





Giving Thanks

Luke 17:11-19

Life of Jesus: Miracles

At the beginning of verse 11 we read that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem, but he went through the middle of Samaria and Galilee where the Samaritans lived. The Samaritans and the Jews did not like each other. Samaritans were primarily half Jew and half Gentile. During the time of the Babylonian captivity of Israel, the Jews that were left in the land intermarried with the Gentiles and this resulted in the Samaritan people. To the Jews, the Samaritans were not pure. They had similar yet different religious beliefs and disagreed on the location of the temple. There had been a bitter rivalry between these two groups since the time of Nehemiah.

Discuss:

A Gentile is someone who is not Jewish. What is a Jewish person? The Israelites in the Bible were called Jews. Discuss possible rivalries between different people groups.

Does God like some ethnicities of people better than others? No.

Did Jesus tell the Gentiles or Samaritans that he would not heal them because they were not Jewish? No. Jesus did say he was sent to Israel (Matthew 15:24) but Gentiles and others received from Jesus by faith.

Jesus is now in Samaria. Ten men that were lepers met Jesus as he entered a village. However, they did not come up to him; they stood far off and spoke loudly to him, asking him to have mercy on them.

Discuss:

Leprosy was a contagious skin disease. It not only affects your skin, it also affects your nerves, and your eyes and can make it difficult to breathe. Because the nerve damage can make it where you don't feel pain, many lepers would lose parts of their limbs (arms or legs) because of infection or injuries; and eventually it can even cause blindness. Discuss what contagious means - a disease or sickness that spreads that you can catch from another person.

When Moses wrote the law, there were rules about how to leprosy. According to Leviticus 13:45-46, a leper had to live outside of the city. He would have to rip his clothes, not cover his head, but wear a covering over his upper lip and call out, "unclean, unclean!" everywhere he went. Even though it was a skin disease it was actually transmitted by coughing or discharge from nose. The Lord knew this, which is why the Old Testament law specified the covering over the mouth.



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Discuss:

Talk about this kind of life. You wouldn't get to see your family, you couldn't touch anyone, you would be living outside in dirty conditions with other people who were sick just like you. Most people did not recover, but there was a plan in place for recovery.

If you did recover, you would go to the priest and he was the person who decided if you were actually well, and if you could return to the town or village with everyone else.

The situation could be compared to Covid except that this leprosy would be a permanent situation not temporary. The face covering was for the same purpose as a Covid type mask.

These lepers saw Jesus, and called out to him. **"Lord, have mercy on us!"**

After Jesus saw the lepers, he told them to go show themselves to the priests. According to Old Testament law, in the day of the leper's cleansing he must go to the priest. The priest determines if the plague is healed, and a sacrifice is made. The leper must go through a purification process, and after a week he must shave all his hair, wash his body, and offer another sacrifice before his purification and cleansing is complete. In a similar story, Jesus healed a leper and told the man to go show himself to the priest for his cleansing, and for a testimony in Matthew 8:1-4; Mark 1:40-45 and Luke 5:12-15. This could also have been a testimony to the priest of the power of Jesus.

The story tells us that **as the lepers went on their way** to the priest, they were cleansed. It appears that their healing was not immediately obvious, but as they acted on their faith (James 2:17) their healing came as they were on their way to the priests.

Discuss:

The Bible says that faith without works is dead.

What does this mean?

If you believe something but you act like you don't, do you really believe it?

If you truly believe, your actions will show it.

They weren't healed at first, but as they started going, they were being healed.

Discuss:

What would this be like? Maybe they looked down and saw that their skin wasn't damaged anymore, etc.

One of the lepers, after he saw he was healed, turned around and went back to where Jesus was. He yelled with excitement and glorified God with a loud voice.



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Discuss:

Talk about this; ask what they would do if they were really excited.

Talk about the leper, his family, what if he had a wife and children.

Could he work to provide for them? If you had to live far away from everyone for a long time and all the sudden you were healed,, wouldn't you be excited?

