

Where Are The Nine? (Luke 17:11-19)

In this passage of Scripture the Lord Jesus Christ is travelling in the midst of the regions of Galilee and Samaria. He is heading toward Jerusalem where He would pay the sin debt of all mankind (**Luke 24**). The Bible states that as He entered into a certain village that a group of lepers called for Him to heal them.

I. The Cry Of The Unclean

Leprosy is a disease that destroys the nerve endings in the body and eventually deforms a person. This disease was rampant in Jesus' day and destroyed many lives. These ten men were part of a leper colony and were united in misery. If a person was a leper they had to leave their families, friends, and work behind to avoid spreading the disease. Instead, the leper had to live with other lepers and have little contact with anyone else.

Leprosy was seen as an affliction caused by sin. Moses' sister, Miriam, became a leper when she sinned against the Lord (**Numbers 12**) as did the great King Uzziah (**II Chronicles 26**). Unfortunately, the Bible tells us that all men are afflicted by a disease that is worse than leprosy: a sinful nature. There are none of us that seek after God (**Romans 3:10-12**); instead we often mold Him into what we want Him to be and live life according to our own set of rules! As leprosy caused these men to be miserable, so does our life of sin bring emptiness, pain, and misery.

These men were united in misery, but also in their desire to be healed. They had heard of Jesus' healing abilities and wanted their lives back. They desired to get back to work, hug their children, and kiss their wives. Leprosy stole their lives and they believed Jesus could restore them. They were right.

II. The Answer Of Jesus

The wonderful thing about our God is that when we look to Him by faith, He always answers! These men called to Jesus from afar off, praying to Him for healing, and Jesus responded to them. Faith always gets God's attention. Money, works, morality, or religion does not matter at all to God, but faith always gains His favor (**Hebrews 11:6**). Faith is simply looking to Jesus to meet our needs (**Hebrews 12:2**). These men did exactly that and were not disappointed.

When we pray by faith, our God not only hears our prayers, but answers them too (**Luke 11**). He is not a cruel and uncaring God, but a loving Father to His children! In this situation the Lord Jesus tests the faith of the lepers, telling them to go to the priests for an examination of cleansing. This was normally not done unless the leprosy was thought to be healed (**Leviticus 13**). But, the lepers trusted the Lord and started walking. Can you imagine the faith it took to take the first step? They were still white as snow with leprosy, but with each step you can imagine that they were healed a little!

Jesus tests our faith in similar fashion. We are sick with sin and have no hope of healing ourselves through good works or religion. Only by looking to Jesus can we be clean, because He has the power to make us so (**Isaiah 45:22**). Now, sin is a spiritual sickness and not a physical one. Therefore the results are not as obvious from the outset. But, with every step of faith we take with the Lord, the outward things start to change as well (**Romans 12:2**).

Some people get it mixed up. They feel that they must come to Jesus after their life is cleaned up. This is not the Bible way. We must humbly come to Jesus, believe that He is enough to purchase our salvation and give us eternal life, and then allow Him to clean up our lives (**John 3:16**)! The Lord has taken many broken lives and put them back together through His Word. He has conquered many addictions, failings, and traps Satan lays for us through our lives. All we must do is come to Him for help and allow Him to help us; just like these ten lepers.

Are you sick of your sin? Are you sick of being sin-sick? If you want your life to be made whole, the Bible says to come to Christ (**Matthew 11:28-30**). He wants to take your heavy burdens and fix your troubles. But, He must be allowed to!

After coming to Christ, we then have a decision to make: will we continue on our own or follow Jesus in His Word? Only one out of the ten actually came back to thank Jesus for healing them. Sadly, this occurs today as well. Many become healed, but few follow out of thankfulness! If you have a desire to know the Lord Jesus and learn of Him, let me help you. This is the heartbeat of Christ and that of our church family. We do not seek to be an entertainment center or a worship center, but a place where we can learn from the scriptures to follow the Lord in this troubled world.

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