

Jesus the Healer

The Grace of Gratitude



SERMON NOTES
AUGUST 4, 2024

11th Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture: Luke 17:11-19

LUKE 17:11-19 (NRSV)

¹¹On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. ¹²As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, ¹³they called out, saying, 'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!'

¹⁴When he saw them, he said to them, 'Go and show yourselves to the priests.' And as they went, they were made clean. ¹⁵Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. ¹⁶He prostrated himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan.

¹⁷Then Jesus asked, 'Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they?' ¹⁸Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?' ¹⁹Then he said to him, 'Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well.'

"Our experience of God's salvation in Jesus Christ prompts us to respond with gratitude and joy!"

I. DO YOU WANT TO BE HEALED?

- A. Jesus is "On the way" traveling from Galilee in the north toward Jerusalem in the south and passing near the land of Samaria. Jews most often avoided the direct route through Samaria (as Jews and Samaritans hated each other) and instead traveled down the Jordan River and then turned west from Jericho up to Jerusalem.
- B. It is in this area "between" that Jesus encounters the ten lepers, who as was custom because of their illness, "kept their distance" and most likely were required to call out, "Unclean, unclean" as others approached.
- C. The lepers must have heard of Jesus and his power to heal as their usual cry for alms is instead a cry for healing, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" Calling Jesus "master" has up to this point only been heard from Jesus' disciples in Luke's Gospel.
- D. In the Greek text, Luke doesn't call them "lepers" but ten men who had leprosy...this subtle detail recognizes them as persons who are afflicted and thus they are not defined by their disease.
- E. Jesus "sees them" as God's children, not lepers or Samaritans or Jews... but as people in need who share a common plight whose suffering voices cry in unison in contrast to their separate traditions.

II. WHAT NOW?

- A. Jesus' "seeing" the men who have leprosy implies more than sight, but personal interest and the opportunity to offer God's mercy to another.
- B. It is interesting that Jesus says to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests," and not "be healed." The Jewish custom to recognize that healing had taken place was to show oneself to the priest, but at least one of these men is a Samaritan?
- C. In Luke 5:14 Jesus had previously healed a man of leprosy and sent him to do the same, but also to include an offering. No offering is mentioned here.
- D. Jesus' words are reminiscent of the words of Elisha (II Kings 5:10) where another "foreigner", Naaman (the commander of the armies of the King of Aram), is told to "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times," and he was healed! In both, the persons are healed in their "going." Jesus treats them as if they are already healed, and in their act of obedient faith the healing takes place.

- E. But this story is not so much about the being made clean as it is about the response of the one man who "saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice!"
- F. It is the account of ten being healed, and one being saved! After all, Jesus came to seek and to save the lost! Life after Jesus?
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How are you seeking
"healing" from Jesus

III. LIFE AFTER JESUS?

- A. This man, who already had two strikes against him, we learn, was indeed a Samaritan, and therefore a social outcast and a religious heretic, and he also had leprosy. And yet, it is this man who turned to give thanks and praise!
- B. The man who had been healed then falls at Jesus' feet and thanks Jesus, recognizing that God has indeed acted through him!
- C. Jesus then asks three telling questions of those present, "Were not ten made clean? Where are the other nine? Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner? His questions, like the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37), draw a sharp contrast to the response of the unlikely "foreigner" and the response of God's own chosen people to God's saving activity!
- D. Jesus' words to the man, "Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well," is not just referring to his physical healing, but the word "well" is the same for "saved or salvation" in the Greek. "Your faith has saved you!"
- E. "They all got what they wanted, but this one received more than he had dreamed of asking for...the man's faith was not expressed by his request for help but by his gratitude and praise of God! (The Interpreter's Bible Commentary)"
- F. This man's actions show the proper response to God's saving mercy...sheer gratitude and pure praise of God!

How are you
responding to
Jesus' healing?