

Series - Awed by His Love

Date/s - 03 January 2016

Topic - A grateful heart draws us to God

Speaker/s - Ps Lionel Goh

**Welcome** [15 min]

You may want to look up the following websites for *icebreakers* suitable for your cell.

[www.thesource4ym.com/games/](http://www.thesource4ym.com/games/)

[www.christianitytoday.com/smallgroups/articles/icebreakersbeyond.html](http://www.christianitytoday.com/smallgroups/articles/icebreakersbeyond.html) < go to LEAD, click on ICEBREAKERS >

**Worship** [15 min]

You may select songs like "Thank You Lord" (for the trials that come my way), "I will Sing (Don Moen - Habakkuk 3:17-19)" and "Amazing Grace"

**Spiritual Objectives**

At the end of the cell discussion, cell members will:

1. Remember God and His blessings.
2. Commit to have a heart of thanksgiving and draw close to God.

**Word** [45 min]

Pastor Lionel starts by saying that a grateful heart draws us to God and that there will be a new season of Grace and we will see people having spiritual breakthrough and growth. We will also see relationships being restored and physical bodies getting better. This is because God has a mandate and a purpose in this House.

The big picture is to create in RiverLife Church a greenhouse that is effective for raising sons and daughters who are able to reveal Father's glory to our generation. The theme for 2016 is First Love according to 1 John 4:19. The inheritance is given to us and we are to grow in love. 2016 will see the strengthening of the foundation for First Love as we are to do church as a family.

Reading from Luke 17:11-19, Pastor gave the context of the healing of the ten lepers. This was a month before our Lord's crucifixion and he was on his way to Jerusalem at the border between Samaria and Galilee. In the distance (as they were an 'unclean' people), the Lepers called out to Jesus, "Master, have mercy on us." Jesus is a man of honour, power and authority. The lepers believed that He can heal them so they shouted "Have mercy on us".

First, the lepers were in a pathetic state. They knew they needed someone in authority and power to get out from the pathetic state they were in. In OT times and according to Lev 13:45 and Numbers 5:2, people with such diseases would be ostracized because of its contagious nature. In the OT, Moses' sister Miriam & King Uzziah were suddenly struck with leprosy. The lepers were also desperate. They heard Jesus had restored the blind and deaf and wanted Jesus to heal them. However, Jesus simply told them to go and show themselves to the priests. He did not pray for their healing directly. Jesus wanted them to exercise their faith and for them to be involved by taking a step of faith.

Leviticus 13 and 14 shows God's law on how these people ought to be treated. This shows that Jesus came not to deal away with the law but to fulfill it and He wanted the laws in the OT to be followed. The priests have been appointed to certify them clean. The two lessons we can take away are:

1) When we are in need, we can always turn to Jesus for help.  
In times of trouble and sickness, do not cope with it on your own but rather bring your problems to Jesus.  
Although there may not be immediate answer, the Lord hears and answers.

2) Even when we face difficulty, we can still exercise faith and obey his prompting

Only one out of the ten lepers, a Samaritan, went back to give thanks. In Matthew 26:6, the hopeless Samaritan met with God's power as His presence touched Him and He was healed. He understood about the One who had performed the miracle and went back to Jesus with his heart filled with joy and thanksgiving, giving Jesus the highest praise and honour. Did nine of the lepers forget about Jesus? Do we see God as an ATM dispensing machine? While Christ could heal without condition He expects us to be thankful people (Luke 17: 18-19).

The next two lessons here are:

3) Jesus expects his people to be thankful for His gifts of mercy and grace.

4) When we have a grateful heart, we draw closer to God, experience deeper grace.

Dr Luke had used 3 Greek words to differentiate the kind of healing the lepers received:

- a. Luke 17: 14, 17 - Katharizo > cleansed, purified
- b. Luke 17: 15 - iaomai > healed physically
- c. Luke 17: 19 - sozo > saved, made whole

How can we develop a grateful heart? We can choose to:

- Focus on positive things (Philippians 4:8, Habbakkuk 3:17-18)
- Be thankful in all circumstances (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)
- bless God for all He has done (Psalm 103:1-5)

Let's start with what Philippians 4:8 says and take charge of our heart's attitude.

### Discussion Questions

1. **Gratitude begins with remembering the Lord. What are His blessings in 2015 on:** [10 mins]
  - Your spiritual journey
  - Your family – parents, spouse and children
  - Your career, academic study
  - Your health, finance & others
  - Your church family

**Leader's notes:** Get members to share about their blessings in 2015 as well as blessings for/from the church family (cell members are part of the church family). Also affirm, appreciate and encourage those who have connected their lives with one another, increasing faith, love and joy among cell members. As an option, write down all our blessings briefly and put them in a box and have members take turn to read out the blessings to the group.

2. **Let's read Luke 17:11-19 and tell if you could identify with the lepers' condition in your own life. What did you do to seek help, solace or respite back then?** [10 mins]

**Leader's notes:** Were there past experiences in your life where you could identify with similar circumstances or conditions the lepers were facing? Were you in a state of distress? Share briefly what was most difficult for you then? How was it overcome?

3 In the list below are those who were stricken with leprosy recorded in the bible. What might possibly be their heart conditions?

- King Uzziah in 2 Chron 26:16-21,
- Naaman in 2 Kings 5:1-27,
- Miriam in Numbers 12:5-10,
- Man with leprosy in Matthew 8:2
- Ten Lepers in Luke 17:11-19

How would you describe your heart condition today? [10 mins]

**Leader's notes:** First, refer to the scriptural verses and consider what might be the heart conditions of each. For example, faith and belief (eg Naaman) and the significance in being humble (King Uzziah) etc.. In times of OT and NT, having leprosy is likened to have been cursed and treated as outcasts, needing the priests to certify them clean in order for them to return to 'society'. From the list, some received healing and some did not. Compare this with the Samaritan leper who was the only one to return to thank Jesus for the healing. This indicates that a grateful heart attracts the compassion of God. While the lepers were pathetic and despondent, they humbled themselves and acknowledged Jesus' authority and believed (faith) in His ability to restore them. With only the Samaritan leper returning with a thankful heart, the Greek word 'sozo' (saved, made whole) used, goes to show how deeper healing takes place when our heart posture is right. Reflect and ask God to examine your heart.

4. How can we develop a grateful heart? Share one practical way on how to take charge of your heart attitude today. [10 mins]

**Leader's notes:** Pastor Lionel shared that a grateful heart draws us towards God. Have members respond on what or how they plan to take charge and intentionally choose to be more thankful this year in the following areas:

- Focus on positive things (Philippians 4:8, Habbakkuk 3:17-18)
- Be thankful in all circumstances (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)
- bless God for all He has done (Psalm 103:1-5)

Close this by pairing up or in groups of three to pray for one another.

**Works** [10 min]

Let's pray:

1. All Riverlifers to remember God and His blessings, always having a heart of thanksgiving and seek to draw close to Him.

**Announcements**

1. **21 DAYS OF FASTING & PRAYER**

16 Jan to 5 Feb (21 consecutive days) | Faith Chapel

- Mondays to Fridays: 8–10pm
- Saturdays: 6–8pm • Sundays: 2–4pm

For more information, please email [riverlifepayer@gmail.com](mailto:riverlifepayer@gmail.com).

2. **WATER BAPTISM CLASS**

Sat, 23 Jan | 9.30am-3.30pm | Faith Chapel

Register at the Information Counter by Sun, 17 Jan

3. **PRECEPT INTRODUCTORY TEA SESSION**

Sun, 24 Jan | 2.30-5pm | Victory Chapel

Registration opens on 10 Jan