#)
I thank my God always concerning you, for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus...
- C. [Eph. 1:16](#)
I do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers...
- D. [Phil. 1:3](#)
I thank my God in all my remembrance of you...
- E. [Col. 1:3](#)
We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you...
- F. [1Th. 1:2](#)
We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers...
- G. [2Tim. 1:3](#)
I thank God, whom I serve with a clear conscience the way my forefathers did, as I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day...
- H. [Philem. 4](#)
I thank my God always, making mention of you in my prayers...

We have determined that by the Lord's leading and the commands of scripture, this is who we want to be.

- People who are passionate and pray for others
- In that we want to be effective

Look at what an Attitude of Thanksgiving AND Praise in prayer accomplishes:

1. Focuses our hearts on God
2. Cleanses our hearts of cares, fears, and earth-centered thoughts
3. Begets and increases faith
4. Invokes God's presence and power
5. Thwarts the work of Satan