

Group discussion *Each number below includes questions that relate to the scripture. I offer a few answers, but your perspective may be better. The point is to discuss, not to get 100% agreement. Rule of thumb: the fewer questions you ask, the better. Save time for "the big question."*

Read Luke 17:11-19 aloud.

1. What was wrong with these men? What were the implications of their disease?

Leprosy meant a lonely death. You had to stay away from society, even the people you loved, so that you would not infect others.

When have you seen diseases that cut people off from loved ones?
Alzheimer's, polio, mental illness, AIDS.

What other situations cut people off from loved ones?
Divorce, addictions, prison, unresolved anger.

In what ways can people today be unclean? How does sin cut us off from people we love?

2. What did Jesus do to help these outcasts?

When did they know they were healed? How might this have been a test for their faith?

3. Why do you think the nine did not return to give thanks?

When have you been so excited that you forgot to give thanks?

When do we forget to thank other people?

When do we forget to thank God?

4. What do we know about this one Samaritan man?

Why do you think he used a loud voice?

Why was it significant that he was Samaritan?

5. What do you think happened to the ungrateful 9?
They were probably healed just like the Samaritan. That's the character of God – he sends sun and rain on the just and the unjust (Matthew 5:43-48).

What blessings did the ungrateful men miss?

What blessings do we miss when we are ungrateful?
Contrast Ebenezer Scrooge to the Samaritan man. Would you rather have money with misery, or faith and health with rejoicing!

6. When someone dies unexpectedly, their loved ones often feel like they left important things unsaid. Who do you need to thank today?

*Let nothing disturb you,
Nothing dismay you;
All things pass,
But God never changes.
Whoever has God lacks nothing:
If you have only God, you have more than enough.
--Teresa of Avila (1515-82)*

† **The big question** *If you ask only one question, let this be it. Allow at least 20 minutes. Go around the circle and give each person an opportunity to answer. It's okay if they pass, but at least they get a chance to respond.*

What is an aspect of your life where gratitude does not come naturally? What would help you remember to be thankful?

Resources

Bible notes

- This story occurred near the border of Galilee (Jesus' home state) and Samaria. Relations were tense between these two groups.
- Leviticus 13 gave lengthy descriptions regarding skin diseases like leprosy: "the person with such an infectious disease must wear torn clothes, let his hair be unkempt, cover the lower part of his face and cry out, 'Unclean! Unclean!'" As long as he has the infection he remains unclean. He must live alone; he must live outside the camp." (Lev. 13:45-46)
- Leviticus 13 describes how to diagnose and treat skin diseases. Leviticus 14 describes how to be restored to the community by a priest if a skin disease passed. (See also Deut. 24:8.) In sending the men to the priest, Jesus respected biblical teaching.

Prayer ideas –

Give thanks.

Pray for thankful hearts.

Kid-friendly activity. *An activity designed to help kids and adults grow in faith together. Do this first, then dismiss the kids so the adults can talk.*

Option 1 – Make thank you cards to send to people outside your group.

Option 2 – Thank you gifts. Bring 3 x 5 note cards or individually wrapped mints. Give each person 1-3 of the items. Ask them to give their items to another group member, and to thank that group member for something as they give the gift.

Read Luke 17:11-19 aloud. Help the group re-tell the story in their own words.

Why is it important to praise God?

Why is it important to say thank you?

Why do we forget to thank God and other people?

What would help us remember to have a grateful heart?



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LIFE Group Guide

Luke 17 – Give thanks

By John Grant (jgrant@collegehills.org)

The theme for this meeting: **Be thankful.**

Luke 17 tells the story of 10 lepers who were healed by Jesus, but only one gave thanks. A great story for us to consider for Thanksgiving weekend.

Remember to return your grocery boxes to the lobby by Dec. 10. If you have several heavy boxes to deliver, save your back – park by the door and get one of the carts from the Depot.

Jeff, Charles, Darrell and I are meeting with LG leaders in small groups to get feedback on ideas for 2009. One possible meeting time will be Wednesday nights in December. We have pushed back our training to January so that we can get your ideas on future leaders to invite.

Leadership tip: One of the best ways to re-vitalize your group is to add a new person. It gives everyone an opportunity to meet a new friend, and it helps people consider how they are responding during group discussions. If you need help finding a guest to invite, call me or check the weekly guest list – Lorrie Petree e-mails it to you on Wednesday.

Relate *Use a few to introduce the theme, check everyone's spiritual pulse, and "break the ice." No right or wrong answers – maybe goofy but not wrong! Look for opportunities to affirm and encourage through these questions.*

❖ What is your most creative idea for left-over turkey?

❖ What is your favorite float from the Thanksgiving parades?

❖ What is your dream for our LIFE group? How could our group improve next year?

The people with good answers to this question are your best choices for future LG leaders. Put them to work and bring them to training!