

Jesus Heals The Ten Lepers

Luke 17:11-19

MEMORY VERSE

PSALM 107:1

Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

As many cut out “thankful men” as the number of children in your class (template provided), tape or push pins, a blindfold, and a sign with the name “Jesus” written on it.

As many pieces of construction paper as the number of children in your class, pencils or crayons, tape, and staples or glue.

As many half sheets of white paper as the number of children in your class, pencils or crayons, and a basket or bowl.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

Pin the Thankful Man

Make enough copies of the enclosed template for each child to have a “thankful man.” Explain to the children that when we are thankful for something wonderful the Lord has done in our lives we need to go to Him and thank Him. Cut out the men from the template. Give one to each child. Tack a sign with the name “Jesus” written on it to the bulletin board. Blindfold the children, one by one, and have them try to pin their man as close to the sign as possible.

Use this activity to introduce today’s theme and how important it is to tell the Lord, “thank you.”

LESSON TIME!

Did you know there is something God wants from all of us? It is something He notices, looks for, and desires. It is a very simple thing, yet it is something we often forget. Let's find out from our lesson today what it is.

LUKE 17:11-12

Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off.

Jesus was traveling through the land of Samaria and Galilee on His final journey toward Jerusalem. On His way, He came to a village where some men seemed to be waiting, hoping He would come. They must have heard of Him. They had heard stories Jesus, the Man who traveled the countryside performing miracles. He had even cleansed lepers! That was of particular interest to these ten men because they were lepers!

Who knows in our class what being a leper means? Leprosy is a terrible, tragic disease. It affects the nervous system and eventually the whole body. Our nervous system is what gives us the feeling in our fingertips and arms and feet, all the feeling in our skin. Leprosy slowly takes that feeling away until you could rest your hand on a hot stove burner and not even feel the heat, but your hand would become very injured. Leprosy also causes sores to appear all over your body.

Leprosy could spread from one person to another person quite easily; if you had it, you would have to leave your family and neighborhood, all your friends, and live far away from everyone. You could only live with other lepers. In Jesus' time, if you were a leper and anyone came close to you, you had to cry out "Unclean! Unclean!" It was a very lonely, painful, tragic way to end your life.

It was a very sad illness for these ten men in our story. The only people they had were each other, no more family or friends. One of the men was a Samaritan, and the others were Jews. Usually Samaritans and Jews did not have anything to do with each other, but having leprosy overshadowed all the silly things they used to argue about. They became united in their common misery.

All ten stood waiting for Jesus "afar off" our verse says. They did not run right up to Jesus; they were lepers and lepers were not allowed to get close to anyone. They stood far away from Him and they called out to Him.

LUKE 17:13

And they lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!"

They had hope that this Jesus they had heard about could and would cleanse them from their leprosy. They asked for His mercy. They called Him "Master" which means "Chief Commander." They knew Jesus was totally in command, even of disease and death.

Jesus is always the right Person to cry out to for help. We may not have leprosy, but everyday we need Jesus. We need Him to save us from our sin. We need Him to help us not to sin. We need Him to help us with our problems. We need Him to show His mercy to us when we are sick or hurt or sad or lonely, and when we are well and happy. He is the "Master" of everything, those lepers were right about that.

LUKE 17:14

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.

Jesus saw them! How wonderful it is to be seen by Jesus. He always sees us. He notices where we are and what we are doing. He is intimately acquainted with us. He knows all our needs. When we cry out to Him, He hears us and answers. Jesus always hears us when we cry out to Him, and He will answer us according to His perfect, loving will.

Our verse tells us that Jesus instructed the lepers to go and show themselves to the priests in the temple. It was Jewish law that said the priest was the one to examine people to see if they had leprosy or not. The priest was the one who could pronounce them clean and allow them to go back to their families, homes, and friends.

Jesus had not yet healed them when He said they should go to the priest. But they trusted Him and went toward the priest. They were still covered with sores and had no feeling in their skin, yet they went and did what Jesus told them to do. He directed them to do what seemed absurd, yet they obeyed. They did not argue with Him or say, "But Jesus, we still have leprosy. Take it away; then we'll go and show the priest!"

No, they turned and went just as they were, full of leprosy. They obeyed Jesus simply because He said to do it.

