

# Meeting the Ups and Downs of Life – Week 21

## Lesson 7.1 – When We Recover from a Serious Illness

### Goals

- To learn to thank God when we receive spiritual blessings
- To learn how to encourage others to thank God for the gift of physical and mental health

### Introduction

1. What is the most serious illness you have ever had? You don't have to share if you don't want to.
  
2. Perhaps the illness is still ongoing; if you have recovered, was there a way that you thanked (or could have thanked) God for your recovery? Think about both private and public ways to do this.

### Life Example

John contracted pneumonia while serving in the Korean War. Because the Americans were in full retreat at the time, he did not receive immediate care. By the time his platoon finally reached safety, his fever was raging, and he was barely conscious. He remembers being afraid that he was going to die and promising that if God healed him, he would always go to church and support the work of the church. He was evacuated to Japan, where he received medication. In time John recovered and was able to go home.

Since then, John has gotten a job, married, raised his children, and retired. Now he is working on his last will and testament. He wants to thank God for sparing his life so long ago. He is torn between the desire to leave everything to his church as a thank offering to God and the desire to leave his wealth to his children. He comes to you for advice.

3. What are some of the issues John might be considering as he tries to make his decision?
  
4. What questions might you ask John to help him think things through?
  
5. What do you make of John's promise to attend church and support the church if God healed him?

### Light from the Word – Luke 17:11-19

Leprosy is treatable today. It's not even that contagious. If left untreated, it leads to serious nerve damage, pain, swelling, and fever. Those in Jesus' day did not have the blessing of medicine to the extent we have it today. So, if someone showed signs of leprosy (it usually shows itself through sores, ulcers, and clawed

feet and hands), they were isolated and neglected—they were treated like a leper. No treatment was available, and it was thought to be highly contagious. Contracting leprosy was basically a death sentence.

6. In Luke's account of Jesus' miraculous healing, what words tell you that Jesus expected thankfulness from all the recipients of his healing gift?
7. We don't know that the other nine lepers were Jewish; that's an assumption we often make, however. What are some reasons a Samaritan might actually be more likely than a Jew to offer thanks to God in this circumstance?
8. List the numerous ways the Samaritan expressed his thankfulness.
9. Perhaps this is obvious, but what advice can John take from this section of Scripture?

### **Life Example #2**

Helga had destroyed her liver through alcohol abuse. She was very near death when she was finally able to receive a transplant. Although she was a member of a church, Helga rarely attended worship—both prior to and following her transplant—though her pastor visited her faithfully. She continues her alcohol abuse and snaps back at friends and relatives who call her out on her sin. Though she appreciates her pastor's private visits, she has not listened to his counsel about her alcohol abuse or about her need to receive the means of grace in public worship.

10. You are Helga's cousin. Because you are a Christian, you are concerned for her. What would you say to her in an effort to bring about thankful living?
11. How could you use the above example from Luke 17 to help her see both her sin and her Savior?

**Closing Prayer – 948 Thank the Lord and Sing His Praise**

**Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell everyone what he has done.**

**Let all who seek the Lord rejoice and proudly bear his name.**

**He renews his promises and leads his people forth in joy with shouts of thanksgiving.**

**Alleluia! Alleluia!**