

Why Expect Thanks?

[Transcript of teaching given on 17th March 2019 in Canberra]

Why expect thanks or praise when you've only done what's expected of you?

Let me read a passage for you. This is Luke 17:9-10.

*Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'*²

Here, Jesus is describing a landlord coming in from work and having his servants prepare his dinner. The question Jesus asks is whether the master should thank the servants for their supply of a meal.

I'll read the verses in a number of other translations so you can get a better understanding of what Jesus was saying.

*He does not thank the servant just because he did what he was ordered to do, does he? So you too, when you have done everything that was assigned and commanded you, say, 'We are unworthy servants [undeserving of praise or a reward, for we have not gone beyond our obligation]; we have merely done what we ought to do.'*³

*Is he grateful and does he praise the servant because he did what he was ordered to do? Even so on your part, when you have done everything that was assigned and commanded you, say, 'We are unworthy servants [possessing no merit, for we have not gone beyond our obligation]; we have [merely] done what was our duty to do.'*⁴

Hopefully, something has twigged in you as I've read these passages.

Finally, I will read it in the Passion translation:

So learn this lesson: After doing all that is commanded of you, simply say, 'We are mere servants, undeserving of special praise, for we are just doing what is expected of us and fulfilling our duties.'

Now, this was a teaching of Jesus. It's Kingdom teaching because that's what he taught. It's pre-New Covenant because he hadn't died yet, and Holy Spirit hadn't been released, but he taught Kingdom principles all the way through in His teaching. So he is actually talking to those who are listening and saying, "Why do you expect to be thanked? Why do you expect to receive the praise of others when you've just been doing your duty?" This is a Kingdom principle he's trying to get across, using their example.

So as we're learning to live in the Kingdom, we have to ask ourselves, if that's a Kingdom principle that Jesus taught, why do we have to be thanked? Or more importantly, why do we have to expect people to thank us? Why do we expect people to praise us? If it's a Kingdom principle, it means that we don't need the thanks and the praise, basically because we don't deserve it, as we're only doing what Kingdom citizens are supposed to be doing. We're supposed to be servants, and if we're serving other people, we're doing what we're supposed to be doing, and we shouldn't expect to be thanked.

Now, one of my bug-bears is mothers, grandmothers and school teachers forcing children to say 'please' and 'thankyou'. The reason it's done is that it's couched in the fact that we are teaching children to be thankful because they need to learn to be thankful. But because it's done by these people, it actually

1 – M omits *him*; NU omits the rest of v. 9

2 – NKJV

3 – AMP

4 – AMPC

becomes ingrained within themselves that other people have to say 'thankyou', and they have to say 'please', and if they don't, then there's something wrong with that person if they don't do it. Because they keep saying, "You must say please", "You must say thankyou", somehow it gets into their psyche, it becomes a you-understood statement that if somebody doesn't say 'thankyou' or 'please', then they're not right. What it leads to then is, from my observation, that if people don't say 'please', or more importantly, they don't say 'thankyou', you lose your self-respect or your self-identity or your self-importance, and you feel belittled or mistreated or under-valued because you have this notion that people must say 'thankyou'.

But Jesus said, that in the Kingdom, if you're only doing what you're supposed to be doing, there's no need to expect to be thanked. Now, if somebody does thankyou, it's a blessing, it's a bit of an extra. Acceptance of this idea that people must say 'thankyou', leads us to wanting the praise of men, so that if people don't praise us or they don't thank us, then we lose self-esteem, and if we don't get it, we feel flat. This is my observation of watching the whole thing through over many, many years.

So if it's a Kingdom principle that we shouldn't expect to be thanked because we're doing what we're supposed to be doing – it doesn't matter what it is, whether it's cleaning toilets or mowing the lawn or shearing sheep or building houses, whatever it is – we shouldn't need to be thanked because we're only doing what we're supposed to be doing.

You see, one of our biggest problems is the praise of men. We have to fight that – I have to – I've had to, especially. We look for the acceptance and the praise of men, and we get that by them saying 'thankyou' and by praising us for what we do. But in the Kingdom, that's not supposed to be the case. It is good to thank the Lord and it is good to be thankful. But if in our heart – and remember that in the spiritual realm, it's all about the heart – we are really wanting someone to say 'thankyou' or really wanting someone to praise us for what we're doing, and if we don't get it, we feel flat or rejected, then our heart is wrong. We don't actually get that picture of speaking erroneously because it's become part of us from the time we were little, and we've been told to be thankful and to look for thanks. But we don't really need thanks! We only look for thanks because we want it. In the Aboriginal culture – and I don't know whether it's right through the entire nation of Aboriginals or just in certain tribes – the children don't have to say 'thankyou' because it's a matter of the heart. They know if children are thankful or they're not, and so they train them to have a thankful attitude.

When I've worked in the bush fire brigade, in the rescue squad, with teams of shearers, while hay-carting, working in the workshop, and when I'm working as a team with men, there's actually no 'please' and 'thankyou'. There might be in the city but not out in 'the bush'. Because you're working as a team, you know that a person is thankful. So if you need a spanner, you just say, "Ooi. Chuck us the SAE 1-inch spanner". Most of the time you don't say 'thankyou'. You just grab the spanner and get on with your work. You don't have to say 'please' because you're working as a team, and you know that the team is working nicely together. You know when somebody has got their 'nose out of joint', and you know when someone is feeling aggressive. It's not about having to say 'please' and 'thankyou' – you don't have to do it.

So it's all a matter of the heart in the Kingdom, and in the Spirit realm. We know that from the Old Testament. Remember when Samuel was looking for the son of Jesse to anoint as king? He looked at the first one and said, "Oh, this is a handsome bloke. Just the sort of person to be king". God said to him, "No. He's got the wrong heart". And that's why it ended up being David, because it was said that he was a man after God's own heart. It's all about the heart, and that's what Jesus taught. Murder and adultery, it's all about the heart. So it's not wrong for you to thank people. It's not wrong to say 'please', but in the Kingdom we have to learn not to want praise, thanks or pleases because we're only doing what we're supposed to be doing.

By the way, do you understand what 'please' means? We've been told by our mums and by our school teachers that it's the magic word. But the origin of 'please' is: 'if it pleases you'. It's not a magic word to allow you to get whatever you want. By saying 'please', the original intent of that expression is 'if it pleases you, will you do this for me?' So you have the right to say "No", because it doesn't please you. For instance, having to spend \$100 on a child because they've been taught that 'please' is the magic word,

but it's so they get their own way. It's not!

So we have to be retrained in the Kingdom. We need to be re-programmed because our culture and our home life and our schooling and 'the school of hard knocks' through life has taught us things that are totally out of line with the Kingdom. Basically, if it's out of line with the Kingdom, it's unrighteous because the Kingdom works in righteousness. The Lord taught me that personally years ago with a 'kick in the pants'. Legalism looks at what's right, the Kingdom looks at what is righteous. Focusing on what is right and wrong is living out of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, which we were not supposed to eat from. We're supposed to eat from the Tree of Life. Doing what's righteous is from the Tree of Life because you're actually doing what Father wants.

So there it is. Have a think about it. We're mere servants, undeserving of special praise, for we are just doing what is expected of us and fulfilling our duties. So it doesn't matter what your duty is, if you're doing it, if you choose to do it or even if you're forced to do it, it's still your duty, and as a servant, as a son of the Kingdom, you shouldn't expect praise for it. If you do get praise, that's a bonus. Otherwise, you should be content, because all your joy, all your satisfaction should come from Father, not from any other source.

It's a hard ask, but that's the way it's supposed to be.

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17-3-2019

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