

GREATEST COMBACKS

PART 10: TEN LEPERS: COMING BACK FROM BITTERNESS

Luke 17:11 – 19

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MESSAGE NOTES

1. Gratitude can so easily be eclipsed by pain.

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for. — Hebrews 11:1 – 2

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him. — Hebrews 11:6

2. Gratitude is based on a choice of perspective.

The discipline of thanksgiving involves a constant stream of decisions to recognize and respond to the many kindnesses that have been poured out on us. The more we cultivate this heart posture, the more it will begin to flow naturally in our lives. It's like a small snowball at the top of a hill. Choose to set it in motion, guiding it down the slope, and it soon grows larger and larger. At a certain point, it runs away with itself, developing a momentum all its own. In the same way, when we become mindful of thanking God for even the smallest details of our lives, we soon find ourselves caught up in an endless list of things to be thankful for.

— Matt Redman, *Blessed Be Your Name*

3. Gratitude is a response to the goodness of God right in the middle of our troubled lives.

*Gratitude is a mindful awareness of the benefits of life. It is the greatest of virtues. Studies have linked the emotion with a variety of positive effects. Grateful people tend to be more empathetic and forgiving of others. People who keep a gratitude journal are more likely to have a positive outlook on life. Grateful individuals demonstrate less envy, materialism, and self-centeredness. Gratitude improves self-esteem and enhances relationships, quality of sleep, and longevity. If it came in pill form, gratitude would be deemed the miracle cure. — Max Lucado, *Anxious For Nothing**

Being joyful isn't what makes you grateful. Being grateful is what makes you joyful. — Ann Voskamp

A few crucial questions:

- Is Thanksgiving a 365 day a year experience for me?
- Do I give more focus to my current losses than my current blessings?
- Would others characterize me as a deeply thankful and grateful person?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Take some time to read back over our passage from this weekend.
- Where was Jesus traveling when this even took place?
- What can you share about the Samaritans and how were they regarded by the Jews?
- How did the lepers refer to Jesus? Why do you think that was significant to their healing?
- Why do you think Jesus told the lepers to show themselves to the priest in the temple?
- When did the healing actually occur for these men?
- In what ways is this same principle true in our walk of faith? (Check out James 2:14 – 17 and Hebrews 11:1).
- Is there some situation right now in your life where you're walking by faith rather than sight (2 Corinthians 5:7)?
- Why do you think the other 9 failed to return and give thanks to Jesus for their healing? What might be the point of noting that in the story?
- Jesus specifically mentions healing being given to the one man who returned with thanks. Since the others were physically healed as well, why do you think Jesus makes that additional statement to this man? What was it that brought about that unique healing?
- Are there ways in which you could grow in your gratefulness to God? How do you think that might impact your life and relationships?