

Foothills Christian Assembly Sermon June 28, 2020
Luke 17: 11 – 19 “And he was a Samaritan”

And which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come at once and sit down to eat'? 8 But will he not rather say to him, 'Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself and serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink'? 9 Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. 10 So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.' " 11 Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. 12 Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. 13 And they lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" 14 So when He saw them, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. 15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, 16 and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. 17 So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? 18 Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?" 19 And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well." 20 Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; 21 nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."

I. Introduction

- a. Calvin “[This event] describes the base and incredible ingratitude of the Jewish nation, to prevent us from wondering that so many of Christ’s favours had been suppressed, and so many of his wonderful works buried, among them. One circumstance, too, is added, which greatly heightens the infamy of their crime. Our Lord had *cured nine Jews*: yet not one of them returned thanks, but, with the view of obliterating the remembrance of their disease, they privately stole away. One man only—a Samaritan—acknowledged his obligation to Christ. There is, therefore, on the one hand, a display of Christ’s divine power; and, on the other hand, a reproof of the impiety of the Jews, in consequence of which so remarkable a miracle as this received scarcely any attention.”¹
- b. While we saw how servants can wrongly expect gratitude in the prior parable of the unprofitable servant, today we will see the proper place of gratitude in the life of the servant. Those who gladly belong to God do not expect gratitude FROM God, but rather overflow with gratitude toward God.
- c. Today’s sermon: Luke 17: 11 – 19 “And he was a Samaritan”
 - i. The setting: v11-12a
 - ii. Ten lepers cry out to Jesus: v12b-13
 - iii. Jesus sees and replies: v14a
 - iv. The lepers are cleansed as they go: v14b
 - v. The return, praise and gratitude of the Samaritan: v15,16

¹ Calvin, J., & Pringle, W. (2010). [*Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke*](#) (Vol. 2, p. 207). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

- vi. Jesus responds
 - 1. Criticism of the nine ungrateful Jews: v17,18
 - 2. Praise of the grateful Samaritan: v19
 - vii. Questions to know, love and obey God
- II. The setting: v11-12a
- a. 11 Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. 12 Then as He entered a certain village...
 - b. Samaria – that place known by the Jews for false worship. Great disdain and conflict existed between the Jews and the Samaritans.
 - c. Galilee – similarly, a negative connotation amongst the Jews. The Galileans were the hillbillies of the 1st century Jewish world... considered crude, uneducated.
 - d. Jesus was not shaped by the connotations and divisions of the humanistic world of the Jews. He came to seek and to save the lost, first to the Jews, then the Gentiles. The ministry of Christ did not seek to build a following amongst the most prestigious or the most powerful.
 - e. “as he went to Jerusalem” – we are reminded of the momentum. Ever since chapter 9, Jesus has been journeying toward Jerusalem, toward His betrayal, crucifixion and resurrection.
 - i. All of Christ’s life was leaning forward toward Jerusalem, toward the completion of His journey, His mission.
- III. Ten lepers cry out to Jesus: v12b-13
- a. “there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. 13 And they lifted up their voices and said, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”
 - b. Sproul “To understand all that is involved, we need to examine the legislation in Leviticus concerning the principles of purification. It was the job of the priests to diagnose various illnesses and in the case of skin ailments this involved a lengthy monitoring process. At the end of this observation period the priest would then pronounce the person clean or unclean (See Lev. 13–14). If the pronouncement was leprosy, in a sense the person’s life came apart at the seams, and that had happened for every one of the ten Jesus encountered.”²
 - c. Note first how these lepers did not wait. They were eager to be healed by Jesus. They cried out to Him at their first opportunity.
 - i. Those who are desperate for Christ’s healing and who trust in His power and mercy do not delay to come to Him.
 - d. Next, see how they stood afar off, as commanded by the law. These men had been diagnosed, by the priests, according to the law, with leprosy. This term was a general term used for any of a number of communicable skin diseases. As a result of their diagnosis, they were required to keep away from the well.
 - i. Sproul “Lepers were required to keep themselves at a distance from other people. They were banished from involvement in local society, and the law prescribed that when they came near a town or a village, they

² Sproul, R. C. (1999). *A Walk with God: An Exposition of Luke* (p. 324). Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications.

had to cry out, 'Unclean! Unclean!', lest anyone inadvertently came in contact with this dreadful disease. They were social outcasts."³

- ii. Note only did they suffer from the disease itself, but also, they suffered the loss of relationships with friends and family, the deep sorrow of loneliness and longing for fellowship with their communities again.
- e. Next, see their hunger for healing presses aside their fear of shame. The cry out.
 - i. They lifted up their voices. They were not afraid of the consequences of being identified with Jesus. They saw their own suffering and cried out.
- f. Next, note how they acknowledge the sympathy, authority, power and love of Christ our Lord.
 - i. "Jesus" – Savior. They call Jesus by His Name, somehow aware of His compassion and sympathy toward the hurting, sick and outcast. They had heard the stories.
 - ii. Master – Jesus is their Master. They know Him to be with authority over them. They see themselves, somehow, as His servants.
 - iii. Have mercy on us – in this plea, they acknowledge Christ's power to heal and His love and compassion for the sufferers. They acknowledge that if He heals, it is out of His kindness, and not because they've earned it.
- g. Note, also, that at this time, the ten lepers are acting in unison. They have one voice at this time. As of this moment, nothing has yet to occur to break their bond of leprous communion.
 - i. Sproul "Now Jews and Samaritans never associated with each other, yet this band of lepers Jesus encountered clearly were a mixed group....In a leper colony social and ethnic divisions fell away."⁴

IV. Jesus sees and replies: v14a

- a. 14 So when He saw them, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests."
- b. Note first that Jesus does ignore them. Instead, He sees them and He listens to them. Their hope in His love, compassion and mercy is not disappointed.
- c. Next, see that Jesus speaks to them. The One by Whom the worlds were made and through Whom all things are held together sets His attention upon these outcasts and speaks to them.
- d. Next, see that He commands them. He is their Master, and He commands them toward their healing.
 - i. Those who trust in Christ and long for His healing are glad to hear their Master command them.
- e. Next, note the importance of the visible church in Christ's process of healing these ten lepers. On this occasion of healing, Jesus includes the priests in the healing process.

