

The first recorded Thanksgiving feast in the United States was in 1621 at the village of Plymouth, Massachusetts. In September 1620, a small ship called the Mayflower left Plymouth, England. The ship carried 102 passengers; pilgrims in search of religious freedoms, and the possibility of land and financial prosperity in the New World. It's a familiar story.

But did you know that the pilgrims hold an important place in church history? The pilgrims were Calvinists who had separated themselves from the Church of England. They were reformers, holding fast to a copy of the Geneva Bible as they boarded the Mayflower. It was the pilgrims that brought God's Word to American shores and subsequently laid the foundation for what was to become the United States.

Luke 17:11-17

As Jesus continued on toward Jerusalem, he reached the border between Galilee and Samaria. As he entered a village there, ten lepers stood at a distance, crying out, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!"

He looked at them and said, "Go show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed of their leprosy.

One of them, when he saw that he was healed, came back to Jesus, shouting, "Praise God!" He fell to the ground at Jesus' feet, thanking him for what he had done. This man was a Samaritan.

Jesus asked, "Didn't I heal ten men? Where are the other nine? Has no one returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?" And Jesus said to the man, "Stand up and go. Your faith has healed you."

Jesus continued on toward Jerusalem: to be arrested, tortured, crucified. Knows what awaits, but continues toward Jeru anyway.

(on way to Jeru) He reached the border between Galilee and Samaria: Jews hated Samaritans = not Jews – half-breeds. The Jews esp. leaders/Pharisees would not even travel thru Samaria, but would go around the city, preferring to go out of way rather than thru. But not Jesus. For J loved all people, came for all people. So He goes thru Sam.

As He entered a village there: ten people w/leprosy (or some other skin disease). They stood at a distance as they were required to. They were also required as they saw people in the distance coming their way to shout out "unclean- stay away, keep your distance, unclean!" But these lepers cry out, "Jesus, master, teach, Jesus sir, have mercy on us!" Obviously, they had heard of Jesus and heard He was in the area; and had heard that this teacher was different. They had heard stories of Him doing miracles, of healing people and of being a man of compassion. "Have mercy on us."

What they heard was true: Jesus came for the rich & the poor, the healthy & the sick, the popular & the outcast, the religious and the non-religious, the good & the sinner.

He looked at them and said, "Go show yourselves to the priests.": Why did J say this?

Leviticus 14:2-4

"The following instructions are for those seeking ceremonial purification from a skin disease. Those who have been healed must be brought to the priest, who will examine them at a place outside the camp. If the priest finds that someone has been healed of a serious skin disease, he will perform a purification ceremony.

But it does not appear that J had healed them yet, He merely instructed them to go to the priest. They show a measure of faith for it appears they obeyed J's command. And as they went, they were cleansed of their leprosy.

One of them, when he saw that he was healed, came back to Jesus, shouting, "Praise God!" He fell to the ground at Jesus' feet, thanking him for what he had done.

Then Luke adds, oh by the way, This man was a Samaritan:
The Samaritan came back to give thanks to God and to Jesus.

Jesus asked, "Didn't I heal ten men? Where are the other nine? Has no one returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?"

