

ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

By: Bobby Sullivan

WHAT ARE YOU THANKFUL FOR TESTIMONIES

Luke 5:12-15 *“And it happened when He was in a certain city, that behold, a man who was full of leprosy (**Leprosy does not maim you initially. It attacks the nerve endings in your body and your extremities become numb. You lose all feeling of pain and your dignity is dissolved.**) Saw Jesus; and he fell on his face and implored Him, saying, “Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.” 13 Then He put out His hand and **touch**ed him, saying, “I am willing; be cleansed.” Immediately the leprosy left him. 14 And He charged him to tell no one, “But go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as a testimony to them, just as Moses commanded.” 15 However, the report went around concerning Him all the more; and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities.*

LIFE OF THE LEPROSITOR:

- A.) Hereditary: It typically came through the family down the generations. People would all of a sudden get tired, no energy, every muscle would hurt, very painful.
- B.) Normal looking people would all of a sudden be plagued from the inside out. Small dark blotches would begin to discolour, turn dark brown...these were the initial signs of this fatal disease.
- C.) Nodules would begin to grow and spread to the persons face. Cheeks would squeeze in, eyes would set back. They would begin to lose all the appearance of a human and look like a lion. Nodules would begin to ulcerate a drip.
- D.) Without asking to be a leper these people would begin to die in front of everyone. Hands would be club like, face like a lion, lose all feelings both physically and emotionally.

Someone describes a person with leprosy as a walking parable of death. Every vein and limb of a developed leper drips with putrefied blood. It totally reverses the pain process.

The leper's family just had to sit back and watch, no one could heal the leper, no one touched a leper, no one paid them any attention at all.

Leviticus 13 Law Concerning Leprosy *“...then the priest shall isolate the one who has the sore seven days ... has indeed spread on the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It is leprosy. ... All the days he has the sore he shall be unclean. He is unclean, and he shall dwell alone; his dwelling shall be outside the camp.”*

Leviticus 13:45 Describes the horrible and humiliating life of the leper.

“ The person with such an infectious disease must wear torn clothes, let his hair be unkempt, cover the lower part of the face, and cry out “UNCLEAN, UNCLEAN” As long as he had this infectious disease he remained uncleaned. He had to live alone outside the camp.

Imagine the life! Face-Lion...hands and feet club like...eyes sunk in..hollow state...voice is hoarse and wheezy so they have a difficult time breathing.

UNDERSTAND: The leper did not ask for the disease, the humiliation and the embarrassment. Now society tells him how he is supposed to live. But now he must announce his arrival!

WHAT DOES HISTORY SAY ABOUT A LEPER?

They were worthless with no protection.

*If there was a walled city like Jerusalem, lepers were not allowed in the city because you could not get away from them.

*They were allowed no protection: If a war broke out the lepers were sent out first. They were useless disposal garbage anyway to the locals.

*If they wanted to worship, they were put in a 10x6 cubical. If they stuck their head out the whole place was contaminated. No one could enter for 2-3 months!

*Jewish law said if you saw a leper walking toward you...you could not say hello or acknowledge him if he was saying UNCLEAN. If the wind was blowing, he had to walk 150 feet away.

Greater is He who is in me than he that is in the world! We are touching the lepers of society and bringing them into the saving grace of Jesus. We are going where few will dare to go. We will touch those that others are afraid too.

STORY OF ERNEST

Have you ever had an ache or pain ... skin spot or lump ... better get that looked at!!! Bobbys bumps

Luke 17:11-19 *“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 (means power and authority. The ability to bring freedom), 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.** (Obedience always paves the way for the miraculous)*

*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? (*katharezo*:— to cleanse) But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?” And He said to him, “Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well (*sozo*:— save, to keep safe, rescue, restore health).”

There was only 1-10 that was grateful enough to give thanks

What are we thankful for? Go ahead and give him thanks! Stand up with an attitude of gratitude and say what your grateful for!

His gratitude opened the door for complete restoration!

Impact Church people are authentic! We will not peddle pathetic religion. No will we embrace nothing less than excellence to the best of our ability as an expression of gratefulness to God. We will not sit back and watch our city drown in a lake of leprosy. Jesus will step into our spotted mess and completely deliver and set us free so we can walk with head held high unashamed and not embarrassed. And bring this city into the reality of restoration not deterioration.

Pastor Karl: The full manifestation of restoration will not happen if we are not grateful.

Hebrews 11:6 “*But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*”

The Samaritan had faith in God to make him complete again.

Romans 1:21 (NLT) “*Yes, they knew God, but they wouldn’t worship him as God or even give him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of what God was like. As a result, their minds became dark and confused.*”

Cicero who lived in Rome between 106 – 43 BC said that, ”gratitude is not only the greatest of the virtues but the parent of all others”.

Two psychologists, Michael McCollough of Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, and Robert Emmons of the University of California at Davis, wrote an article about an experiment they conducted on gratitude and its impact on well-being. The study split several hundred people into three different groups and all of the participants were asked to keep daily diaries. The first group kept a diary of the events that occurred during the day without being told specifically to write about either good or bad things; the second group was told to record their unpleasant experiences; and the last group was instructed to make a daily list of things for which they were grateful. The results of the study indicated that daily gratitude exercises resulted in higher reported levels of alertness, enthusiasm, determination, optimism, and energy. In addition, those in the gratitude group experienced less depression and stress, were more likely to help others, exercised more regularly, and made greater progress toward achieving personal goals.

