

# Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart

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**【Luke 17:11-19】** Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. 12 As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance. 13 and called out in a loud voice, “Jesus, Master, have pity on us!” 14 When he saw them, he said, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went, they were cleansed. 15 One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. 16 He threw himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan. 17 Jesus asked, “Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? 18 Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?” 19 Then he said to him, “Rise and go; your faith has made you well.”

A true Christian should often count the Lord's blessing, then they will receive more of God's blessings.

## 1. The Historical Background of Jesus' Healing of Ten Lepers

Jesus' healing of ten lepers is a very important event in the Bible. While Jesus was on earth for 33 years, he was in ministry for 3 years. During these three years of ministry, he went to Jerusalem three times, and some theologians say that Jesus' healing of ten lepers occurred during his third trip to Jerusalem. This miracle took place in a small village near Galilee.

## 2. Jesus' Healing of Ten Lepers (Luke 17:14)

One leper was terrible enough, it was even more shocking to have ten lepers together. Matthew 8 records that Jesus healed a leper and the name of Jesus was widely known among the lepers. These people who needed to be healed, gathered together and came to Jesus' presence, but they stood in a distance because they were afraid that they would not be able to stand before God. They were also afraid that people would stone them to death, and they cried out loudly, begging Jesus to heal them, which shows that they had been oppressed for so long, that they needed Jesus to heal them urgently at this moment.

### How did Jesus heal them?

**Luke 17:14** When he saw them, he said, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went, they were cleansed.

It was illogical to go and show it to the priests, but this was where Jesus acted wonderfully, It was a great demonstration of God's grace. Jesus was full of love and was already going to heal them when He said this, and the moment the sick men went, they were healed. Healing is directly related to faith and obedience, and people who want to be healed need to go through the testing of faith.

## 3. Miraculous Reaction (Luke 17:15-16)

**Luke 17:15-16** <sup>15</sup> One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. <sup>16</sup> He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan.

Ten people were healed, and only one man came back to see the Lord. This someone who has seen God's Word fulfilled, seen God's wonderful works and knew to give thanks. Those who did not come back were Israelites, who believed in God, and who probably felt that they deserved to be healed. They did not see that it was Jesus' miracles that healed them and God's grace on them.

The stranger who came back was a foreigner, a Samaritan, and when the foreigner saw the grace of God and felt he was not worthy of it, he gave thanks to the Lord loudly and glorified God.

So, at the end of the year, we should always count God's blessing and grace. A person who does not appreciate God's grace could lose the grace. A man who is suffering, a true Christian, should see what he has, and be grateful for it. It is by faith that he will receive a greater blessing and grace.

#### **4. A Person of Faith will Receive a Double Blessing (Luke 17:17-19)**

**Luke 17:17-19** <sup>17</sup> Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine?" <sup>18</sup> Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?" <sup>19</sup> Then he said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."

This person did not just receive healing but saw that it was by faith that he got healed. What a wonderful encounter. These broken men would have lost their confidence as they have been looked down on by the people, but now his confidence has been restored also. He saw that it is God's grace is not only by identity, on the Jews but on all who who believe. Therefore a grateful person could be blessed by God with a double blessing.

So, Christians should count the grace and the blessings they have received during the year, and God could double our blessings. Continue to be thankful, then you will continue to be blessed.

#### **Testimony**

Through two and half years of covid pandemic, except for Jonathan, our family was saved from being transmitted...., until July this year when we came back from the pastor's conference in Queenstown. Angie suspected she was being transmitted on the plane's toilet. Her symptom was a mild cold, just a slight runny nose, no temperature or sore throat, so, we didn't think she had caught the covid because the next day was Sunday, we thought we needed to be precautious, so we tested on the 5<sup>th</sup> day, it was positive! Of course, she stayed at home that Sunday. Because her symptoms were mild, I was not afraid of being transmitted by her. I still kept close to her and didn't take any precautionary measures.

Sure enough on Tuesday, I started to have some mild symptoms and was getting better by Friday, but on Saturday I started to cough very badly, once every 3 seconds right through the day and most of the night. It got slightly better on Sunday, but after my hot shower because I

was feeling cold, I felt drowsy and could just drop to sleep, but a few minutes later it became better.

On Monday the cough was better but I still had the same problem after my hot shower. By Tuesday when I walked up 8 steps to my garage floor and turned around to go up another few steps to my lounge I felt like passing out. Everything started to go blank, I tried to see what was ahead of me, but I couldn't. It was like when you play a video game and you get shot.

