# CITYWEST CHURCH
# 01.11.2026 - 10 AM
# THANKFULLNESS

As Jesus continued on toward Jerusalem, he reached the border between Galilee and Samaria. 12 As he entered a village there, ten men with leprosy stood at a distance, 13 crying out, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”

14 He looked at them and said, “Go show yourselves to the priests.”[b] And as they went, they were cleansed of their leprosy.

15 One of them, when he saw that he was healed, came back to Jesus, shouting, “Praise God!” 16 He fell to the ground at Jesus’ feet, thanking him for what he had done. This man was a Samaritan.

17 Jesus asked, “Didn’t I heal ten men? Where are the other nine? 18 Has no one returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?” 19 And Jesus said to the man, “Stand up and go. Your faith has healed you.[c]”

**Luke 17:11-18 (NLT)**

## *Have we forgotten to say thank you?*

*We teach our children to say two important words: please and thank you.*

*We remind them because gratitude doesn't always come naturally. We can be quick to ask for something and slow to acknowledge what we've received.*

*And if we're honest, adults aren't that different.*

*We pray when we're desperate. We call on God when we need a breakthrough. We ask Him to provide, heal, guide, restore and open doors. And there's nothing wrong with bringing our needs to God. Jesus invites us to pray.*

*But here's a question worth asking: Are we as intentional about thanking God as we are about asking Him for things?*

*In Luke 17, Jesus encounters ten men suffering from leprosy. They are isolated from society, living with a disease that has affected their health, relationships and place in the community. They stand at a distance and cry out for mercy.*

*Jesus responds, and all ten experience healing. But only one comes back.*

*This story challenges us because it reveals something about the human heart. We can receive the goodness of God and still forget to turn back towards the God who gave it.*

1. **THANKFULNESS BEGINS WITH US ACKNOWLEDGING OUR NEED FOR JESUS.**

12 As he entered a village there, ten men with leprosy stood at a distance, 13 crying out, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”

**LUKE 17:12-13 (NLT)**

*These ten men had a shared problem. They were suffering from leprosy, a condition that left them ceremonially unclean and socially isolated. They were forced to live at a distance from the wider community.*

*Notice the words Luke uses: “stood at a distance.”*

*They were close enough to see Jesus, but their condition kept them separated from others. They knew their need, and they knew they couldn't fix it themselves.*

*So they cried out, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”*

*Their prayer wasn't complicated. It was honest. They recognised their need and called on the One who could help them.*

*There's something important here for us: Thankfulness grows when we remember how much we depend on God.*

*Sometimes, when life is going well, we can start to believe that we're managing everything ourselves. We become confident in our own abilities, our own plans and our own resources. We can begin to take for granted the things that once caused us to pray desperately.*

*But the truth is that every day is an opportunity to recognise God's grace.*

- *The breath in our lungs is a gift.*
- *The people God has placed around us are a gift.*
- *The opportunity to gather and worship is a gift.*
- *The grace that meets us in our failures is a gift.*
- *The hope we have through Jesus is a gift.*

Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens.[d] He never changes or casts a shifting shadow.

**James 1:17 (NLT)**

*Gratitude begins when we stop treating God's goodness as something we are entitled to and start recognising it as something we have received.*

*That doesn't mean we pretend life is easy. It doesn't mean we ignore grief, disappointment or unanswered prayer. These ten men were genuinely suffering. Their gratitude didn't begin with pretending their circumstances were good; it began with recognising that Jesus was good and that they needed His mercy.*

## 2. AS WE OBEY JESUS, OUR THANKFULNESS GROWS.

**14** He looked at them and said, “Go show yourselves to the priests.”[b] And as they went, they were cleansed of their leprosy.

**Luke 17:14 (NLT)**

*This is an extraordinary moment.*

*Jesus tells these ten men to go and show themselves to the priests. Under the law, a priest could examine someone who appeared to have recovered from a skin disease and confirm their cleansing, allowing them to return to community life.*

*But there is a detail we shouldn't miss: Jesus tells them to go before Luke tells us they are healed.*

*They have to start walking while they are still carrying the evidence of their condition.*

*Imagine being one of those men. You have cried out for mercy. Jesus has given you an instruction. But when you look at your skin, nothing appears to have changed yet.*

*Will you trust Him enough to take the next step?*

*Luke tells us, “And as they went, they were cleansed of their leprosy.”*

*Their healing happened as they went.*

*We should be careful not to turn this into a formula that says God must heal everyone who demonstrates enough faith. The story isn't a promise that we can control God's actions through our obedience.*

*But it does show us the importance of trusting Jesus enough to respond to His word.*

*And this connects with thankfulness because gratitude isn't only something we express after God has answered our prayers; it is also an attitude we cultivate as we trust Him along the way.*

*It's easy to thank God when the answer is obvious.*

*It's easy to praise Him when the door opens, the provision arrives or the breakthrough comes.*

*But what about when we're still waiting?*

*Can we thank Him for His presence while we're waiting for the answer? Can we remain faithful when we don't yet see the outcome? Can we obey Him even when the next step doesn't make complete sense?*

*Paul writes in 1 Thessalonians 5:*

16 Always be joyful. 17 Never stop praying. 18 Be thankful in all circumstances, for this
is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.

