

CouplesInBloom.com – Thank You

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Jesus asked, “Were not ten cleansed? **Where are the other nine?**” ⇒ Luke 17:17. This true story is recorded in verses 12-19. When ten men with leprosy asked Jesus to have mercy on them, He told them to go show themselves to the priest (the health official of that day). Jesus did not heal them of leprosy until they were on their way to the priest. A Samaritan (half Jew) of the ten went back to greatly thank Jesus as soon as he was healed.

The point here is **heart fruit**: action from attitude. Actions speak louder than words ⇒ Matthew 21:28-31. Thankfulness from the mind is religious duty; thankfulness from the heart is relationship overflow (the story context). Jesus was happy that the man did not legalistically ‘go to the priest’ as instructed. The man’s actions revealed his heart: worshipping his Healer was clearly more important than obtaining the approval of men.

The point here is **not condemnation** for neglecting politically correct religious duty. “Where are the other nine?” wonderfully illustrates God’s relational heart. Jesus did a wonderful miracle for ten men; only one reciprocated in kind. The Samaritan’s response was **normal, not special**; the other nine were lacking. **Do not pervert this Scripture** by thinking the Samaritan’s response was special and the responses of the nine were normal!

The ‘complaint’ that the Bible is a book of *do’s and don’ts* is founded on this type of perversion: religious **duty**. Do we protect those we love out of religious duty or relational heart? Jesus protected us from our sins while we were still His enemies ⇒ Romans 5:8; **what is a normal response to that love?** Do we reciprocate in kind? Is it even possible?

The Bible is clear on how to thank God: **say it with our life**. Jesus gave His life to save ours; we give our life to live for Him. He in turn empowers us with His Holy Spirit; we cannot keep up with God! He is addicted to blessing us. **Who needs religious duty?!** Our gratitude for God’s eternal salvation alone is more than enough for us to say **Thank You** to Him eternally (i.e. in kind) ⇒ Luke 10:20. That response is proportional to that gift.

The more we realize this, the more it permeates our life. Look at those with nothing, or with suffering, or both. In contrast, begin listing big, medium and little things in life that are good in some way. Now: How many of them are we appropriately thankful for, reciprocating in kind? Do we say so when they happen? We need to **ask ourselves** Jesus’ question: **Where are our other nine?** It may very well be we verbalize less than 10%.

Marriage is a central application for this lesson, though not the only one. With all the trials we have been through these past years, some lessons have gone deeper. We have such improved appreciation for each other. Ministering to someone in pain has a way of grinding criticism to dust (where it belongs) and emphasizing what is truly important.

Do not wait until it is too late to say Thank You. Learn from the Samaritan. Jesus used Samaritans in stories to contrast the superficial religiosity of the Pharisees, which He hated and got angry about ⇒ Matthew 23:13-38. “I hate half-heartedness” ⇒ Psalm 119:113, so don’t be that way. Instead, embrace those you love, look them in the eyes, and say, “**Thank You!**” Make God the first one you say it to, and say it right now. Say it to your spouse next, then to others... maybe even to enemies! ♥ Loren & Kathy Falzone