

Spiritual How-to's -

How you can please the Lord

Gratitude brings you closer to Jesus

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Intro. He went from living in quarantine, outside of the city, isolated from all others to being at the feet of Jesus. What made the difference? What changed things for him?

I. Luke 17 tells the story of 10 leprous men who lived in this situation because of their infectious disease.

- A. We see them standing together in their disease but distanced from Jesus as He walks the road toward them. Lk. 17:11-12
- B. They began crying out for Jesus to have mercy on them. V. 13
- C. Hearing and seeing them, Jesus told them to go and show themselves to the priests
 - 1. This was the normal procedure to get medical clearance for the cure of leprosy. Lev. 13 & 14
 - 2. Nine of the lepers understood this process, being that they were Jewish
 - 3. The other leper was a Samaritan. v. 16
- D. On their way to see the priests, all 10 were healed from their leprosy. v. 14
 - 1. The nine kept walking to find the priests
 - 2. the one "turned back, glorifying God, fell at Jesus feet giving thanks to Him..." v. 15
- E. The Samaritan had no priest, so he turned back to Jesus with his gratitude & praise to God. What a statement, what a model!
- F. Jesus' response was, "where are the other nine?" "You mean only this unbeliever returned to give thanks and not my fellow Jews?" v. 17-18
- G. The Samaritan was received by Jesus, healed by Jesus and left Jesus well. His thankfulness and gratitude brought him closer to Jesus. v. 19

II. Dare we state, that gratitude, being thankful will bring you closer to Jesus? YES!

- A. Learning to be thankful and express it, overcomes infectious sin, isolation & separation from God and people.
 - 1. We can train ourselves to show thanks
 - 2. Without being thankful, we won't be pleasing to God
- B. Sometimes it's believers, God's "people" who become spiritually ungrateful & deaf. Outsiders are sometimes more responsive than God's people.
- C. Drawing close to Jesus in thankfulness & dependence brings us total wellness. v. 19

III. Humans struggle with gratitude

- A. Sometimes we don't appreciate all God has done for us until it is gone
 - 1. Have you thanked Him for your food, car, housing, running water?
 - 2. How 'bout the almost car accident?
- B. Our experiences as designed in part to help make us thankful.
 - * Do we choose to thank Him?
- C. Research shows clearly that gratitude makes us happier and even more successful.
 - 1. As opposed to this present victimhood culture
 - 2. Lash out or look up? Which is you?
 - 3. In good AND bad circumstances.
 - 4. How often do you feel grateful? How often do you express it?
- D. Gratitude is part of well being.
 - 1. It requires not just feeling thankful
 - 2. But acting on it
- E. We need to get this right, if we are looking to please the Lord and walk in wellness.
 - 1. Choose resentment, entitlement & envy OR
 - 2. Gratitude, Generosity & goodwill
- F. The healed and thankful leper was loud and boisterous in his praise and thanks.
Are you?

IV. My life is a constant live stream of thanks. No kidding!

- A. I speak it out loud in nearly every situation (& a lot of times immediately)
- B. My self talk is peppered with a variety of grateful expressions
 - Ex: Yes, God. Way to go God. Thanks Lord (is my favorite) That's awesome Lord.
My heart is full, Lord. Ok, God. You know, Lord. I trust you. We got this Lord.
- C. Bad times – car probs, physical pain, husband's health
- D. Good times – new jobs, homes, health reports, moves
- E. How is yours?
- F. I promise you, gratitude brings you closer to Jesus.

V. Important bible verses urging us on to being thankful. Look them up. Practice them

Ps. 107:8; Ps. 30:4; Ps. 118:1; Lk. 17:11-19; Rom. 1:21; 1 Cor. 15:57; 2 Cor. 2:14; 2 Cor. 9:14; Eph. 5:20; 1 Thes. 5:18; Rev. 4:9; Eph. 5:4; Col. 2:7; Rev. 7:12