³ Sproul, R. C. (1999). *A Walk with God: An Exposition of Luke* (pp. 323–324). Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications.

⁴ Sproul, R. C. (1999). *A Walk with God: An Exposition of Luke* (p. 325). Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications.

- d. Note, next, they were healed as they went. As they obeyed Jesus, they experienced His power in them.
 - i. This is a Biblical maxim. It is not before obedience that we experience healing and sanctification, but in the midst of obedience.
 - ii. Henry “Observe, *Then* we may expect God to meet us with mercy when we are found in the way of duty. If we do what we can, God will not be wanting to do that for us which we cannot. Go, attend upon instituted ordinances; go and pray, and read the scriptures: *Go show thyself to the priests*; go and open thy case to a faithful minister, and, though the means will not heal thee of themselves, God will heal thee in the diligent use of those means.”⁸
- VI. The return, praise and gratitude of the Samaritan: v15,16
- a. “And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, 16 and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan.”
 - b. One of them, when he saw that he was healed – Here we begin to see a greater faith at work. This one not only had faith to believe Jesus would heal Him, faith to go to the priests as commanded, but this one, he also had even more faith. The faith that finds Jesus as deserving of more affection, glory, praise and thanks than anyone else.
 - i. What did the other nine do when they saw that they were healed? They rushed on toward the priests, toward their families, back toward their prior joys.
 - c. He returned to Jesus first, instead of his friends, family, community. Did he go first to the comforts of the priestly acceptance and joy? Did he go first to the comforts of his wife and children? Did he go first to his old friends and companions? Did he go first toward another fishing trip with pals?
 - i. No, he went first to Jesus.
 - d. With a loud voice – his shameless love of Jesus on display. From start to finish, this one is not afraid of any consequences of being identified with Christ.
 - e. Next, note how this man glorifies God with not only his voice, but even his body, falling down on his face at the feet of Jesus.
 - i. Gratitude makes one forget anything but Jesus. “Who cares what anyone thinks about me.” Humbling himself before Christ, he cared only to give praise and glory to Christ.
 - f. This Samaritan was overwhelmed with gratitude toward Christ.
 - i. While the Jews were the recipients of God’s Word as His beloved chosen people, they had rejected Jesus.
 - ii. The Samaritans, who had rejected God’s Word and created a false system of worship, nonetheless, have one who heeded God in Christ.

⁸ Henry, M. (1994). [*Matthew Henry’s commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume*](#) (p. 1887). Peabody: Hendrickson.

- iii. McDurmon “The most important idea illustrated here is that of the faithful remnant. Only the tiny minority actually returned to give glory to God. The rest received their blessing and went off to do who knows what with it. Sure, they adhered to the outward command of Jesus, but just as the Pharisees and lawyers obeyed the jots and tittles but neglected the weightier matters of the law—justice and love, etc.—so had these neglected to attend to the most important duty of faithfulness and thanks to their true Master, the true High Priest. In the end, *only the remnant proved to be the faithful elect*. Many had been called, but only this remnant was chosen.”⁹

VII. Jesus responds

- a. Criticism of the nine ungrateful Jews: v17,18
 - i. 17 So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? 18 Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?"
 - ii. Jesus continues His instruction of His disciples by emphasizing the ingratitude of the Jewish nation of that time. The Jews were self-righteous and ungrateful, not acknowledging God as the source of their blessings. Whereas, conversely, God had raised up the lowly Samaritans, so that their faithfulness served as a contrast and condemnation to the unfaithful Jews of the time.
 - iii. Note also Jesus openly equates Himself with God in this response.
- b. Praise of the grateful Samaritan: v19
 - i. “And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."
 - ii. Jesus has acknowledged the Samaritan who gave glory to God. Now, Christ blesses this man to go his way. Return to your family, your friends, and continue to glorify God.
 - iii. Your faith has made you well – This is not only a reference to the absence of leprosy, but also the presence of a healthy soul that prioritizes worship praise and gratitude properly.
 - 1. Calvin “It is faith alone that sanctifies the gifts of God to us, so that they become pure, and, united to the lawful use of them, contribute to our salvation. Lastly, by this word Christ has informed us in what manner we lawfully enjoy divine favours. Hence we infer, that he included the eternal salvation of the soul along with the temporal gift. The *Samaritan* was *saved* by his *faith*. How? Certainly not because he was cured of leprosy, (for this was likewise obtained by the rest,) but because he was admitted into the number of the children of God, and received from His hand a pledge of fatherly kindness.”¹⁰

VIII. Questions to know, love and obey God

⁹ McDurmon, J. (2011). [*Jesus v. Jerusalem: A Commentary on Luke 9:51–20:26, Jesus’ Lawsuit Against Israel*](#) (p. 110). Powder Springs, GA: American Vision.

¹⁰ Calvin, J., & Pringle, W. (2010). [*Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke*](#) (Vol. 2, p. 211). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.