



Father Joseph's Outline for the 12th Sunday of Luke

Luke 17:11-19 - Sunday 01/18/2009

“Then said Jesus: ‘Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?’” (Luke 17:17-18)

What did these people suffer from?

- Leprosy mainly affects the skin and nerves
- can cause tissue change and, in severe cases, loss of sensation and disfigurement
- It was believed to be easily transmitted through personal contact
- People with (or thought to have) leprosy were cut off, being banned from society and family
- “Ten men with leprosy came toward him. They stood at a distance and shouted.” (Luke 17:12-13)
- “If you ever have leprosy, you must tear your clothes, leave your hair uncombed, cover the lower part of your face, and go around shouting, ‘I’m unclean! I’m unclean!’ As long as you have the disease, you are unclean and must live alone outside the camp.” (Leviticus 13:45-46)

Leprosy was considered differently from other diseases.

- The Lord never asked any of those whose bodily sicknesses He healed to show themselves to the priests, except those struck with leprosy.
- “After you think you are healed of leprosy, you must ask for a priest to come outside the camp and examine you...he will sprinkle you seven times...After this you must wash...shave your entire body...You may move back into camp, but you must not enter your tent for seven days.” (Leviticus 14:2-8)

The Ungratefulness of the Nine Lepers

- The Evangelist Luke emphasizes the ungratefulness of the nine more than the gratitude of the one.
- “Then said Jesus: ‘Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?’” (Luke 17:17-18)
- After the fall of man from grace, he has become a taker rather than a giver.
- Man has become a complainer who is easily offended when he does not receive, yet insensitive and unconcerned about giving thanks when he receives.

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Forms of Ungratefulness

According to this account of the miracle, the percentage of gratefulness seems to be limited to 10% of those who receive God's bounties.

- Ungratefulness of children toward their parents and vice versa
- Ungratefulness of people toward their leaders or heroes and vice versa
- Ungratefulness of employees toward their employers and vice versa
- Ungratefulness of beneficiaries toward their benefactors
- Ungratefulness of friends toward each other
- The worst form of ungratefulness is that shown toward God for His bounties.
- "For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened." (Roman 1:21)

How to restore the forgotten virtue of Thankfulness

- Christ is the key and the only element that can restore thankfulness to man.
- Being connected and united with Christ is the only way to get rid of the insensitivity of unthankfulness.
- "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in Him, rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness." (Colossians 2:6-7)

Practical Ways to Offer Thankfulness

*Constant prayer:

- "Pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." (1 Thessalonians 5:17-18)

*Praying for others and thanking God for them even our enemies:

- "I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers" (Philemon 1:4)
- "Woe to you when all men speak well of you ... But ... love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you." (Luke 6:26-28)

*Dedicating all our actions and offering for the sake of Christ and in His name:

- "We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully." (Romans 12:6-8)

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*Offering and participating in the “Divine Thanksgiving” (Divine Liturgy) is the utmost way of offering thanksgiving to God:

- “Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe” (Hebrew 12:28)

Prayer

O Lord Jesus Christ, my Lord and God, I come to You with a thankful heart, worshipping and glorifying You as did the Samaritan leper whom You healed. Cast Your divine light into my darkened soul, granting me the gift of good judgment and sensitivity to thank You for all of Your bounties and the goodness that is showed to me by those whom You send my way. Allow me to become a grateful servant worthy of the heavenly Kingdom which is Yours, together with Your eternal and loving Father and Your all-holy and life-giving Spirit. Amen.

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