



## THE MIRACLE OF GRATITUDE

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*One of them, when he saw that he was healed, came back to Jesus shouting, "Praise God!" – Luke 17:15*

## THE THANKFUL LEPER

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READ LUKE 17:11-19

Kids don't have to be taught some words. Words like "no" and "mine" seem to come naturally to toddlers and preschoolers. But has any kid ever been known to say "thank you" without being taught? Pretty unlikely. Gratitude does not come naturally to human beings. And it's not just kids who have to be reminded to say "thank you."

Jesus healed ten lepers in this week's Bible story. Ten people were cured of a disease that had not only caused them intense physical pain, but also made them social outcasts, unable to be touched by others and having to shout "unclean" when in public. Imagine their delight when they followed Jesus' instructions to go to the priest, and on the way there were healed! No more disease. No more pain. No more loneliness! But only one returned to thank Jesus.

Did you think: How ungrateful?! How selfish?! It is tempting to want to judge the nine lepers who didn't come back to thank Jesus for healing them. But how often are we like the nine – we keep on our way, living our lives with our own blessings from God without acknowledging and thanking him who has gifted us with them? If you're afraid that, like the toddler, you're a little more prone to saying "no" and "mine" than "thank you", don't worry. You're not alone. It takes practice to go to God with gratitude. Practice doesn't always make perfect, but practice makes better. The more you choose to thank God first, the better you will become at making gratitude second nature.

## QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT

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1. Do you remember to thank God for the simple blessings in your day? What are some ways you can remind yourself to do this?
2. How does showing gratitude improve your relationships – including your relationship with God?
3. How do you feel when someone expresses gratitude to you? Who (in addition to God) do you need to express gratitude to today?
4. Take some time to write out a list of everything you are thankful for today. Praise God!