19 Do not stifle the Holy Spirit. 20 Do not scoff at prophecies, 21 but test everything
that is said. Hold on to what is good. 22 Stay away from every kind of evil.

**1 Thess 5:16-22 (NLT)**

*Notice that Paul says in all circumstances, not for all circumstances.*

*We don't have to thank God for every painful thing that happens to us. We can grieve, lament, and ask difficult questions. Biblical gratitude isn't denial.*

*Rather, we can give thanks in the middle of hardship because our circumstances do not have the final word. Jesus is still Lord, His character remains faithful, and our hope is anchored in Him.*

*Sometimes, the most powerful expression of gratitude is to keep walking with Jesus before we know how the story will end.*

## 3. THANKFULNESS BRINGS US BACK TO THE GIVER.

One of them, when he saw that he was healed, came back to Jesus, shouting, “Praise God!” [16] He fell to the ground at Jesus’ feet, thanking him for what he had done. This man was a Samaritan.

**LUKE 17:15-16 (NLT)**

*All ten men were healed. All ten received mercy. All ten experienced the goodness of Jesus.*

*But only one came back.*

*Luke tells us that when this man realised he had been healed, he returned to Jesus, shouting praises to God. He fell at Jesus' feet and thanked Him.*

*I love that picture. This man doesn't offer a polite nod from a distance. He comes right back to Jesus. His gratitude is visible, vocal and personal.*

*And Luke makes a point of telling us that he was a Samaritan.*

*The other nine are not identified here, but the contrast is striking. The man who returns is someone who, because of his Samaritan background, might have been considered an outsider by many Jewish people.*

*Yet he is the one who comes back to worship.*

*The person who might have been expected to remain on the margins becomes the example of gratitude.*

*Jesus asks:*

[17] Jesus asked, “Didn’t I heal ten men? Where are the other nine? [18] Has no one returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?”

**Luke 17:17-18 (NLT)**

*Jesus isn't asking because He needs His ego stroked. He's exposing something about the human heart.*

*The nine received the gift, but the one returned to the Giver.*

*And this is where thankfulness becomes more than good manners. Gratitude turns our attention away from simply what God has done for us and towards God Himself.*

*We can want God's blessings without wanting His presence. We can want His provision without wanting His direction. We can want His intervention without allowing Him to shape our lives.*

*But the grateful heart says, "Jesus, I don't just want what You can give me. I want to know You."*

*The greatest gift of the Christian life isn't simply that God makes our circumstances better. It is that, through Jesus, we are brought into relationship with God.*

*The Samaritan came back to Jesus, and Jesus said to him:*

**19** And Jesus said to the man, "Stand up and go. Your faith has healed you.

**Luke 17:19 (NLT)**

*Some translations render the final phrase as "made you well" or "saved you." The wording points beyond the man's physical healing towards the fuller significance of his encounter with Jesus. We should be careful not to claim that the other nine received no spiritual benefit, but Luke clearly draws our attention to the faith and gratitude of the one who returned.*

*He didn't just receive something from Jesus. He came to Jesus.*

*And that is the invitation for us.*

*Don't let the blessing become more important than the One who blessed you.*

*Let's be intentional about coming back to Jesus.*

*Come back in worship. Come back in prayer. Come back in the way you speak about your circumstances. Come back by telling your children what God has done. Come back by encouraging someone else with your testimony.*

*And when God answers a prayer, don't just move straight on to the next request.*

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever. [2] Has the LORD redeemed you? Then speak out! Tell others he has redeemed you from your enemies.

**Psalm 107:1-2 (NLT)**

*Stop.*

*Recognise His goodness.*

*Give Him the glory.*

*Say thank you.*

**Connect Group Questions**

**What are some ways we can become so focused on what we need from God that we forget to acknowledge what He has already done?**

**How can we cultivate gratitude and continue trusting Jesus when we are still waiting for an answer to prayer?**

**What is the difference between being thankful for God's blessings and developing a heart of gratitude towards God Himself?**