

### **Where are the nine?**

Do you give thanks and recognise the goodness of your health. I do not ask you to ignore the aches and pains. I do not ask you to deny what the doctor has said to you, and the reduction of your strength. I do not even ask that you ignore your hangover. This being induced not by alcohol but the fact that you have overdone it again.

No. What I ask is that you give thanks and recognise the goodness of your health. That the bones that ache, do so because of the fantastic football player you were. That you are still using them to not now to kick the centre forward. But to move forward in what needs to be done. What I ask is that you can recognise the miracles of medical science, and are prepared to make the best of what is there. That you are still capable of having a hangover. Because your life has been lived.

Before you give thanks you must recognise what is there

Or are you one of the nine

Do you give thanks and recognise the goodness of your family. I do not pretend that your family are perfect. I do not ask that you deny that you worry about them often needlessly. That not one of them has won the Nobel Prize for literature. I do not even ask you to pretend that they do not annoy you more than any other people you share your days with

No. What I ask is that you give thanks and recognise the goodness of your family. That the faults and failings come with the lovely affections, eccentricities, qualities and memories that you treasure. That you worry because you care, you care because you love, and love is worth the cost. (Although we are wasteful in the way we spend our energies.) That you treasured the pictures they brought home from school, far more than the mortgage they took on. And yes they are annoying. They can be very annoying. Indeed you are annoying given the right context.

Give thanks

However before you give thanks you must recognise what is there.

Or are you one of the nine

Do you give thanks for, and recognise the value of, the money in your pocket, or the food upon your table? You have never had enough, for the nature of the beast is more. I do not pretend that motor cars can be driven without fuel or insurance. That it is possible to watch the television or hear others speak of a massive celebrations of excess, that you are excluded from. That at the end of the month there is a strong chance that you have eaten, or will eat, a lot of potato hash.

No what I ask is that you give thanks for, and recognise the value of, the money in your pocket, or food upon your table. You have never starved although you can witness this curse upon your TV screens. Indeed some of you enjoy your food. You have purchased cars, televisions, holidays, socks.

Some good some bad. You have used them, abused them, and time has moved on. You have watched those who have far more than they need wrapped up in glamour, which fundamentally is not a source of happiness. Some of the best meals you ever had, consisted of potato hash

When there was enough

And enough created the feast

Give thanks

However before you give thanks you must recognise what is there.

Or are you one of the nine

Sadly the nine obviously never recognised what had happened

Sadly the nine never appreciated the miracle that had happened in their lives

In order to give thanks you must first take nothing for granted

All is gift

All is gift

Even what you have earned

The very capacity to earn

Is itself gift

Recognise the gift

Enjoy the gift

Celebrate the gift

And be the awkward one.