On Wednesday when Angie came home for lunch, she saw me not well but didn't know what was wrong with me. When she went back to work, while she was working God told her the word "oximeter." She didn't know what the oximeter was, so she looked up and realised it was a mechanism that measured the blood oxygen level. She didn't know where to get it at first, but God directed her to ring one of the sisters in the church who lives close to Angie's work. She had two so she lent us one. When Angie came back from her work and tested my oxygen level it was 84%-86%. The figure didn't mean anything to us until we looked up on Google which says the normal level is above 95%, if below 95% then need to see a doctor, if 90% and under, it would need to go to the hospital immediately. Angie wanted me to go to a hospital that night but I thought we would have to wait for a long time to be seen by a doctor and I didn't feel I was dying so I still didn't go to the hospital.

The next morning when I got up I started to cough, and when I measured the oxygen lever it was 74%, I started to think does this mechanism work correctly? But then I was struggling to keep awake. After a few deep breaths, I got better.

Again, Angie asked me to go to the hospital and this time I agreed. When I got to the hospital, they put me in the observation room straight away and did a few tests, even though were negative, they still put me in the covid ward. I was quite determined to get out of the COVID ward so the next day when the doctor came to see me and measured my oxygen level, it was in the acceptable range and I didn't tell her about my situation how I felt drowsy after I go to the bathroom and back or just being moved around. So, she discharged me. She felt that I could still take antibiotics at home for recovery.

The next two mornings I still had the same problem, very drowsy and hard to breathe in the morning when I coughed but I couldn't stop coughing. On Sunday morning I found it hard to breathe and all this time I felt cold. So, Angie and Jonathan took me to the hospital again. This time I waited for 1 hour and a half before someone came to check up on me and when the nurse checked on me I had a high temperature, straight away she placed me in a private observation room. Again, have my COVID-19 tested, yes it was negative. I thought no wonder I was feeling cold because my body was fighting the inflammation in my lung. I haven't been able to eat much in the last few days.

Later I was placed in a 6 beds emergency room with only one nurse. People were crying for help. Didn't have much breakfast and had lunch at 3 pm, with one sandwich and I had to ask for food. I felt like I was in a war zone. I prayed that God would provide me with a better environment. Later that day they moved me into a four-bed room, a quiet place. The food

was much better, you could order what you like, but I still didn't have the appetite. I was still coughing, especially at night, and it hindered me to go to sleep.

Angie would cook food and bring it to me and look after me during those three nights. On Wednesday after the meal, I was too full so we walked through the corridor to pass my time and have some exercise. I was hoping that I would feel sleepy so I would be able to doze off quickly.

Angie put her hand behind me and prayed for me as we walked. I felt God's anointing was working on me. That night I had a good night's sleep and didn't wake up many times as usual to cough, the next morning I had an appetite, and my cough was gone. I was scheduled to have a telescopy so I was moved to the outside of the examination room. I didn't think it was necessary to go through with it because on the previous night, I felt the healing and also a sister from our church texted me saying, "May God heal you before you have the telescopy examination." If I have the test, there is the possibility of getting an infection again.

I was moved to the waiting place at 9 :30AM after 12 PM I was still there. During that time, I struggled whether to have the test or not. The doctor needs to know if this lung problem was caused by other means or if it is safe to take steroid to suppress my inflammation, because steroid will suppress my immune system and if there was infection in my lung it would be quite dangerous.

After consulting with the doctor, I decided not to have the test. I was discharged that day as they see that I was getting better. This time they gave me steroid to take home. I was to take a large dosage and a long term treatment, which caused some concern. Unfortunately I was not able to communicate with the doctor anymore so I had to look for a specialist but as you know specialist need weeks, some time even months to get an appointment but I needed to have this sorted out before I become a long term taker, which can have some major side effects and withdraw problems. I wrote to a specialist and the secretary said it is not possible to see the doctor for another two months, even the cancer patient are on the waiting list, but she will refer my situation to the doctor. Amazingly the doctor agreed to see me in two days' time and the clinic was in Mairangi Bay.

During the consultation, she said if I have delayed another few more days to the hospital, I would end up on a ventilator machine, and in a grim situation.

Someone from our church who knew a Chinese medicine doctor said, the doctor helped many people during the covid pandemic, but not long ago that doctor caught the covid, coughed badly for few days then admitted to the hospital. She stayed one night and was discharged the next morning, like me but she got worse after few days, was admitted to hospital again but was too late, the doctor was not able to treat her and passed away after few days.

Praise God that He saved me, praised God that he healed me. I am still taking the steroid but in a less dosage now, I will have another CT scan at the end of January. The doctor said I would need to take the steroid minimum of 6 months, many takes more than one year. I pray for another miracle.