

1. Jesus Responds to Humble Pleas for Mercy

- a. Even though Jesus is heading toward terror of His own, He shows great compassion to these ostracized sufferers who cry to him for help
 - i. On his way to Jerusalem to be executed (see 9:51)
 - ii. **When I have great trials looming before me, I usually don't consider the lesser trials of others, but Jesus is so compassionate and trusts so greatly in his Father that he hears and responds**
- b. They cry out to him humbly
 - i. From a distance – shamefully
 1. Lepers were commanded by the Law to remain outside the city or the camp until their leprosy cleared
 2. **They had to cover their upper lip and cry out “unclean!” to let people know that they were contagious**
 - a. Rather than merely bearing their shame, they must proclaim it to others so that others could avoid them
 - b. **Imagine this humiliation...and see Jesus' response.**
 - ii. Raising their voices – shamelessly
 1. This willingness to cry out for help shows a shamelessness indicative of both despondency and of faith
 2. Despondency in that their suffering left all possible shame as paling in comparison to the hope of healing
 3. Faith in that they believe that Jesus could heal them more than they feared what shame may come of their yelling
 - iii. **They refer to Him as “Commander”** – selflessly
 1. **The word is not the usual word of respect, “Lord” (κυριος), but rather a word only used by Luke in the NT, “Master” or “Commander” (επιστατης)**
 2. It is a word used in the LXX to indicate a person in authority over others, usually in the army, or of an officer in charge of priests in the priesthood
 3. **The only others to use this term in Luke's gospel are Simon and John, indicating that these lepers considered Jesus as having the same authority over them as Peter and John believed that he did over them.**
 4. This shows us that these men see themselves as inferiors, servants, and Jesus as having all authority over them, and this shows by their response to his command
 - a. Matt 8:5-12
 - iv. They plea for mercy – faithfully
 1. They recognize that Jesus owes them nothing, but that he had the power, as Commander, to come to their aid
 - a. This humble plea is the only way that one can approach Jesus rightly
 - b. As a beggar, with no merit to impress him or loveliness to woo him, but with plea to his mercies alone, shamelessly
 2. They also believe that Jesus is willing to help them when they ask
 - a. **Thus, they don't remain far off and silent, but cry out**
 - b. They know enough about Jesus to know that he may help them.

2. The Commander Issues a Command and the Needy Trust It

- a. This is a command to believe in the power of His word
 - i. Lev 13-14 – leprosy is confirmed and healing is confirmed by the priest

1. See 5:14
2. There was also an expectation of a sacrifice and the administration of blood, the life for the life, for the cleansing to take place
- ii. You only went to verify healing, not to be healed, thus Jesus is commanding them to trust His word, to have faith in him, and go to the priests before they were healed
- b. Thus, "as they went there were cleansed" - mass healing as they went forward in faith
 - i. Imagine this moment on the road!
 - ii. What did they see?!
 - iii. Think of it this way: They were reborn on that road, with new skin, new digits, new life!
- c. This is the root of discipleship: Trust His Command
 - i. **"You are my friends if you do what I command"** – John 15:14
 - ii. **"If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth and the truth will set you free."** (John 8:31-32)
 - iii. Whatever Jesus says is true is true and whatever he commands is the only good, even when our experience says otherwise and our feelings declare the opposite.

