



A GRATEFUL HEART

Sunday November 5th 2021

The story is told of the man who confronted a friend after being betrayed by him asking, "How could you do this to me? Who picked you up out of the gutter? Who gave you your first job? Who lent you money and bailed you out of jail?" The betrayer replied, "You did all of that, that's true. But what have you done for me lately?"

Have you ever dealt with people who seem to take for granted what you do for them as if they were entitled to your act of kindness?

Entitlement is the belief that we inherently deserve privileges or special treatments, or that we have the right to something.

In our world of entitlement, the spirit of gratitude seems to do rare appearances. The bigger our sense of entitlement, the smaller our sense of gratitude

The gospel isn't about "good people" getting what they deserved, it's about "sinners" not getting what they truly deserved.

Ephesians 2:8 (CEV) You were saved by faith in God, who treats us much better than we deserve. This is God's gift to you, and not anything you have done on your own.

Understanding the depth of God's love and generosity, in sacrificing His one and only Son for our sins, should breed in us a true spirit of gratitude.

All the blessings that we as children of God enjoy in life, such as peace, joy, health and provision flow from the undeserved, unearned, unmerited favor of God through Christ His Son.

Ephesians 1:3 (NLT) All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ.

Romans 8:32 (NKJV) He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

The generosity of God should breed in us a spirit of gratitude not one of entitlement.

Gratitude: a feeling of appreciation or thanks.

"What I have done is worthy of nothing but silence and forgetfulness, but what God has done for me is worthy of everlasting and thankful memory." Joseph Hall

It is so easy to show up at a church service and go through the motions and spiritual exercises and forget to express gratitude for what God has and continues to do in our life.

When it comes to our salvation we can never repay what God has done for us but we can respond with thanksgiving.

Let me illustrate this with a story in scripture about 10 lepers

Luke 17:11-19 (NKJV) Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. ¹² Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. ¹³ And they lifted up *their* voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" ¹⁴ 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. ¹⁵ And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, ¹⁶ and fell down on *his* face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. ¹⁷ So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where *are* the nine? ¹⁸ Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?" ¹⁹ And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."

What they received was completely undeserved, unmerited and unearned.

They cried "Master have mercy show leniency and compassion on us..."

They realized that their deliverance relied not on their worthiness but on His mercy. So too for us!

Our salvation relied not on our worthiness but His mercy

Titus 3:7 (CEV) God our Savior showed us how good and kind he is. ⁵ He saved us because of his mercy, and not because of any good things that we have done. God washed us by the power of the Holy Spirit. He gave us new birth and a fresh beginning. ⁶ God sent Jesus Christ our Savior to give us his Spirit. ⁷ Jesus treated us much better than we deserve. He made us acceptable to God and gave us the hope of eternal life.

The word of God at work

Luke 17:14 (NKJV) 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.

Jesus didn't touch them, he didn't pray for them he simply instructed them to go and show themselves to the priest as was required by the Law of Moses.

However, according to the Law you went after you were cleansed not before.

These men were moved by faith because of the spoken word given by the word incarnate. They were acting on the word of Christ and as a result they were cleansed.

We too were delivered and saved by the word of God

I Peter 1:22-23 (NKJV) Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, ²³ having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever...

Our salvation was an act of God's mercy towards us, undeserved, unearned and unmerited

When must realize, like the Samaritan leper, that we could not heal ourselves, we could not change ourselves, we were hopelessly lost.

Like him we were living in a colony of dead men.

But God healed us and cleansed us...

Colossians 2:13-14 (MSG) When you were stuck in your old sin-dead life, you were incapable of responding to God. God brought you alive--right along with Christ! Think of it! All sins forgiven, ¹⁴ the slate wiped clean, that old arrest warrant canceled and nailed to Christ's Cross.

Understanding God's mercy and grace should produce a spirit of gratitude and praise

Luke 17:15-16 (NKJV) And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, ¹⁶ and fell down on *his* face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan.

Did you notice his response?

When he saw he was healed **he returned**, with a loud voice **Glorified God**, fell at Jesus feet and **gave thanks...**

His whole spirit, soul and body were totally engaged in a life of gratitude and surrender.

He may not have gone to the earthly priest but he did go to the High Priest of His soul who declared him cleansed!!!

His healing I believe wasn't just physical, it was a heart cleansing too and he knew it!! He wasn't a Jew he was a Samaritan! He was shown mercy and extended grace!!

God had chosen to heal him, had welcomed him into His family and made him one of his own.

So too with us we have been made part of Gods family...

1 Peter 2:9-10 (The Voice) But you are a chosen people, *set aside to be* a royal order of priests, a holy nation, God's own; so that you may proclaim the wondrous acts of the One who called you out of *inky* darkness into shimmering light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received it.

God through Christ has shown us His goodness and kindness and everything we enjoy is an outflow of His grace and mercy....

Ephesians 1:3 (The Voice) *Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus the Anointed One, who grants us every spiritual blessing in these heavenly realms where we live in the Anointed—not because of anything we have done, but because of what He has done for us.*

I'm not blessed because I'm entitled to it, I am blessed because He has been gracious and kind to me through Christ His Son.

2 Peter 1:3-4 (NCV) Jesus has the power of God, by which he has given us everything we need to live and to serve God. We have these things because we know him. Jesus called us by his glory and goodness. ⁴ Through these he gave us the very great and precious promises. With these gifts you can share in God's nature, and the world will not ruin you with its evil desires.

We are blessed not because we deserved it but because God is good and drew us to Christ.

When we understand this truth, the response is gratitude *and thanksgiving; a feeling of appreciation or thanks.*

We cannot repay we can but can respond.

Jesus expects a response of gratitude

Luke 17:17-19 (NKJV) So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where *are* the nine? ¹⁸ Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?" ¹⁹ And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."

Those who have truly been made whole will always return and show gratitude!