

Gratitude determine your altitude

A time to reflect

Have you ever been so excited to bless someone, just waiting for the smile on their face letting you know just how happy it made them feel? Not long ago I was anticipating my time with this young couple. They were flying in from a different country, didn't have much, so I really wanted to bless them. Everything had to be perfect, down to the smallest detail...a fruit basket in their room, bath products & goodies, chocolates on their pillow... I wanted them to feel so special!

Their wish was our desire, so we took them out to an amusement park, then to St Augustine, took them out to eat, showed them around, pampered them, the list goes on. I just wanted to see that smile of happiness and pleasure on their face. The truth be known, I only saw expressions of indifference sometimes boredom as if it was not appreciated, simply expected. I cannot hide the fact that it made me sad, but it also forced me to reflect on my own attitudes toward God and others.

Do I sometimes overlook God's acts of kindness towards me? Do I fail to tell Him or others a simple thank you? As I remember the pleasure I felt in giving and blessing, but also the sadness I experienced when the blessing was not acknowledged nor appreciated, I came to the revelation that the Father was thrilled and excited to bless His children, but was probably often met with indifference and ingratitude.

The power of gratitude

Paul warns the believers in 2 Tim. 3:2 that a sign of the end times is unthankfulness. Have you noticed that it is listed right between rebellion and unholiness, and my friends he was not talking about unbelievers! No wonder the apostle Paul urged us again and again to remain thankful. In everything give thanks for this is the will of God (1 Thess. 5:18).

Do you want to know how to please God? Cultivate an attitude of gratitude. Psalm 69:30 tells us that Praise & thanksgiving please God more than sacrifices or offerings. Gratitude pleases God because it is an expression of faith, and faith pleases God.

In Luke 17:11-17 we find 10 lepers who pleaded with Jesus for their healing. Have you ever seen lepers? I have! They might be walking disfigured, without a limb or a nose, covered with infectious boils, their flesh eaten up by the disease. Jesus told them to go and show themselves to the priests, and half way through the journey (quite a long journey between Samaria & Jerusalem) they realized they were healed, their skin was clear, the boils gone, once again they had feelings running through their body.

One out of the 10 lepers made the decision to walk those long miles back to give thanks to Jesus. There is here a lesson for us to learn. Jesus asked: "Were they not ten **cleansed**? Were there not any found who returned to give thanks to God except this foreigner?" And Jesus said to the one: "Arise go your way, your faith has made you **whole!**"

You see the other nine were healed, cleansed, but still walking without a limb or a nose, but the one whose faith was perfected through his giving of thanks received wholeness. His nose, his toes and his fingers grew back. It wasn't that God played favorites, Jesus said "YOUR faith has made you whole, not MY will nor MY power !

When we choose to be thankful (even before we see the answer) we not only put a smile on God's face (and people 's too!) but we position ourselves for greater blessings and miracles.