

Tuesday, November 24, 2020
Devotional Thoughts from Pastor Jim Murr...

"Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan."

Luke 17:15-16

You may remember the context of this passage. There were ten Lepers (people with Leprosy) who came to Jesus to ask Him to heal them. Jesus was all too happy to grant their request. He healed them all! They were now free to go out and live a normal life. No more needing to cry out "Unclean" when they came among a crowd of people. Lepers in Jesus' day were truly used to "social distancing." People stayed away from them because of their dreaded disease. It was a disease that rotted a person's skin. And it was considered to be very contagious.

In the Biblical account of Jesus healing them, we are told that, even though all ten were healed, only ONE came back to thank Jesus. This meant a lot to Jesus. He did take notice that the other nine did not come back to thank Him. He said, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine?" I'm sure the nine were thankful that they had been healed. It's just that they forgot about the Healer!

Is there a difference between being thankful and saying thank you? I believe there is. This is something for us to consider as we approach Thanksgiving Day. Actually, Thanksgiving Day has been nicknamed "Turkey Day." Just like Christmas has been renamed "Holiday." The Christmas season is referred to as the "Holiday Season."

So, how do you think "Thanksgiving 2020" will go this year? It wasn't until I was writing this devotion that it really struck me that Thanksgiving comes near the end of the year. (I know, sometimes I'm a little slow.) The fact that it comes near the end of the year kind of makes it a time to reflect back on the year and to give thanks to God for all of His blessings. Will that be hard to do this year? Not if you are a Christian. And not if you really think about what life would be like without our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Because of Jesus, even a year like 2020 is a year for giving thanks. Why? Because not once did God ever leave us! Not once did anyone HAVE TO go through these difficult times alone. Some may have chosen to go through it alone, but they didn't have to.

Even in a year like 2020, there should still be a lot of people in line to give thanks to God because the most important thing we have ever needed was never in jeopardy. We are at peace with God because of Jesus, and He has promised never to leave us or forsake us. In Romans 5:1-5, we are reminded of this fact:

"Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us."

God's Peace!
Pastor Jim