

- ” (Luke 17:15-6). Just as Jesus saw the ten lepers whom others failed to see, this Samaritan leper sees what the other nine lepers failed to see:

- 1) that he is healed
- 2) that God deserves worship and praise and
- 3) that Jesus deserves thanks.



- When we receive forgiveness for our sins do we like the Samaritan leper recognise that we have been spiritually healed and that God deserves worship and praise and Jesus thanks for what he did on the cross for us.

- ‘Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?’ (Luke 17:17-18). Jesus is critical of the nine, and we are tempted to join him in his criticism. How could the nine fail to give thanks? We should consider, however, how eager they must have been, after such a long period of isolation, to rejoin their families and to resume normal life. Under the same circumstances, would we stop to give thanks? How often do we stop to thank God for our blessings? How often do we forget to thank God for all He has done for us?

2.6 BOW - Conclusion

- ‘Rise and go; your faith has made you well.’ (Luke 17:19). Jesus has already physically healed the ten lepers including this Samaritan leper but in verse 19 we get a sense that Jesus spiritually saves the one who bows before Him in worship and praise and thanks him for his healing. The Samaritan leper leaves his meeting with Jesus not only physically healed but also spiritually healed as well. He starts a new journey of relationship with God that day.

3. Questions to consider at home

- 3.1 Why was the life of a leper so difficult in Jesus’ day?
- 3.2 “When he saw them.” What do we learn about Jesus from these words. How should these words challenge us?
- 3.3 Why does Jesus tell the ten lepers to: “Go and show yourselves to the priests?”
- 3.4 Why does Jesus not heal the ten lepers immediately?
- 3.5 Why does the Samaritan leper ‘throw himself at Jesus’ feet and thank him?’
- 3.6 Do we see this story in a different light if we imagine our personal sin to be like leprosy?
- 3.7 Imagine yourself as one of those lepers, would you have begged for Jesus help? If once cleansed, would you have gone to see your family or returned to thank Jesus?

Matthew Street 24th March 2024



The Parish of Wellow

Luke 17:11-19 - Ten Lepers

Passage, Talk Notes and Questions

Please feel free to take these talk notes home with you and you may wish to find some time during this week to consider the questions below.



1. Talk Passage – Luke 17:11-19

11 Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus travelled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. **12** As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance **13** and called out in a loud voice, ‘Jesus, Master, have pity on us!’

14 When he saw them, he said, ‘Go, show yourselves to the priests.’ And as they went, they were cleansed.

15 One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. **16** He threw himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him – and he was a Samaritan.

17 Jesus asked, ‘Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? **18** Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?’ **19** Then he said to him, ‘Rise and go; your faith has made you well.’

2. Talk Notes

2.1 Introduction

- How would you describe your physical health? Are you feeling 100% or are you feeling under the weather? Maybe you are struggling at the moment with some physical ailment or maybe you are facing some life threatening disease.
- How would you describe your spiritual health? Is your relationship with God in a good place at the moment or is it strained through repeated sin and disobedience?
- In our passage we meet ten men who have an incurable, highly contagious, skin disease called leprosy.

Beg

- These ten men recognise that they need help. Believing that Jesus can help them they beg him for help: ‘Jesus, Master, have pity on us!’ (Luke 17:13)

Obey

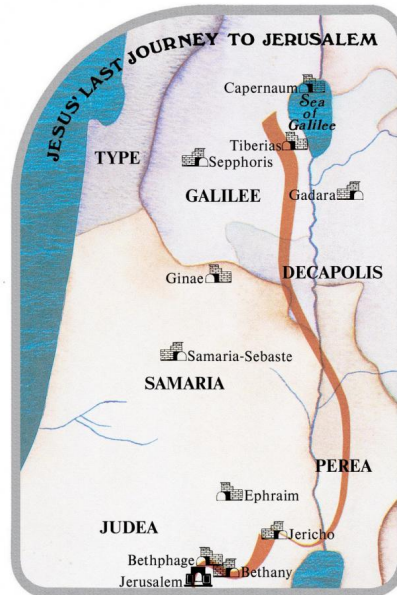
- Jesus stops and tells them ‘Go, show yourselves to the priests.’ (Luke 17:14) As they obey they receive their healing.

