TOPIC: MY REASON FOR BEING THANKFUL

I can always be thankful to Jesus because His love for me is limitless.

KEY POINTS

- What does it mean to be thankful?
- To be thankful is the process of feeling, showing and expressing gratitude; it is the demonstration of an attitude of appreciation.
- The celebration of Thanksgiving was designed to celebrate the harvest and the blessings received in the past year.
- It is evident from the history of the Thanksgiving holiday that the process of appreciating the good experiences in life was deemed important to the early settlers and inhabitants of this great nation.
- The notion of thankfulness is also a valuable principle to God.
- The word "thanksgiving" occurs 28 times in The Bible, "thanks" 73 times, "thank" 27 times and "thankful" occurs 3 times.
- A cursory reading of Scripture makes it clear that giving thanks to God is an important behaviour, and the story of the 10 leapers found in Luke 17:11-19 (NIV) really emphasizes this principle.
- These 10 lepers had a need for healing and they called out to Jesus Christ in faith for help.
- While they were in the process of obeying Jesus' word, they were actually healed. But of the ten lepers who came for healing, only one of them came back and glorified God (verse 15).
- Based on Jesus' response in verses 18 and 19, it is evident that expressing gratitude was an expectation because He asked where the other nine were.
- But what is even more interesting is the fact that the leper who returned to give Jesus thanks was a Samaritan.
- Now a Samaritan was a mixed race despised by the "purebred" Jews of the day.
- The lesson here is that it doesn't matter who you are. You can still experience the life-changing power of the almighty God, and we should all be thankful for the goodness of God that we experience.
- But now the question is, who feels like being thankful when things are not going our way, or when we experience loss, tragedy or hurt?
- Consider the experience of Job. In one day Job lost 7000 sheep, 3000 camels, 500 oxen, 500 donkeys, a large number of servants and his 10 children consisting of seven boys and three girls.
- How would you respond if you had even a remotely similar experience? Job's response is likely the opposite of how most people would respond:
- "At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship [21] and said: 'Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised'" (Job 1:20-21 NIV).
- A response like Job's requires a strong grasp on Romans 8:31–39, which outlines the consistency of God's love.

KEY SCRIPTURES

Romans 8:31-39

- It requires a broad understanding of the love of God and his intention and desire for us as humans to be able to express the same sentiment of the prophet Habakkuk when things are not going our way:

  Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, [18] yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior. [19] The Sovereign Lord is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to tread on the heights (Habakkuk 3:17-19).
- True thankfulness is the demonstration of an attitude that reflects gratefulness to the living Saviour Jesus Christ for His benefits and blessings in our lives.
- True thankfulness is more than just an expression in a moment; rather, it is the manifestation of an attitude that translates to a way of life. My thankfulness to Jesus Christ should be a way of life for me.
- True thankfulness is demonstrated in the way we engage with others. When we are thankful for the mercy that God has extended to us, we will, in turn, offer mercy to others.
- So let us be continually thankful to the almighty God because His love for us is limitless.

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. Describe three things in your life that you are thankful for.
2. Why do you think the leper in Luke 17:11-19 was made whole after expressing thankfulness?
3. Describe how challenging you think it was for Job to worship God even though he had lost so much. How challenging would it have been for you to respond in the same way?
4. How would you define "true thankfulness"? In other words, what does it mean to you?
5. Describe three practical ways that you can express true thankfulness.

Prayer Time

Lord, please reveal to me the depth of the love You have for me so that I can truly be empowered to express thankfulness to You in all things.

L.G. ice-Breaker: Have you ever had a "Job experience"? What/who helped you through that time?

WEEK OF SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2017

NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week's message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

(Reminds me/Confirms) (New idea) (Think about)

! (Do this) (Speaks to my heart) (Must share)

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS