

I Will Sing of The Goodness of God

Introduction

This week is one to celebrate what God has brought us through. On Sunday, our pastor reminded us that **His mercy endures forever**. Our study finds us in Luke 17:11-19, and there, on the outskirts of one unnamed village, ten leprous men recognize Jesus and His disciples. Dictionary.com defines leprosy as a contagious disease that affects the skin, mucous membranes, and nerves, causing discoloration and lumps on the skin and, in severe cases, disfigurement and deformities. In modern times, we now call this affliction Hansen's Disease. The law of Moses in Leviticus 14:1-32, directed the priests as the health inspectors of the day, to restrict lepers from the community and force them to keep at least six feet between them and healthy people. They were to cry out, "Unclean, Unclean!" to anyone that came close while at the same time ring a bell. One of the ten men in Luke was a Samaritan (v. 16), with whom Jews did not normally associate and regarded with scorn as an apostate from the Jewish faith. It's interesting to find that the nine Jews and the one Samaritan were living in the Samaritan territory, an area that Jews typically bypassed. Here we see them living in community, mutually supporting one another, perhaps receiving more help from a Samaritan village rather than Jewish territory.

It's also interesting to see that Jesus required them to do what a cured leper would do even though they were not yet healed. He required them to take steps of faith and trust His Word. In Luke 5:12-14, when Jesus healed the leprous man, He reached out and touched him, healing him instantly. However, here in this passage, there was no touch and very little communication. Jesus told the leprous men to go to the priest to get a clean bill of health. This likely meant they were to travel to the Jerusalem Temple to see the priest and get the pronouncement of health certificate to be readmitted into society. I imagine that they might have been tempted to think that Jesus had misheard them or misunderstood their request. This journey required faith because as they started the route, they were not yet healed. I imagine when they went to Jesus, they expected to receive a touch, a pronouncement, a prayer, a shaking, a something. But instead, Jesus gave them ... a direction. Have you ever waited on a big touch from God and instead received a direction?

It must have seemed ridiculous to them as they started on their journey to go and get a clean bill of health from the priest when their faces and limbs were obviously marred with leprosy. As the Samaritan began to walk, his mind must have been filled with



questions. He must have wondered if Jesus even realised that he was a foreigner; He must have wondered if the priests would receive him, being firstly a leper and secondly a Samaritan; He must have wondered if the healing would even be extended to him due to the extreme animosity between the Jews and the Samaritans. How strange it would have seemed to receive the direction to go somewhere to get a clean bill of health when he had not yet been healed. The phrase reads, "And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed."

So often, we lose sight of the fact, that our blessing from God comes in our obedience. Isaiah 55:8-9 reminds "For my **thoughts** are not your **thoughts**, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are **higher than** the earth, so are my ways **higher than** your ways and my **thoughts than your thoughts**". When we think on this and then reflect on the fact that ***His mercy endures forever***, it gives us the confidence to praise Him right now! As the story continues, while they were yet walking, their fingers began to grow. While they were yet walking, their toes suddenly filled their shoes. While they were yet walking, some began to feel the skin on their faces softening and others their noses growing out again! Can you imagine looking at the man beside you and visibly seeing the complete representation of God's healing power? Hallelujah!

The Samaritan was so ecstatic with praise to God that he could not contain himself. He left the company of the nine and began to run back to find Jesus and thank Him. This man knew how to express gratitude. He shouted at the top of his voice as he approached Jesus and threw himself on the ground, lavishly shouting God's praise. Sometimes from the outside it looks like the people praising God the loudest are the holiest ones, but here we see that it was actually the one who had been forgiven much, who was the most grateful. This may be a true worshipper's secret, but the one who is loved much, loves God much in return. Jesus expresses disappointment in the nine Jewish men that did not return once they realized they were healed. Let's never forget to thank the Lord for all He does for us.

Getting Started

Read **Luke 17:11-19; Leviticus 14:1-32; Luke 5:12-14**

1. Why would Jesus send the ten lepers to the priests unhealed instead of healing them on the spot?
2. In Bible study, we have been talking about the necessity of combining faith with works (action), how is this concept demonstrated in this scripture?
3. What are some of the comparisons between leprosy in biblical times and the modern day Covid-19 virus?



Let's Get Personal

1. Think of a time in your own life when you were praying for or waiting on a big shift from God and instead you received a direction. Write it down, both what you were praying for and the direction you received. Did it help you move forward? Did you follow the direction that God gave?
2. Listen for this experience in your life. Notice the next time that you are praying for mercy but instead receive a direction. Journal it and follow the direction. Notice the impact of your obedience in your life.

Take The Next Step

Spend 10 minutes a day this week thanking God for His goodness. Write down His blessings as you remember them daily. Use a song as inspiration as you spend that time in His presence. Please use the link for this one if you don't have another song that inspires you to remember His goodness.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y81ylo1_3o8