

True Thankfulness
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Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. Luke 17:15-16

When Jesus healed the ten lepers there was one that came back to thank Jesus. Sometimes this event is turned into a moralistic lesson on how important it is to be thankful. I guess it's easy to do since even Jesus points out the absence of the other nine who were healed. However, when we turn this event into a lesson on the importance of having good manners, I think we miss the bigger picture.

Don't get me wrong – We should say “Thank You” often as we are truly blessed people. But I have learned this truth: YOU CAN'T FORCE SOMEONE TO BE THANKFUL! You can make a child go through the motions of thankfulness by insisting they say thank you to grandma for the socks and underwear Christmas present, but you can't force them to be thankful. Again, please don't misread this – You should absolutely make your child say thanks for the socks and underwear. It's good parenting, and good manners are lacking in our world today.

But maybe we should focus less on OUR RESPONSE to the gift and more on the actual GIFT! Turning this event into a lesson about how we should be thankful obscures the most amazing part of the story. JESUS HEALED TEN LEPERS! So, if your child's face droops when they see the socks and underwear instead of the latest video game, try pointing out to your child how amazing socks and underwear are and how much grandma must love your child for such an amazing gift! They may look at you like you are crazy, but that's ok, because you are pointing them to the GIFT and the GIVER. When people begin to see the greatness of the GIFT and love of the GIVER, true thankfulness is not far behind.