



Let us come before him with  
*Thanksgiving*

Psalm 95

Christ Church Cathedral, Fredericton NB Thanksgiving 2023

Dear Friends,

At Thanksgiving this year we'll be reading one of the more familiar gospel texts about gratitude from Luke 17. It might be called, "The Nine Guys Who Forgot;" instead, some biblical translations title it "Jesus Cleanses Ten Lepers." While some suggest the latter simply reflects a "glass half full" optimistic description, the text itself may reveal Jesus' real concern. When only one leper returned, Jesus asks,

*'Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they?'*

"But the other nine, where are they?" Jesus' question conveys with some degree of certainty something of his minimal expectations.

In an age with widespread attitudes of entitlement, pure gift is taken very much for granted. Comparing our good fortune with that of others helps us be reassured we have far less than many. Twenty-first century western culture suffers from a memory too short to enliven the kind of gratitude Jesus expected from the lepers or of us. That's probably why Luke told the story. One would expect a miracle such as this to cause over-the-top thanksgiving. Did the nine just forget? Can we accept the real meaning of the story may be the less optimistic "glass-ninety-percent-empty?" Are we more like the nine or the one? What are the signs?

When I was growing up my parents were constantly prompting me: "What do you say?" The "thank you" that would follow I uttered maybe just to avoid the question being asked but eventually, it came naturally. If I still say it often out of habit there's little harm in that. Gratitude is what we feel. Thanksgiving is what we do. Peace and happiness are wishful thinking without thanksgiving shaped by an attitude of gratitude.

"If there was ever a secret for unleashing God's powerful peace in a situation, it's developing a heart of true thanksgiving," says author Lysa Terkeurst.

One effects the other this Thanksgiving and every day. Making gratitude concrete by returning to give thanks pleases God. Giving thanks has the power to encourage inward gratitude important to the healthy Christian spirit.

I pray you are enriched by whatever customs are yours at this time of year. We'll be expressing gratitude and giving thanks at Christ Church Cathedral on Sunday, October 8<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 and 10:30 a.m. and I pray we'll also see you there.

Yours sincerely,

Geoffrey Hall (The Very Rev'd)  
Dean of Fredericton  
GMH

Make your thanksgiving offering  
(and be receipted immediately)  
HERE