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May 2, 2004

## The Eucharist - The Great Thanksgiving Luke 17:11-19

This story of the ten lepers is a story

that is true about people in general.

Especially people who are long time Christians or  
even new Christians.

We take things for granted.

Often we take what Jesus has done for us for granted.

We take what God has done and given to us for granted.

Jesus is a healer.

He is the Son of God, through whom the blessings and  
power of God becomes real in the lives of people.

Jesus opens the eyes of the blind,

he gives food to hungry,

he forgives the accused,

he pardons the guilty,

he encourages the down hearted,

he makes wise the simple,

he gives understanding to those who want to know.

Jesus gave his life for us.

He restores our relationship with God for us.

He gives us meaning, purpose, hope, love,  
everything our souls desire.

But many times we are like the nine lepers.

We do what we are told,

we get so focused on going to show ourselves to the  
priests - to do our duties, that

when we realize we are healed, or forgiven

or some other blessing of God comes our way,

we just keep on doing what we are doing,

we keep on living our lives as if

nothing has really happened.

And we forget to do what this Samaritan did.

And sometime we even say that

it is not in our nature to be like him.

This Samaritan, this foreigner to the faith,

this new comer to the people of God,

when he realized what Jesus had done for him,

when he realized he was healed,

he came back praising God in a loud voice.

No inhibitions, just spontaneous loud praise.

He threw himself at Jesus feet and eucharistoad Jesus.  
That's the Greek word used here in this passage.  
He eucharistoad Jesus. He thanked Jesus.

Many things have happened to us the last weeks  
in our fellowship and our worship services.  
Last week we celebrated  
the baptism of Daniel Paul Koops.  
We were reminded of what God has done and  
how he wants to be our Father and we his children.

The weeks before that we celebrated Easter, and  
we were reminded of the amazing new life that is  
possible with God.  
We had an amazing worship service here in this room.  
400 people celebrating the resurrection power of  
God in many languages, we ate together as one family.  
I don't think any thing like this has happened  
in this building for many years. A sign of God's power.  
And then the weeks before that we observed of lent -  
we did the 40 Days of purpose campaign.  
We were reminded of what on earth we are here for.  
New fellowship groups formed.  
In the last months we have clearly seen the healing  
and renewing touch of God in our lives.

And today we celebrate the Lord's Supper.  
And we could celebrate the Lord's Supper just as the  
nine healed lepers did when they went to the priests  
in Jerusalem.  
But is that what we want to do?

Some people call the Lord's Supper communion  
because it is communion with God and with each other.  
And that is true.  
Today we have communion with God and each other.  
And there is blessing in that.  
But that is not all there is to the Lord's Supper.  
Some people call the Lord's Supper the Eucharist.  
That is a good Greek word meaning thanksgiving,  
to give thanks.  
To do what that Samaritan did when he realized  
he was healed.  
When he realized that the power of God touched him,  
he praised God in loud voice and gave thanks to Jesus.

This morning I would like for us  
to celebrate the Lord's Supper as a Eucharist.  
We have just come through an amazing  
time as a congregation.  
We witnessed again and remembered the crucifixion and  
the resurrection of Jesus and  
we were reminded of our purpose in life and  
that God loves us.  
So today I would like for us to celebrate the Lord's  
Supper as the Samaritan did in this story.

When Jesus celebrated the first Lord's Supper  
it also was a eucharist. Look at Luke 22:15-20.  
17: he took the cup and eucharistod, he gave thanks.  
19: Jesus took the bread and he eucharistod.  
He gave thanks.  
And in the same way, 20 the same spirit of giving thanks  
Jesus took the cup after supper and eucharistod.

The Lord's Supper is a Eucharist.  
It's a way of giving thanks  
the way the Samaritan did when he was healed.  
Jesus gave thanks to God  
for the promises that were fulfilled in his life.  
He gave thanks for the forgiveness of sin.  
He gave thanks for a new relationship with God that  
was made possible through the cross.

There were reasons for Jesus to be anxious,  
to be angry, to be full of fear, but  
instead on the night Jesus was betrayed and was killed –  
crucified – he took the bread and cup and  
gave thanks. He gave thanks.  
He celebrated the Eucharist.

What are you thankful for?  
Think about all the things that happened to us as a  
congregation these last months.  
And what about you personally?  
What has God done for you?  
How has he ministered to you and your family?

I'm inviting some of you to share something you are thankful for.  
Maybe something  
that happened in your 40 Days of purpose group, or  
something you learned by reading the Purpose Driven

Life book.

Maybe it was something you realized when you saw the passion movie or participated in the Good Friday service or the Easter service.

Maybe you are thankful for your baptism or what that means.

I'm inviting us to join that Samaritan and tell out loud what you are thankful for.

As we are waiting I would like each of us to think of three physical material things and three spiritual things you are thankful for.

In a few moments we

have the privilege of sharing in the Eucharist.

When we eat the bread I would like us to say out loud (and we'll do it all together) what we are thankful for.

And again when we drink the cup we will express what we are thankful for, especially what we are thankful for spiritually.

Let's begin our Eucharist

by presenting our offerings and our tithes to the Lord as an expression of our thanks.

And while the deacons are taking up the offering if there is someone who would like to share one thing they are thankful for please come forward