

June 13, 2021

KIBC Sunday Worship Service (The 23<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Worship)

Message by Pastor Teichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "Thanksgiving is Like a Boomerang!"

—Faith is the Response of Thanksgiving—

Text: Luke 17:11~19

**17:11 On the way to Jerusalem he was passing along between Samaria and Galilee.**

**17:12 And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance**

**17:13 and lifted up their voices, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us."**

**17:14 When he saw them he said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed.**

**17:15 Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice.**

**17:16 and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan.**

**17:17 Then Jesus answered, "Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine?"**

**17:18 Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?"**

**17:19 And he said to him, "Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well."**

### Introduction

We celebrate the 23<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of the Foundation of KIBC today.

When we look back these 23 years, we received lots of God's blessings. Some of our brothers and sisters expressed thanksgiving to God. Let us also give thanks first to God.

By the way, I read a poem entitled *A little amount of* by Elizabeth Nobel as below.

*A little amount of sugar changes food tasty.*

*A little amount of soap cleanses a body tidy.*

*A little amount of sunshine makes sprouts grow healthy.*

*A shortest pencil makes us write a beautiful sentence.*

*A shortest candle lights up the place around us.*

My friends, **a little amount** of something can be the difference between a happy life and an unhappy one. A small daily habit can be the difference between a successful life and an unsuccessful one.

If someone practices giving thanks every day until it becomes their habit, their life will become quite different. Even if we give thanks for only one day, we will spend that day with a happy feeling, and it becomes a special one. If we acquire a good habit of giving thanks, we keep giving thanks through our lives and they will come to be blessed.

The most precious habit is to give thanks every day, not only for the special day.

**Psalm 100:4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise!**

**Give thanks to him; bless his name!**

The Bible records a kind of person who shows his gratitude and one who does not. Let us study about them from today's text.

#### Main Points

### 1 . People Who Were Given God's Blessing

Let us first read today's text and listen to its summary.

#### 1 ) Ten lepers

On the way to Jerusalem, Jesus was passing along **between** Samaria (the Gentiles' residential area) and Galilee (the Jews' residential area). It looks like our lives heading toward Jerusalem in heaven. It means that we are passing along Galilee (Christians who live Christian lives) between Samaria (people of society who do not know God). And as he entered a village, he met ten lepers (a dreaded skin disease), who had to stay at a distance. Leprosy was a desperate disease in those days. It symbolizes a man's sin according to the Bible. They lifted up their voice at a distance.

**Luke 17:13 and lifted up their voices, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us."**

Listening to their voice, Jesus said,

**17:14 When he saw them he said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed.**

One of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice as below,

**17:15 Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice.**

**17:16 and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan.**

The Samaritan man experienced an amazing miracle, who was despised by the Jewish people. How blessed he was!

Then Jesus said as following,

#### 2 ) Where are the nine?

**17:17 Then Jesus answered, "Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine?"**

**17:18 Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?"**

Only one of them gave thanks to Jesus, who were blessed by Jesus and healed. This seemed to be an example of human nature. Nine people were also healed, however, none of them responded to God for His healing with thanksgiving.

What do you think about the story? Can you hear the word of Jesus, **"Where are the nine?"** It was the Samaritan (a Gentile) who responded to Jesus. These were people who were looked down on by Jewish people. Jesus' blessing reached to that Gentile. He was praising God with a loud voice and fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks.

How about us? How much do we give thanks to God? Jesus said, **"Where are the nine?"** We can look in Jesus' heart (Jesus' pain).

Let us study the second point so that we understand Jesus' word further in the following verses.

## 2. Faith Is the Response of Thanksgiving

### 1) The response of thanksgiving

My friends. When you throw a ball against a wall, it always bounces back to you. If we throw a complaint, it bounces back to us. On the contrary, if we throw thanksgiving, it bounds back to us with the amazing blessings such as healing, restoration, and happiness.

Many scholars in the world study thanksgiving. Psychologists say that **thanksgiving** activates the prefrontal cortex, reduces stress, and increases a level of mental well-being.

Professor Michael McEnroe, a psychologist of the University of Miami, says as follows,

**"When we stop just for a second every day to give thanks for the countless blessings, at that very moment our emotional system has already shifted from fear to the positive feelings."**

It is true that he who gives thanks everyday lives a far happier life than he who grumbles (He who rarely gives thanks). One of the ten lepers expressed his joy of healing and thanksgiving openly. In those days, priests judged whether a person had leprosy or not.

The man realized that he was healed before he went to the priest, so he immediately went back to Jesus. We see his quick response.

Let us study another point.

### 2) The faith of the man with leprosy

**17:19 And he said to him, "Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well."**

Let us think about Jesus' word, **"Your faith has made you well."**

Don't you think it somehow strange? Jesus saved him, not the man's faith. However, Jesus said, **"Your**

**faith has made you well.”** Ten lepers were healed of severe leprosy. However, Jesus said that about the man who returned. Isn't it strange?

Why did Jesus say such strange words? Let think the following two points.

### ① **The first blessing**

The man was not only saved from leprosy. Ten men were healed. Those ten men were given great blessing but they only experienced physical healing. On the other hand, we see from the attitude of the Samaritan man that he was really converted.

Jesus saw the real conversion in his words and deeds. The man who was sincerely converted had thanksgiving from the bottom of his heart. The truly converted sincerely worships God. Let us look his words and deeds when he was converted.

**17:15 Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice.**

**17:16 and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan.**

We understand that Jesus' words, **“Your faith has made you well”** was response to the man, who was converted and came to Jesus (blessed).

### ② **The second blessing**

Another blessing was hidden in Jesus' words, **“Your faith has made you well”**. It was the blessing to the Gentiles are now allowed to enter the Kingdom of God in heaven. The Jewish people, who were chosen, did not give thanks to God. The Samaritan man, the Gentile, was saved by faith and came to worship God.

It is an unbelievable blessing. The Jewish people who were chosen by God did not give thanks nor worship God. The Gentile who was far from God's choice fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. Jesus said to him,

**“Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well.”**

Jesus gave him the words of encouragement and blessing and said to him **“Rise and go your way.”**

It was indeed like the praising song that the author of the Psalms sang as below,

**Psalm 100:4 “Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.”**

\* There are two blessings in Jesus' words, **“Your faith has made you well.”** The first one was that the man with leprosy was healed and was truly converted and became to worship God. The second blessing was that the Gentile Samaritan who was blessed was able to stand up through the faith. What a blessed story! Those who respond to God with the heart of thanksgiving are blessed.

## Conclusion

Title of the Message: "Thanksgiving is Like a Boomerang!"

– Faith is the Response of Thanksgiving–

Today we celebrate the 23<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Worship of Foundation of Kitahama International Bible Church. With what feeling do we attend worship today?

Today's sermon is about ten lepers. They were healed by Jesus' words, and they were divided into two groups. Only the Samaritan man, a Gentile, was given Jesus' blessed words, "**Your faith has made you well.**" He fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. It reveals his attitude of conversion.

Jesus said important words to him:

1. Where are the nine?
2. Your faith has made you well.

What faith do we have now ?

Let us walk before Jesus by giving thanks to Him. The response of thanksgiving brings God's blessings like a boomerang. If we worship God with thanksgiving, we will absolutely receive God's blessings.

\* God bless you!