

The Cheerful Giver/Thanksgiving is our Dialect

November 21st and 24th, 2019

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 9.10-15, Luke 17.11-19

2 Corinthians 9.10-15 (NIV)

¹⁰ Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹ You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

¹² This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. ¹³ Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. ¹⁴ And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. ¹⁵ Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

Luke 17.11-19 (NIV)

¹¹ Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. ¹² As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance ¹³ and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!"

¹⁴ When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed.

¹⁵ One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. ¹⁶ He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan.

¹⁷ Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? ¹⁸ Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?" ¹⁹ Then he said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."

Read and Discuss

Introduction

We wrapped up our Cheerful Giver series of messages this week. Christians have a peculiar way of talking. Pastor and Author Eugene Peterson translated a verse from the letter to the Ephesians to read, "Thanksgiving is our dialect." In other words, thanksgiving is the way we talk. This stands in direct contrast to much of what we experience in our day to day life. Pastor Mark shared about how a dialect of thanksgiving was lived out by a former leper from Samaria and how it might be lived out during our holiday gatherings. We also saw a pattern of relationship between God's provision, our generosity and gratitude.

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Engage the Scripture

- Read 2 Corinthians 9.10-15. How would you describe the relationship between God's provision, our generosity and thanksgiving? Can there be true generosity without God's provision? Does God's provision depend on our generosity? Explain why or why not.
- This weekend at Providence Church, more than 300 Thanksgiving family meals were packed and delivered. More than 2 tons of food were brought in and then delivered to the local Help Center and hundreds of food backpacks were prepared for elementary students who will need food over the long Thanksgiving break. You may have other examples of such scenes. Identify where God is providing in these efforts. Identify the generous sowing of seeds, the abundant harvest from God, and thanksgiving.
- Read Luke 17.11-19. What stands out about the one healed (former) leper who returns to Jesus? Have you ever been so overwhelmed by a blessing that you had difficulty coming up with words to express your gratitude?
- Mark shared that sometimes the deepest language of prayer is simply, "Thank you God!" Our worship is a regular practice of coming back to God to ask for help and give thanks. Why do you come to worship? Are there times when you neglected to thank God? How did that impact you?
- If you've ever planted a garden you've probably developed a plan of where you would sow each kind of seed. Can you imagine your holiday gathering, family gathering, or workplace as a seedbed—a place where the good things God has given to you can be sown? How will you plan to sow good seed in the seedbeds of your life?

Pray

God you are the giver of good seed, thank you for giving generously to me. Help me to sow with that which you have given me. Thank you in advance for the abundant harvest you will provide. Increase my generosity and lead me to a life of thanksgiving. Amen