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Hindrances to Thankfulness

By Dr. Michael D. Stone

The book of Luke is a most interesting book. The author of the book, a Gentile, wrote more of the New Testament than did any other writer. If you look at the books of Acts and Luke, they comprise almost one-half of the volume of the New Testament writings. The Apostle Paul wrote the greatest number of New Testament books.

In Luke chapter 17, the story is recorded about the healing of ten lepers by Jesus. Leviticus chapter 14 is a good chapter to read regarding the laws for leprosy. If the disease went into remission, then the leper could present himself to the priest who could then declare him clean. Also, involved in the Luke story is a Samaritan. These were people who had intermarried outside of the Jewish race following the Assyrian captivity of the northern kingdom. At the time of Jesus, the Samaritans were a hated people by and large by the Jews because of this mixed blood.

According to verse 12, when Jesus, “entered a certain village, there met Him ten lepers, who stood afar off.” Since these men stood “afar off,” then they more than likely were not in remission and probably had a “full blown” case of the disease. Jesus then told these ten men to go and present themselves to the priest. They might have wondered why they were to present themselves to the priest when they actually were not yet in remission. What would the priest say? How would they explain to him their reason for coming when they were not in remission? I just do not know what went through their minds, but, I do know that they went forth in faith and before they got to the priest, they were healed.

Only one of these ten healed men had the courtesy to thank Jesus for what he had done for him. Therefore, it is sometimes with the ungrateful people that we are on occasions. In addition, the one who returned to give thanks was the one probably least likely to have done so according to the Jews. Let us be careful to not set up our judging tent to condemn others who in reality just might be more religious than we.

I think there are several hindrances to prevent us from being the thankful people that we should be, not the least of which is pride. How does pride keep us from being thankful? It causes us to think that we deserve whatever good may come our way. This was the downfall of the rich fool in Luke chapter 12.

In Proverbs 16:18, the Bible says, “Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.” There are some negative characteristics that proud people usually have. They take little account of their weaknesses; however, they certainly will notice the weaknesses in others. Secondly, they do not anticipate stumbling blocks. So, when they do come. They are not prepared to face them. Third, they think they are above the frailties of the common people.

Of all the people in the world, the Christian ought to be the most thankful. We ought to be a happy and cheerful people in spite of the human frailties that we all face. We ought every day of our lives to give our thanks and praise to God for all that He has done and continues to do for us. Please let the record show that I wish to be counted with the one and not the nine. Jesus, I thank you!