



GIVE THANKS TO
THE LORD FOR HE
HAS MADE US
WHOLE

SERMON |



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Give Thanks to the Lord, for He has made Us Whole!

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and our Lord and Saviour Jesus the Christ. Amen.

This morning's sermon is drawn from the Holy Gospel according to Saint Luke. May the Lord, who grants us faith by His Word and Sacraments, preserve us in the same, that we may give Him thanks—now and forevermore. Amen.

“Sola fide”—Latin for “faith alone”—was the heartbeat of Reformation. Articulated by the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther, it became the principal cause of reform. Not by novelty but by returning to the words of Christ Himself. It very well seems that Luther was echoing Jesus' own words we heard today.

In today's Gospel from Luke, we hear Jesus say to one of the ten lepers, "*Your faith has made you well.*"

Dr. Luther confronted a Church plagued by spiritual corruption—afflicted in a way, like a leprosy outbreak. He turned to the healing words of Jesus, seeking to cleanse the "Bride of Christ" from practices that obscured the Gospel, and to restore her to the purity of "*faith alone.*"

Today's Gospel reading gives us a beautiful example of this phrase in *action*. As Jesus entered a village along the border between Samaria and Galilee, *ten* lepers stood at a distance. As soon as they saw Jesus, they cried out at the top of their voices.

And if you read between the lines, you'll notice something remarkable.

All of them recognized Jesus and called Him by name.

They knew that Jesus was a teacher and a master, so they addressed Him by saying, "*Jesus, Master!*"

They also knew that Jesus was more than a teacher—they must have heard that Jesus was merciful, and in His mercy, they believed He could heal them.

Do you see their faith in action? Calling out to Jesus in "*faith alone*" — "*Jesus, Master have mercy on us.*"

And that's not all.

When Jesus saw them, He said, "*Go, and show yourselves to the priests.*" And Luke tells us—they went immediately.

All ten of them! No questions asked.

Jesus commanded them to go, and they went! None of them expressed any hesitation.

Not even a concern that they were supposed to remain outside the city, in the place designated for lepers. They simply obeyed Jesus. They trusted His Word. And surprisingly, they all went to show themselves to the priests.

Now, if you look closely at the text, Luke doesn't say they were healed at that moment. Not yet.

So, what do we see here again? *Faith in action*. Obedience that flows from faith to trust in Jesus. Obedience to Jesus in "*faith alone!*"

But here's a twist.

All ten lepers were brought to faith by Jesus' words. And all ten were healed, as Jesus heard their pleas, and in His mercy, He saved them all. Their healing was a gift, received in mercy, as Jesus gave them more than they asked for.

But only one of them returned to Jesus to give thanks.

And Jesus asks the piercing question: “*Where are the nine?*”

A question that pierced His own heart. And here, the Gospel reveals something sobering—our indifference toward God and His mercy.

God doesn’t differentiate among us. He shows no partiality. [Romans 2:11]

God makes His sun rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. [Matt 5:45]

The salvation that comes through Jesus is free—and it is for all. For God did not send His Son to die for a privileged few, but for the whole world. Jesus did not heal only the one leper who returned with thanksgiving—He healed all ten.

So today, I commend to your consideration the best, the first, and the most faithful way to celebrate Thanksgiving. Let us always return to Jesus and give thanks to Him.

Dr. Luther returned to Jesus and to His words. His way of giving thanks to Jesus was to bring the truth and purity of the Gospel back to the world.

Yet, as we know, there is something that has come between us and God. Something that has come between us and each other. It brings much grief and sadness to us and to this world. We hurt because of it. We feel the pain of it. We try to run from it.

But it's always there—like that hideous and incurable leprosy of the miserable ten. It is the sin within us. The sin of the world. And the Devil himself, who works to keep us doubting our faith.

And you know what?

Jesus is fully aware that we grapple with sin in this world. That's why Luke gave us such a disproportionate equation. Nine out of ten lepers who were granted faith to be healed did not return.

They were caught up in the worries and the fancies of the world. Perhaps they were eager to rejoin the glamour of this glitzy world.

But in doing so, they missed the greater gift—not just healing, but wholeness. Because Jesus didn't just say, "*You are healed,*" He said, "*You are made whole,*" meaning, "*You have been saved.*" The one who returned didn't just believe in the healing, but the Healer Himself. His thanksgiving revealed that faith not only receives mercy but responds to it.

But this happens to us too—all the time.

We get pulled into the desperate rhythms of this world. Political crisis, finances, health, family, they all capture our senses and attention. It becomes hard to bear the death of a loved one, the weight of long-term illnesses, financial strain, the peer pressures faced by our young adults, or the rising educational demands on our children. And amid all of this, we forget to return to the One who reigns over everything.

So, what do we do?

We must follow that one leper—the one who returned to Jesus, shouting in a loud voice, falling on his face at Jesus' feet, giving praise to God and thanksgiving to Jesus.

Jesus longs to see each one of us!

He desires to strengthen us through His Word; read and preached at every Divine Service, for us, for you and for me.

And Jesus still asks the piercing question at His Supper,
“Where are the other guests whom I invited?”

Because Jesus wishes to feed us with the bread from heaven. His own body and blood, given and shed for all, for the forgiveness of our sins. And when we neglect this gift, He still asks us, *“Where are my guests?”* He longs for us to be made whole in Him, so that we may be saved and remain in faith.

Faith that saves us.

Sola fide! Faith alone!

And Luke tells us that when we return to Jesus—in thanksgiving and trust—He lovingly responds just as He did to that one leper:

“Rise and go forth; your faith has made you whole.”

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, Let us give thanks to the Lord, for He has made us Whole.

Now may the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and minds in Him. Amen.

My family and I wish you a glad thanksgiving!

Vijay Samuel