A wonderful thing happened after they obeyed. As they were going to the priest they were cleansed! First came their act of obedience; Jesus said it and they obeyed. Then the miracle happened! Often in life it will be that way for us. We will cry out to Jesus to help us with something much bigger than us and He will tell us what to do. It might seem crazy, and ridiculous, but when we obey Him and trust Him, the power and the miracle comes.

My Miracle

Tell the class of a time from your own experience when your obedience to the Lord resulted in a miraculous resolution of a seemingly impossible situation. If you cannot think of any that are appropriate to share with the class, share a story of someone you know.

Allow the class to ask questions, and share from their experiences the miraculous provision of the Lord.

LUKE 17:15-16

And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God,

and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan.

How many men did Jesus cleanse of leprosy? He cleansed ten men. How many came back to thank Him? Only one returned. Let's look closely at this man that came back. He was a Samaritan. Jesus was a Jew. Usually Samaritans did not talk to Jews. The other men were Jews, but they did not run back to Jesus. We see that this Samaritan praised God. He actually threw himself at Jesus' feet and praised Him.

Praise is worship, adoration, the expression of our knowing God to be holy and right and good and glorious. This leper also said "thank you" to Jesus. Thanksgiving is the expression of our gladness that God is good to us. **Jesus loves a thankful heart.** This one leper came to say "thank you" to Jesus for His provision and involvement and love in his life.

"Thank you" is not difficult to say, but it says a lot. It acknowledges the thoughts and acts someone has given on our behalf. "Thank you" is a very important and beautiful

thing to say, especially to Jesus. **Jesus loves a thankful heart.** He gives us everything, even the air we breathe. He deserves our "Thank you(s)" all day long.

The Bible tells us it is God's will for us to say "thank you;" 1 Thessalonians 5:18 tells us, "...in everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." When we thank Him we are giving Him the glory for all that goes on in our lives. **Jesus loves a thankful heart.**

The Thankful Cone

Pass out a piece of construction paper to each child in your class. Explain that they are going to be making "thankful cones." Have them color or decorate them however they like. When they are done coloring, have them roll the sheets into cones, tape or staple in place so they do not unroll. Snip the ends with a pair of scissors so they are not pointed.

Have each child put their cone to their ear and, one at a time, have them whisper thank you into the cone of their neighbor. The sound should be pleasant for each child. Explain that it is also a pleasant sound to the Lord when we express our thanks. When you are all done, you can have your class use their cones as megaphones and say "thank you" to the Lord.

LUKE 17:17-18

So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine?"

"Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?"

Jesus lets us know through these verses that He notices when we forget to thank Him. He waits for our thanks and our worship. He gives us His mercy. He showers us with blessings. He provides for us and helps us all day long. Do we thank Him like the Samaritan? Or are we like the nine who went on enjoying the gift of their cleansing but forget the Giver?

Jesus loves a thankful heart. Do you have a grateful, thankful heart? Jesus waits for our "thank you" to Him. Sometimes we go along like the nine lepers, so excited with our answered prayer and our blessings that we forget to run back to Jesus to say "thank you."

Saying "thank you" is something we have to train our hearts and minds to do. We get so self-centered that we forget to thank people, especially the Lord. It takes training for our minds to forget ourselves and to remember to thank the Lord. **Jesus loves a thankful heart.** The verse in 1 Thessalonians tells us we should give thanks in EVERYTHING, not just when things are going great.

Saying "thank you" to the Lord when it seems nothing is working out right is one way to obey Jesus before we see His miracles.

LUKE 17:19

And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."

Here we note something very interesting. Jesus gives this man an additional blessing due to his thankfulness. **Jesus loves a thankful heart.** He was already cleansed from leprosy, but now Jesus lets him know he is made well. More would be well for him since he acknowledged God with a thankful heart.

Psalm 107:8 tells us, "Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men." The Lord deserves and waits for our "thank you" for the little things and the big. It is right and good to give our thanks to Jesus just like the one leper. **Jesus loves a thankful heart.**

The Thankful Basket

Pass out half sheets of paper and have your class write down the things they are thankful for (for younger children, have them draw pictures of what they are thankful for), and have them deposit their folded sheets in a basket.

Explain that the Lord is blessed by our thankful hearts. **Jesus loves a thankful heart.** If time permits, read or show the sheets of paper to the rest of the class. Be sure to respect the confidentiality of each child; tell them that they do not have to write their name on their paper.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of thanksgiving. If there are any children who have not responded to the gospel, give them an opportunity to do so.

Template – Pin the Thankful Man

