



Matthew 13
New International Version

A Prophet Without Honor

⁵³When Jesus had finished these parables, he moved on from there.⁵⁴Coming to his hometown, he began teaching the people in their synagogue, and they were amazed. "Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?" they asked. ⁵⁵"Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother's name Mary, and aren't his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas? ⁵⁶Aren't all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?" ⁵⁷And they took offense at him.

But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own town and in his own home."

⁵⁸And he did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith.

We believe in God the Father, infinite in wisdom, power and love, whose mercy is over all his works, and whose will is ever directed to his children's good.



HABITS OF A CONTAGIOUS CHRISTIAN

No one knows the pressure, the disappointment and frustration I'm going through.

He walked in our **SHOES**

"He made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness." Phil 2:7

Jesus was frustrated by **CRAZY PEOPLE**

"How much more valuable is a person than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath." Matthew 12:12

Jesus asked them, "Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they remained silent. Mark 3:4

Jesus was personally **REJECTED**

"He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain." Isaiah 53:3

"[Peter] denied it. 'Woman, I don't know him.'" Luke 22:60

God of the Universe (*infinite in wisdom, power and love*)
Knows my pain and problems (*from experience*)
Offers the only perfect solution (Christ)

LIVING WORD

THE THANKSGIVING FACTOR

In everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 1 Thessalonians 5:18

In the classic autobiography, *The Hiding Place*, Corrie ten Boom tells of her sufferings at the hands of the Nazis during the evil reign of Adolph Hitler. Corrie and her sister, Betsie, were incarcerated at the Nazi concentration camp, Ravensbruck, and experienced terrible atrocities there. On one occasion, they were forced to disrobe before the German soldiers. In that awful, humiliating moment, an amazing discovery came to Corrie's mind: "They took Jesus' clothes too. He hung naked for me." When she relayed that wondrous thought to Betsie, she gasped and said, "Oh, Corrie, and I **never thanked Him for it.**"

One of the things that made Corrie and Betsie such dynamic Christians was the fact that they chose to see life from God's perspective. In the worst of situations, they found new insights to praise and thank God.

The **Bible** tells us that we are to give thanks in everything, the good things AND the bad things. In Psalm 50:23, God says, "*He who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving honors Me.*" In the hard times, thanksgiving is difficult. It is definitely a sacrifice to thank God in a Nazi concentration camp, but it is so very necessary. Thanksgiving honors God, and when you and I honor God, He honors us (**1 Samuel 2:30**).

How is your thanksgiving factor? Are you facing tough times? Have you been griping and complaining about the things in your life that are hard, lonely and frustrating? Why not try praising and thanking God for your difficulty. He knows about it, He is over it, and He cares for you. Without question, He has a purpose in every trial and tribulation. Start today to live a life of thanksgiving. If you will do it, I promise you on the authority of the Word of God, your attitude will change, the people around you will be blessed, and **Jesus Christ** will be glorified and honored.

People protect what they love?

How can they protect what they don't understand?

"Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him." Psalm 34:8

⁵When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" ⁶He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do.

⁷Philip answered him, "It would take more than half a year's wages^[a] to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!" John 6:5-6

In a real sense, this Memorial Service of Light and Life, and appropriately with Communion and the Great Thanksgiving Prayer, is a service of remembrance so that we can render thanks to God for the lives and deaths of those who have labored here with us as colleagues and family in the church on earth -- reminding us of our connection with the church triumphant in God's love. And so this is a service of triumphant joy as we remember and celebrate those "of whom the world was not worthy" and "who surround us as a great cloud of witnesses."

In a sense they are "invisible onlookers," as we continue the noble traditions that they have bequeathed to us. We gather here today because of their faith. We who are gathered here in this place are here because they have gone before us and believed, preached, taught and lived the Gospel. We who are gathered here today have faith because those who have gone before us were faithful. We who are gathered here to answer the roll call and to have our "character passed" are here because they gathered together across the years -- and many of them tough years of hardships, low salaries, sacrifices, self-denial.

GOD'S FIRST WORDS TO THE FIRST SINNER – Where are you?

Today is the anti-Ash Wednesday.

What you Proclaim you become

What you permit you promote

“I am not a saint, unless you think of a saint as a sinner who keeps on trying.” — Nelson Mandela

You are under a curse—your whole nation—because you are robbing me. ¹⁰Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the LORD Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.

Malachi 3:9-10

1 Corinthians 3:6

I planted the seed, and Apollos watered it. But God is the One who made it **grow**.

You are robbing me of the offerings and of the ten percent that belongs to me.^[b] ⁹That’s why your whole nation is under a curse. ¹⁰I am the LORD All-Powerful, and I challenge you to put me to the test. Bring the entire ten percent into the storehouse, so there will be food in my house. Then I will open the windows of heaven and flood you with blessing after blessing. I will also stop locusts from destroying your crops and keeping your vineyards from producing. ¹²Everyone of every nation

will talk about how I have blessed you and about your wonderful land. I, the LORD All-Powerful, have spoken! **Malachi 3:8-12**

People who worry that they’re going to give up more for God than they’ll gain are underestimating His Character. Bill Hybels

God is the reason why even in pain, I smile

In confusion, I understand;

In betrayal, I trust;

And in fear, I continue to fight.