

With total pledges of \$2,699,718.55 from our C.T. leaders, the mark has been set—and ***we are on our way!*** Our church family will present their written pledges next week on Commitment Sunday, November 16th. God is so good!

Love and blessings always!

Pastor Heard

Take the Land, Build the Dream, Change the World!

Part 29: Feel the Passion!

Texts:

Ecclesiastes 9:7 (The Message) - "Seize life!"

Hebrews 4:14-16 (NKJV) - "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. [15] For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. [16] Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

The thesis for this series: To move God to do extraordinary things on our behalf, we must do something extraordinary ourselves!

Luke 17:11-19 (NKJV) - "Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. [12] Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. [13] And they lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" [14] So when He saw them, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. [15] And one of

them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, [16] and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. [17] So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? [18] Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?" [19] And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."

Too Grateful NOT to Say, "Thanks!"

- A. If you continually focus on negative issues, your outlook on life will be affected, without even realizing what has happened.
1. The more I listen to the news, the less I want to hear about what's happening around me—and that's not good. We all need to be informed.
 2. Because bad news sells, events are usually presented in a negative way.
 - a. Psychologically speaking, news is presented in this manner to make you feel somewhat threatened by what you hear.
 - b. It's a proven fact that people will work twice as hard to keep what they already have, than to gain what they do not yet possess.
 3. Think of the news reports in the last few days: ISIS; terrorism; Iran's development of a nuclear weapon; the economy; mass murders; school shootings; etc.
 4. Because we are a fallen race, living in a fallen world, and ruled by a fallen lord, we must all deal with issues that are upsetting. The Book of Job verifies that a man born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble. Everyone experiences a multitude of difficult situations.
 5. Without thinking, you can develop a negative attitude that leads to a loss of happiness, a loss of achievement, or a loss of accomplishment. If a situation doesn't immediately become worse, you still feel as though it's about to happen. We are all prone to expect the worst rather than the

best and to spend time and energy worrying about the bad, rather than enjoying the good.

6. It's so easy to become like my friend's grandfather. Arriving in Wisconsin from Eastern Europe, he thoroughly enjoyed eating Limburger cheese. If you're not familiar with this cheese, it's really nasty smelling stuff. Being from the old country, he was also very proud of his big, bushy mustache. One day while eating his favorite cheese, some of it stuck on his mustache. When he went to the kitchen, he began to complain, "There's something that stinks in this kitchen!" From there he went to the sitting room and again complained about the terrible odor. Moving to the bedroom, it wasn't long before he smelled something bad in that room. Going to the porch, he finally decided, "The whole world stinks!" Of course, the problem was not the whole world, but what was right under his nose!

7. **Joke:** The Funeral of Boudreaux's Wife

At the funeral service of Boudreaux's wife, who had just passed, the pallbearers were carrying the casket from the church. When one of them accidentally bumped into a wall and jarred the casket, they heard a faint moan. Opening the casket, they discovered that his wife was still alive! After living another 10 years, she died. The ceremony was held at the same church and once again, the pallbearers were carrying the casket to the hearse. As they approached the door, Boudreaux called out, "Watch out for dat wall, y'all. Watch out for dat wall!"

8. **Joke:** Or you can become *really* positive and expect good things to happen, like the cat who went to heaven.

When God met the cat at the gate, He said, "You have been a good cat all these years, so you can have anything you desire. All you have to do is ask."

"Well," said the cat, "I lived all my life on a farm and had to sleep on hardwood floors."

"Say no more," said God, and instantly a fluffy pillow appeared.

A few days later, six mice were killed in a tragic accident and went straight to heaven. God met them at the gate with the same offer given the cat of anything they desired.

"All our lives," said the mice, "we've had to run. Cats, dogs, and women with brooms chased us. If we had roller skates, we wouldn't have to run anymore."

God said He could take care of that and instantly, each mouse was fitted with a beautiful pair of tiny roller skates.

A week later God checked on the cat and found him asleep on the fluffy pillow. Gently He nudged the cat and then asked, "How are you doing? Are you happy here?"

"Never been happier," said the cat, stretching and yawning. "And those meals on wheels you've been sending me are great!"

Even heaven is better if you have the right attitude!

B. The truth is, most of us are doing much better than our grandfathers or great-grandfathers.

1. Being poor is a relative thing. The poor in Africa or India consider the poor in America to be rich!
2. My early childhood was spent on my grandmother's farm. It's true that we didn't have the same conveniences that people have today, such as a car. We raised our own food—and I mean almost ALL of it, but we were happy. We weren't poor, we were 'po.'
3. **1 Timothy 6:6-9 (NKJV)** - "Now godliness with contentment is great gain. [7] For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. [8] And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. [9] But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition."