In addition, Dr. Emmons' research shows that those who practice gratitude tend to be more creative, bounce back more quickly from adversity, have a stronger immune system, and have stronger social relationships than those who don't practice gratitude. He further points out that **"To say we feel grateful is not to say that everything in our lives is necessarily great. It just means we are aware of our blessings."**

Dr. Robert Emmons

"A practice of gratitude raises your **'happiness set-point'** so you can remain at a higher level of happiness regardless of outside circumstances."

Happiness Movement. Creating an atmosphere of happiness. Your attitude of Gratitude is determined by your altitude! The higher you go the happier you will be.

Colossians 3:17

"And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him."

Ephesians 5:19

"Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything."

Philippians 4:5-7

"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ..."

"... and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Psalms 100:4-5

"Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name. For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting, And His truth endures to all generations."

Psalms 67:5-6

"...let all the people praise thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase...God, shall bless us."

Psalms 69:30

"I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving."

Psalms 50:23 (AMP) *"He who brings an offering of praise and **thanksgiving** honors and glorifies Me; and he who orders his way aright [**who prepares the way that I may show him**], to him I will demonstrate the salvation of God."*

Thanks (eucharistia):—gratitude; expressions of grateful language to God as an act of worship, thankfulness, giving of thanks, thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving:— (**towdah**) to express visible thanks or adoration to God by extending the hands to God in reverence, coupled with offering a sacrifice of praise to God through audible confessions of thanks.

What you appreciate, appreciates!

What you don't appreciate ... depreciates!

Appreciate:— to be grateful or thankful for. OR to raise or increase in value.

Your Job ... Your Wife ... Your Car ... Your Church ... Your God

Give it focus ... intentional effort ... thankfulness

Sonja Lyubomirsky Professor of Psychology at the University of California Author of "The How of Happiness," a book of strategies backed by scientific research that can be used to increase happiness.

"One characteristic of the happiest people is that they are **comfortable expressing gratitude** for all they have".

Jesus exercised thanksgiving.

John 6:11 "...when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples..."

John 11:40-43 "...Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me."

Chinese researchers looked at the combined effects of gratitude and sleep quality on symptoms of anxiety and depression. They found that higher levels of gratitude were associated with better sleep, and with lower anxiety and depression. This begged the question, is the level of gratitude improving these symptoms or is it the fact that the patients are getting better sleep? These researchers ran some analyses controlling for the amount of sleep and revealed some interesting links.

They found that after controlling for the amount of sleep people got, gratitude still had an effect on lower depression scores. This means that regardless of their levels of insomnia, people who showed more gratitude were less depressed.

National Institutes of Health (NIH). NIH researchers examined blood flow in various brain regions while subjects summoned up feelings of gratitude (Zahn *et al*, 2009). They found that subjects who showed more gratitude overall had higher levels of activity in the hypothalamus. This is important because the hypothalamus controls a huge array of essential bodily functions, including eating, drinking and sleeping. It also has a huge influence on your metabolism and stress levels. From this evidence on brain activity it starts to become clear how improvements in gratitude could have such wide-ranging effects from increased exercise, and improved sleep to decreased depression and fewer aches and pains.

Furthermore, feelings of gratitude directly activated brain regions associated with the neurotransmitter dopamine. Dopamine feels good to get, which is why it's generally considered the "reward" neurotransmitter. But dopamine is also almost important in initiating action. That means increases in dopamine make you more likely to do the thing you just did. It's the brain saying, "Oh, do that again."

Gratitude can have such a powerful impact on your life because it engages your brain in a virtuous cycle. Your brain only has so much power to focus its attention. It cannot easily

focus on both positive and negative stimuli. It is like a small child: easily distracted. Oh your tummy hurts? Here's a lollipop.

PAUL AND SILAS GIVING THANKS in ACTS 16:25-26

5 Gratitude Observations

1. Gratitude Is Never Invisible

No expression is a heart problem.

Luke 6:45 *“For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.”*

“Gratitude is never invisible or silent. Real gratitude speaks up and acts out. “Thankfulness is the beginning of gratitude. Gratitude is the completion of thankfulness. Thankfulness may consist merely of words. Gratitude is shown in acts.” Henri Frederic Amiel

2 Gratitude Sustains Joy And Blessings

Sustain pedal on piano. Unforgiveness repeats the offence. Don't rehearse misery.

Practice Praise!

Thanksgiving in everything repeats and accelerates joy.

3 Gratitude Begins Where The Sense Of Entitlement Ends

Direct Deposit Instead Of Cash

Failure to be grateful is at the root of the fall of man. **Is that all there is?**

Steven Furtick noted, “Your **sense of gratitude ends** where **entitlement begins**... You cannot be **grateful** for something you feel entitled to.” **Gratitude** reminds our hearts that everything we have is a gift.

Understand that gratitude does not change your experience, but rather gratitude changes your perception of your experience..

The difference between gratitude and entitlement is not found in what happens to us, but rather our response to and perception of what happens. When we exercise our gratitude muscle, we accept the information and assessments that fit the gratitude grid instead of the entitlement grid. We can try to force change in our circumstances or we can work to shift our perspective.” Scott Savage

4 Grateful People Can Always Find Or Enlarge Blessing

Some spin gold out of every situation ... others not so much.

My situation doesn't have to improve for my gratitude to increase.

5 Gratitude Increases Favour and Creates Opportunities

Joseph never complained about the negative things he went through. Prison to Palace!!!

A study with those experience in depression found: A month of listing things you appreciate raised happiness levels 30% – more than antidepressants.