

Thanksgiving (CA)

October 12, 2026



Behold, so powerful is faith, to obtain all it wants of God, that God considers it done before the asking.

– Martin Luther –

“The Ten Lepers,” 1521

PROCLAMATION POINTS

The following are some thoughts and questions to be used for a text study on the weekly lessons, or for jump-starting the imagination of the preacher and hearer in preparing for the proclamation event.

Deuteronomy 8:1–10

The author of Deuteronomy posits that the hardships Israel suffered in the wilderness was to test them, to see what was in their hearts. The Lord God demanded and still demands singular loyalty from his people. This is spelled out very clearly in the First Commandments, “You shall have no other gods before me.”

- *How does the First Commandment set the tone and expectation for the other nine?*
- *How would people today respond to the notion that God tests his people to see where their hearts really are? Would modern people balk at that idea, or do they understand God’s intention?*

The potential problem for Israel was the same potential problem for believers today, namely that the more we possess, the less we trust in our Creator. The accumulation of wealth and possessions causes human beings to forget about the goodness of the Lord and rely on ourselves instead.

- *How does any success we have or any thing we have gained, come from the Lord God?*
- *Why is it so important to remember where we came from so that we know where we are going?*

The historian mentions that “man does not live by bread alone,” and all that Israel suffered on their journey to the Promised Land was to remind them of God’s providence. God gave them manna to sustain them, but they hoarded it and it rotted.

- *Why did Satan test Jesus with the challenge to turn rocks into bread? What was Jesus’ response? (Matthew 4:4) How did Jesus succeed whereas the Israelites failed in this regard?*

Psalms 67

In this thanksgiving psalm, the psalmist gives thanks for a bountiful harvest with hope of continued bounty in the future. This song is like a sung prayer where the singer invokes God’s blessing but at the same time acknowledges it. “Let all the peoples praise you, O God,” he sings.

- *In what ways is this psalm a confession of faith?*
- *What does it mean to you that God is fair and just?*

Philippians 4:6–20

Do not be anxious about anything, St. Paul wrote from prison. If a guy who was in prison, having been persecuted for the faith, having endured a “thorn in the flesh,” and

having been abandoned and criticized by many, can say that, then perhaps we ought to listen.

- *Why is life so anxiety producing? How does faith address all of this uncertainty and worry?*

Paul encouraged the Christians at Philippi to turn all their worries over to the Lord, that he would grant them peace. Peace is not just an absence of conflict; it is an abiding sense of well-being, even when all isn’t actually well. Not only are we to give everything over to God in prayer, but we are also to give thanks in all circumstances (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

- *Do you find it easy or difficult to give thanks for the trials and sufferings in your life? Why?*

Finally, Paul commended the Christians to keep their eyes on “whatever” (hosos in the Greek) is of God: things that are true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable, excellent, and worthy of praise. These things will keep us going when life gets rough!

- *When you need a good pep talk, does focusing on the things and ways of the Lord help you? If so, how?*

Luke 17:11–19

This story of the ten lepers asking Jesus for healing is a familiar one. It is the appointed Gospel text for Thanksgiving every year. We often focus on the lack of lepers who returned to give thanks to Jesus, but wasn’t it their faith that brought them to him in the first place? Apparently they believed he could do something for them, so they approached him and asked for his mercy. They did not assume that they were worthy of his assistance, they simply trusted in his power.

- *Could Jesus have avoided the lepers and been justified? Why?*
- *What made him take the risk of going near them AND interacting with them?*

Once they were healed, they hurried on to the temple to receive the proper cleansing from the priest so that they might be restored to the faith community. Jesus instructed them to do so! But one man received a second blessing. He chose to return to Jesus and express his heartfelt thanks. This one was a Samaritan.

- *What is St. Luke trying to convey by reporting that the only leper who returned to give thanks was an “enemy” of Israel?*
- *In what ways do we receive a second blessing when we live a life of gratitude?*
- *How do faith and thankfulness go hand in hand? Can there be one without the other? If so, what does that look like?*