

# Study 6

## An Attitude of Gratitude?

### Luke 17:1-19

#### Share something...

What would make you shout for joy and thank God at the top of your voice? Maybe an unexpected good result from medical tests? Perhaps a surprisingly impressive exam mark? Would you care to share with your group the last time you were truly thankful to God?

### Sin, Faith and Service

In Luke 17, Jesus highlight a number of the qualities of a genuine disciple. **All of these** are in stark contrast to the Pharisees, who **considered themselves** to be outstanding examples of piety. The trouble is, Pharisees specialized in unforgiveness and judgmentalism. The Pharisees considered themselves worthy of a pat on the back from God. The Pharisees – and the people of Israel in general – were ungrateful. All kinds of other people are doing better!

So let's have a look at some genuine 'qualities of the Kingdom.' **Read through Luke 17:1-19.**

#### 1. Watching yourself

a) From verse 1 to 3, as well as thinking about your own performance, what else do you need to think about?

b) Why is there no room for complacency among followers of Jesus?

c) How can what we do cause other people to sin? How does Paul apply this in 1 Corinthians 8:9-13 and 10:31-11:1

**PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL – FOR YOUR EYES ONLY!**

d) It's possible to be so complacent about your own life and attitudes that you actually cause other people to stumble. Can you think of any ways this might directly apply to you?

**2. Watching Your Brother...**

a) We often forget that Christianity is a team sport. What are we told to do if our brother or sister sins?

To be honest, I'm not sure that this ever works. Most of us are so thin skinned and sensitive that no one would dare rebuke us for sinning. What a shame! And that means we often miss out on the next phase as well...

**3. Forgiving Your Brother**

a) The difference between us and the Pharisees comes in the words that come after "if he repents." What are we meant to do?

Why do we find forgiveness so difficult?

b) What are we meant to do about people who sin against us and don't repent?

PS The comment above about being 'so thin skinned that no one would dare rebuke us' was meant to cause discussion ;-)  
...So did it?

#### 4. Faith to Forgive

a) Why do you think the apostles ask Jesus to 'increase their faith' at this exact point in the conversation?

b) Perhaps their faith doesn't need to be increased after all? If even a tiny bit of faith could replant a mulberry tree into the sea, perhaps it wouldn't take all that much faith to help us keep forgiving one another. If 'faith' means trusting God to bring the right result out of our current circumstances, how will it help us to forgive?

#### Astonishing Example

Ashleah Taylor recently saw her parents run down by a passing car. But according to the Courier Mail, Ashleah, a committed Christian, has nothing but forgiveness for the man that was driving the car that killed her parents. "We are all grieving, but the driver has a family as well," said Ashleah. "I want him to know I'm not angry with him at all."

Can you share with your group some examples of when you've found it **difficult** to forgive like this?

#### 5. Just Doing Our Duty

a. The Pharisees thought that by rigorously keeping the minute details of the Old Testament law they would deserve a hearty pat on the back from God. From verses 7 to 10, what attitude should true servants of God have?

b. 'Doing our duty' somehow seems an old fashioned idea in today's world. What can we do to develop more of a sense of humble service?

## 6. Thankfulness

**Re-read the account in verses 11 to 19.** Note that Samaria was the area that used to be the northern half of the Kingdom of Israel. During the period of Israel's exile, Samaria was resettled by a multi-cultural influx who combined their diverse religions with a vague respect for the first five books of the Old Testament. Prophets like Jeremiah had promised a time when this 'northern kingdom' would be re-united with God's people. But as time went on, this seemed incredibly unlikely. There was constant bad feeling between Samaritans and Jews. Perhaps that's why Jesus carefully traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee.

### Five Second Questions...



1. What do the ten men do?

2. What's the result?

3. What does one man do?

4. What's the surprise?

a) As Luke's long story unfolds, we're looking for signs of fruitfulness in the nation of Israel. How is Israel looking here?

b) In terms of where we are in Luke's narrative, what signs of hope do you see for 'non Israelites' like us?

c) Jesus **has** made us clean by faith', just like the Samaritan. Maybe we can't throw ourselves at Jesus' feet and thank him... but how can we appropriately respond? Take a look at these verses for some practical ideas...

2 Cor 9:11-12

Eph 5:20

Phil 4:6

Col 3:16,17

Genuine thankfulness is the heartbeat of the Christian life. It informs our prayers, our singing, our giving – in fact, whatever we do! **Pray together, giving thanks to God.**