Worship

- Only one, the despised foreigner, returns in worship, praising God, thanking him for his healing and bowing before him: ‘One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him— and he was a Samaritan.’ (Luke 17:15-16) He receives not only his physical healing but his complete spiritual healing as well: ‘Rise and go; your faith has made you well.’ (Luke 17:19)

2.2 Background and Context

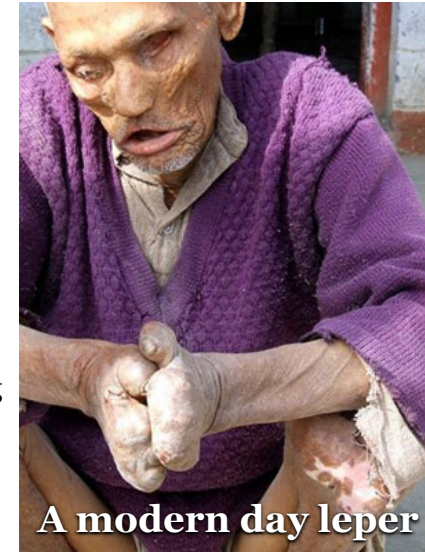
- ‘Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus travelled along the border between Samaria and Galilee.’ (Luke 17:11). Jesus was on his final journey towards Jerusalem. In his day the normal way of getting to Jerusalem from Capernaum, his home town, was to avoid Samaria and to travel down the Jordan valley towards Jericho and then to slowly ascend the 3,000 foot climb to Jerusalem.
- Samaria had been the home of the ten tribes of Israel (as distinct from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin in the south). When the Assyrians took the Israelites into exile in 722 B.C., many Gentiles came to live in Samaria. Returning exiles inter-married with those Gentiles. As a result, Jews loathed Samaritans, whom they considered to be religiously compromised half-breeds.



2.3 Beg

- ‘As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance’ (Luke 17:12). They stood at a distance because that is what the Torah and specifically the Book of Leviticus demanded (Leviticus 13:1-46). Priests were responsible for diagnosing leprosy, (*‘The priest is to examine him, and if the swollen sore on his head or forehead is reddish-white like a defiling skin disease, the man is diseased and is unclean. The priest shall pronounce him unclean.’* (Leviticus 13:43-44)) and a diagnosis was treated as a death sentence—in much the same way that a diagnosis of cancer or AIDS was regarded as a death sentence only a few decades ago.
- Once a priest judged a person to be unclean, that person was cut off from society—cut off from family—unable to hold a job or to engage in commerce—reduced to begging. The isolation experienced by such people must have been truly terrible.
- The ten lepers leprosy was not necessarily Hansen’s disease, the terrible wasting disease that we think of today as leprosy. Biblical leprosy included a variety of skin diseases such as ringworm, psoriasis, leucoderma, and vitiligo. Some of these diseases were highly contagious (Hansen’s disease and ringworm), but others were less so (leucoderma and vitiligo). Some were curable, while others were not.

- The fate of the ten lepers was made even worse by the requirement, to prevent the infection spreading, that they be isolated. They were required to shout “Unclean! Unclean!” when approached by healthy people. *“Anyone with such a defiling disease must wear torn clothes, let their hair be unkempt, cover the lower part of their face and cry out, “Unclean! Unclean!” As long as they have the disease they remain unclean. They must live alone; they must live outside the camp.”* (Leviticus 13:45-46)



A modern day leper

- To add insult to injury healthy people in Jesus’ day tended to regard leprosy as a sign of God’s judgment which made them far less compassionate than they might otherwise have been, because they believed that those suffering from leprosy had brought the suffering upon themselves.

- How do we view people suffering with leprosy today?

- *They stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, ‘Jesus, Master, have pity on us!’* (Luke 17:12b-13) The ten lepers recognise Jesus as no ordinary traveller. They refer to him as ‘Master.’ The text doesn’t tell us but surely Jesus’ reputation for healing must have preceded him. These 10 lepers don’t ask for money they are hopeful for something far greater.
- What about us are we prepared to beg Jesus in prayer for both our physical and spiritual healing?

2.4 Obey

- *“When he saw them”* (Luke 17:14a). Jesus saw them. Jewish law coupled with human nature conspired to make lepers invisible. Many of us are inclined to ignore sick or dying people, because suffering and death make us feel uncomfortable. But for those of us who are suffering at the moment we should feel immense relief that Jesus saw those ten lepers just as much as he sees us today!
- *“Go and show yourselves to the priests”* (Luke 17:14b). Jesus does not heal the lepers immediately, but instead commands them to show themselves to the priests for inspection as if they had been healed. He asks the ten lepers to step out in faith and obey his command. Would they have been healed if they had failed to seek priestly assistance? We have no way of knowing, because *“as they went, they were healed”* (Luke 17:14b).
- Why does Jesus do this? Probably so that the priests who declare the lepers clean would know of Jesus’ transforming power.
- Are we willing to obey God’s commands knowing that God wants the best for us or are we still insistent on doing things our way?

2.5 Worship

- *“One of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, glorifying God with a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him – and he was a Samaritan.*