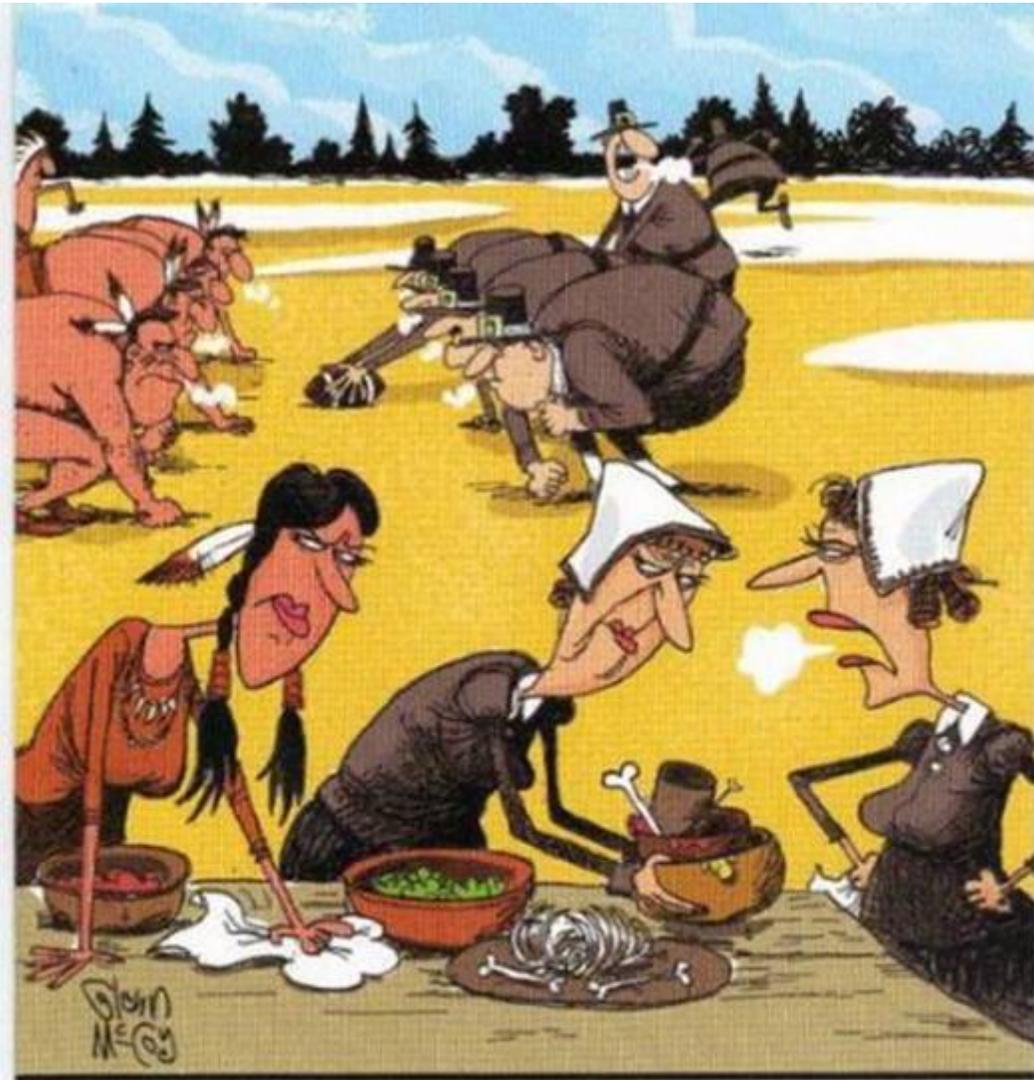
Once again J must be disappointed with His own people's lack of acceptance and faith. Ever been in a crisis and prayed, "L if help me, I promise I will... go church more, be more committed follower, etc."? L got you thru the crisis, but you not keep your promise. Only one returns to give thanks and glory to God.

Why do we give thanks to God? It is part of our worship and praise and showing worth to God. We do it because He is God, good, faithful, His love endures forever, He is great, He is near, the wonderful deeds He has done, mighty miracles, skillful Creator of all things, graciously answered prayer, it is His will that we be thankful in all circumstances, He has put wonderful people in our lives, we don't want to take Him and His blessings for granted, pleases God when we give thanks.

Only one out of 10 comes back, but something happened that this Samaritan man never forget. Something that changed his life forever; even more than the others who had also been healed of leprosy.

And Jesus said to the man, "Stand up and go. Your faith has healed you."

By coming back to give thanks this man has a personal encounter with the C. It is an interesting word that J uses here. The Gr Wd translated healed means saved, delivered, made whole. His faith or his conviction of the truthfulness of God and his reliance upon JC saved this man physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Jesus was not so much concerned about being thanked as He was about the men's understanding of what had happened. The other nine went off, free from leprosy but not necessarily free from sin through the salvation Jesus could offer. This one man was freed, so Jesus sent him on his way with the knowledge that his *faith* had made him well. He not only had a restored body, his soul had been restored as well.



"I HOPE THIS DOESN'T TURN
INTO A TRADITION."