

Flexing Your Gratitude Muscles

Scripture Reading — Luke 17:11-19

He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan. — Luke 17:16

I'm a bit of a health nut. I exercise regularly. As I age, I'm noticing how quickly my muscles weaken when I don't use them for a while. It's often said that if you don't use them, you lose them. It's helpful to think of gratitude in that way too.

Gratitude is not an inborn trait that some have and -others don't. Rather, it's more like a muscle that can be strengthened over time. And being intentional about exercising it can be critical to becoming a more grateful person.

We don't know much about the ten lepers that Jesus healed. We know that the one who returned and gave thanks was a Samaritan. Luke may have included that detail because the Samaritans were looked down on by the Jews of Jesus' day. But this Samaritan demonstrated a level of gratitude that the other lepers didn't show.

At a time when things like entitlement, accusation, venting -anger, and violence seem to have taken hold of our culture, what kind of impact might gratitude have? Saying "I'm grateful" or "Thank you" does not simply express our thanksgiving but actually gives voice to a countercultural witness that has the power to push back the tide of resentment among us. Then there is room for a fresh appreciation of God's renewing, saving grace.

Are you keeping your gratitude muscles in shape?

Prayer

Gracious God, receive our thanks for your healing touch and power in our lives. In the name of Jesus, help us remember all that you do for us each day. Amen.

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