His whole life has just dramatically changed. He has a new life!

This guy yelled loudly and ran over to Jesus. He ran and fell down at Jesus' feet, thanking him. Talk about what this would look like.

This man, the one that went back to thank Jesus, was a Samaritan. Remember who the Samaritans were? Did Jesus seem to dislike the Samaritans? No. Jesus showed everyone the same love and compassion.

Many of the miracles of Jesus involved Gentiles. Many Gentiles were more willing to receive Jesus than many of the Jews.

Jesus says to the Samaritan,

Weren't there ten lepers that were healed? Where are the others? None of them came back to give glory to God, except for this stranger.

Notice what Jesus says here, "give glory to God." What was this man doing? He was *thanking* Jesus.

When we thank God, we are giving him glory. We are thanking him for something that only He can do, and acknowledging it is not something we could have done ourselves.

Jesus then says to the Samaritan,

"Get up, go your way, your faith has made you whole."

There is a different Greek word used for the other lepers that were cleansed, than the word used for the Samaritan who was made whole or healed. It seems that this Samaritan received something more than the other lepers. He was made whole, or preserved. Some theories suggest that he could have been missing fingers, an arm or something else and he was completely restored, where the other nine lepers were cleansed but not made whole.

When we give thanks and glory to the Lord, we are opening up the door for him to move in our lives. There are stories in the Old Testament where they sent out the singers and the choir before the armies.

When they began to praise and give glory to the Lord, He would set up against their enemies (2 Chronicles 20:22).

When you praise, you are giving the Lord the ability to do something for you.

It takes you out of the situation and gives Him the opportunity move. It's not that He does not have the power to do it, but your praise gives him place in your life. It is you, yielding to him through faith, to do a work in your life. When we give thanks, it takes the focus off of ourselves, and acknowledges God and gives glory to Him.

We should give thanks always, and in everything (Ephesians 5:20; Colossians 3:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:1).

Jesus in the Story



Jesus came as the Messiah for the Jewish people of Israel (Matthew 15:24). However, his ultimate plan was to bring salvation to the whole world through his death and resurrection. But during his life ministry, other people groups such as Samaritans, Romans, and other Gentiles reached out to him and received by faith.

The words thanks and thanksgiving are in the Bible 98 times; praise and praises 242 times; sing and singing 127 times; rejoice and rejoicing 211 times; bless and blessing 181 times; and glory 371 times.

Thanks, praise, glory, blessing rejoicing, are all a big deal to God. We do not always understand the power in giving thanks and praising Him. Jesus equated giving thanks to be the same as giving glory. When we give thanks and glory to God, we are humbling ourselves and realizing that we are not capable of doing the things that he does.

We are acknowledging His power and work in our lives, and that without him, we are nothing. But with him, we are everything.



Lesson Questions & Memory Verses

17. One Thing I Know

Read Isaiah 64:8

1. What is a potter?
2. Who is the potter?
3. What are we compared to in this verse?
4. What does it say about God's work?

Isaiah 42:16

And I will bring the blind by the way they did not know; I will lead them in paths they have not known. I will make darkness light before them, and crooked places straight. These things I will do for them, and not forsake them.

18. If You Believe

1. What does Mark 9:23 say is possible to those who believe?
2. John 12:44 says if you believe on Jesus you actually believe on who?
3. Luke 8:12 says if they believe they would be?

John 20:30-31

And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and believing you may have life in His name.

19. Giving Thanks

1. When does Ephesians 5:20 say that we should give thanks?
2. Who should we give thanks to?
3. Colossians 3:17 says that we should do everything in the name of Jesus and then give what to God?

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

20. Have Mercy

1. Where did God meet with people? (Exodus 25:22; 30:6)
2. When you walk with Jesus, what will follow you? (Psalm 23:6)
3. What surrounds you when you trust in the Lord? (Psalm 32:10)

Psalm 147:11

The Lord takes pleasure in those who fear him, in those who hope in his mercy.