

## Thanksgiving

A Happy Thanksgiving to you and your loved ones as we give thanks. What better way to give thanks to God for all His blessings, than to gather round His table in the Great Thanksgiving as we remember His goodness and His gift of life through our Lord Jesus Christ.

We live in a country that was once described as flowing with milk and honey. The land has an abundance of natural resources to provide energy needs, food and like the children of Israel, the means to produce wealth. God is good to us. So why is there poverty?

Poverty is man-made. We are given the ability to learn skills to reduce, if not eliminate need. But it still remains, even in the richest of countries. Poverty is not something we wish on anyone nor do we know anyone that wants to be poor. It can happen from neglect, and the refusal to be part of the solution. Or sometimes, it can be caused by lack of effort and complacency.

Like the lepers whom Jesus met we are invited to show ourselves to be declared clean and return with thanks and praise for our healing.

Yet only one leper returned to give thanks and praise to Jesus. What happened to the other nine lepers? Well, they got excited about the prospect that once declared clean by a priest; a seal of approval recognized by Jewish society, their life which made them once untouchable was made better forever. This was freedom. But sometimes, once we are set free, whether from disease, poverty or failure, we forget from where we came. We forget to give back not just with words, but in a life that continually gives thanks to God.

That day, ten lepers were healed, but only one recognized how deep his healing went. His very soul had been transformed, a much deeper healing than that of the skin disease. You see, a life of giving thanks is much deeper than the surface of what you see on the outside. New life goes into the human heart and changes a person forever, from inside out. The lepers' healing was not just for them to fit in with the rest of the world. New life was leading them to give back, just as they had received.

God bless you as you give during this holiday season from the depths of gratitude. Amen.