C. I love this story from the Bible about the ten lepers.

1. Leprosy is a horrible disease that ravages the body by affecting the nerve endings and causing certain areas to become numb. While it was apparently very contagious in biblical days, 80 percent of people today have an immunity to the disease.
2. In the Old Testament, leprosy depicted the effects of sin upon a person's life and its destruction of our spiritual sensitivity. Paul spoke of those whose consciences had been seared with a hot iron, meaning they had sinned for so long, they no longer felt any remorse for wrongdoing.
 - a. Man with leprosy:
<http://m.ajtmh.org/content/81/2/189/F1.expansion.html>
 - b. Disfigured hands:
<http://asylumelectica.com/malady/archives/leprosy.htm>
 - c. Ulcerated foot:
<http://asylumelectica.com/malady/archives/leprosy.htm>
3. A person with leprosy could no longer live with those who were healthy. By losing their place in society, the ten men in this story could not be with their families, hold their children, or embrace their wives—all because they were lepers.
4. Jesus healed all ten of them, but not in the expected way. He sent them to be examined by the priest.
 - a. A leper was required to be examined and evaluated by a priest before being declared as healed and allowed to rejoin society.
 - b. But considering their pitiful condition, even such a command could have seemed cruel. Jesus instructed the men to walk from a village miles away and be examined by the temple priests in Jerusalem.
 - c. Had CNN, FOX, MSNBC, or any of the other news services heard about Jesus' command, they would have harshly condemned Him for being so uncaring.

5. While on the way to see the priest, all ten men were healed. In other words, Jesus' healing touch had halted the progression of the disease—dead in its tracks! As they moved forward in faith, their fever broke, the wounds were healed, the sores disappeared, and their condition was immediately changed!
6. Nine of them were thinking, "I'm going to get that confirmation from the priest and then I'm going straight home to my family! I can't wait to take charge of my company again and rejoin the golf club!"
7. But one of the men said, "What are you guys talking about? I'm going back to thank the One who did this for me!" And he quickly left to find Jesus and say, "Thank You!"
8. What makes the story even more interesting is the fact that nine of the men were Hebrews. As Jesus pointed out, one was a Samaritan. Guess which one returned to give thanks? Not the nine Hebrew church-goers, but the Samaritan. Those who knew better failed to do what should have been done!
9. The result: the Samaritan was made WHOLE. Not only was the disease arrested, he was immediately cured of all the deformities he had suffered, such as the loss of fingers and toes. The other lepers were healed, but the Samaritan was restored and made whole!

D. What does it mean to be thankful?

1. In Hebrew, the word for 'thanks' is Yadah; or 'to hold out the hand.' The implication is that we give something in response to what we have been given.
2. That's what one leper did; he came back with open hands. The result? Jesus made him whole! There is a difference in being healed and made whole. The other nine kept their disfigured hands, feet, saddle nose and other deformities, but one man was made completely whole.

3. **Psalm 107:19-22 (NKJV)** - "Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, And He saved them out of their distresses. [20] He sent His word and healed them, And delivered them from their destructions. [21] Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness, And for His wonderful works to the children of men! [22] Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, And declare His works with rejoicing."

E. How to be thankful:

1. Focus on your potential rather than your present condition.
 - a. I would rather be Joseph living in a dungeon, than one of his brothers living in Canaan.
 - b. Why? Because Joseph was on his way to the throne and his brothers were on the way to a famine.
2. Count your blessings rather than your problems.
 - a. **1 Corinthians 5:18 (NIV)** - "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."
3. Correct your thinking.
 - a. Life is a reflection of what we think, not what happens to us. Thoughts determine our actual life.
 - b. **Proverbs 23:7 (NKJV)** - "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he."
 - c. **Philippians 4:8 (NKJV)** - "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy— meditate on these things."
 - d. **2 Corinthians 10:3-6 (NKJV)** - "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. [4] For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, [5] casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought

into captivity to the obedience of Christ, [6] and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.”

4. Trust God.

a. Don't allow present circumstances to affect your beliefs about God or His commitment to you and your welfare.

b. **Job 13:15 (NKJV)** - “Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.”

F. How to say, “Thank you” in different languages:

1. Afrikaans (South African) - Baie dankie (buyer dung key)
2. Japanese - Arigato
3. German - Danke sehr
4. Spanish - Gracias
5. French - Merci
6. Swahili - Asante sana
7. Russian - Spasibo
8. Arabic - Shukran
9. Swedish - Tack
10. Hebrew - Yasher koach (Koy ach)
11. Philippines - Maraming Salamat
12. Thai - Kop kun maak
13. Nigeria - Modupe
14. Hindi (India) - Sukria
15. Korean - Kamsa hamaida
16. Chinese - Xie xie (Shieh Shieh)
17. Ugandan - Waybale nyo
18. South India - Nun ni
19. Rwanda - Murakoze
20. No matter our spoken language, we can still say, “Thank you!” Even if you're deaf and unable to speak, you can!!!