3. Saving Faith is God-Glorifying and Grateful to Christ Jesus

- a. **"Your faith has saved you."**
 - i. The word is not "cleansed" or "healed" but rather the word "saved".
 - ii. Jesus is not talking about the cleansing of leprosy here (the word cleansed was used earlier to denote that effect for all 10 former lepers), but something else
 - iii. He is talking about salvation from the curse of the Fall, restoration of Eden, reconciliation with God, hope of real and eternal life
 1. John 5:24; 10:25-30
- b. The heart that has been rescued recognizes, first and foremost, that God is to be praised (glorified) and Jesus to be thanked!
 - i. It's not that that the other 9 weren't somehow grateful that they were healed, but their joy was in their healing and their gratitude was not Christ-centered nor God-glorifying
 - ii. We know this because they didn't return "to give glory to God" *through Jesus*.
 - iii. They returned to their communities and lives without centering their affections and directions upon Jesus, thus there is no pronouncement of saving faith upon them.
- c. The Samaritan's saving faith resulted in the kind of thanks that was centered on Jesus and gave glory to God and thus was truly saving faith and not merely vague gratitude.
 - i. This differentiates a type of broad gratitude from the God-glorifying Christ-exalting gratitude of a regenerated heart.
 1. The unregenerate are described in exactly the opposite as this Samaritan: "though they knew God, they did not honor (*δοξάζω*) Him as God or give thanks (*ευχαριστέω*) to Him..."(Rom 1:21)
 2. "Praise be to God.."(Eph 1)
 3. "Praise be to God the Father..."(1 Pet 1:3)
 4. "I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you..."(Rom 1:8)
 5. "giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ"(Eph 5:20)
- d. This type of God-glorifying and Christ-grateful praise also leads us to leave all our identity markers behind to come to Him to declare truth and define righteousness
 - i. The fact that this group of lepers found more community and identity within their shared experience of leprosy than with their nationalistic heredity shows the power of experience as a shared identity marker
 - ii. Three communities: Samaritans, Jews, and Lepers
 1. Leprosy being the most defining for this group of 10

2. The lepers' comradery was not found in their heritage, but in their common present experience, both outward (leprosy) and inward (loneliness)
3. Some experiences are much more foundational to our identity than others
 - a. Sexual identity determined by the experience of our desires
 - b. Social identity determined by the experience of our achievements
 - c. Political identity determined by the experience of our socio-economics, urbanization, educational upbringing, etc.
- iii. Usually Samaritans and Jews didn't socialize but these lepers forced to the outskirts of society had bonded together around their common suffering and grief
 1. And the one leper at the end of the story finds salvation because he recognizes that God was more glorious than his former experience and he was grateful to Jesus for his rescue more than he desired his former life
 - a. His experience with Jesus was now the most intense experience of his life that transformed him to come to Christ for everything!
 - b. Rather than identify with his leprosy, or even his healing, he identifies as absolutely Christ-dependent and desires to glorify God more than his desires, his achievements, or his former community
 2. This leaving of our former identifications and clinging to Christ Jesus with God-glorifying gratitude is the expression of true saving faith.
 - a. He fell on his face before Jesus in deep humility and submission
- iv. What intense experience is it that moves the Church? GRACE TOWARDS SINNERS!!
 1. Eph 2 – You were dead in your trespasses and sins and you were made alive together in Christ Jesus...**for by grace you have been saved, through faith, not as a result of works so that nobody can boast...**
 2. Eph 2 – we are all like living stones being fitted together
 - a. You and I are made a community not by our perfection or performance, but by grace towards helpless lepers!
 - b. This should move us to glorify God and thank Christ Jesus in full submission to Him, on our faces in grateful humble joy
- v. We must ask ourselves the question: are we like the 9, loving our community more than Christ? Or, are we like the 1, leaving our former identifications to glorify God and loudly declare gratitude to Christ for our rescue?

4. Consider the Leprosy of Soul From Which You Have Been Reborn and Rescued

- a. **How can Jesus pronounce that this man's faith saved him?**
 - i. The Law stated that for the cleansing to be complete, the priest must verify the cleanness and make an offering of blood, sprinkling it upon the cleansed leper (Lev 14)
 - ii. **Jesus simply said, "Get up and go your way. Your faith has saved you."**
 - iii. Jesus could say this because He is the final High Priest AND the final blood sacrifice
 1. **"by his stripes we are healed" (Isa 53:5)**
 2. **"forgiveness of sins through his blood" (Eph 1:7; Rom 3:21-26; Heb 9:22-26)**
- b. Consider what you have been rescued from and to what you have been reborn toward!
 - i. Romans 5:9 – **blood and salvation from God's wrath**
 - ii. Col 1:20-22 – blood/death and salvation from alienation, unholiness, and blame
 1. See Heb 10:19-22
 - iii. Heb 13:11-14 – blood/death and salvation from alienation, being brought near to the throne of God as His children in whom He delights

Conclusion:

Jesus again emphasizes that this man was a foreigner AND that he was accepted not based upon his commonality with those who knew the promises, but he was accepted based upon his God-glorifying faith in Christ Jesus that resulted in humble submissive gratitude to God through Jesus. Jesus saves the unexpected people. **It's not the righteous people, but sinners who repent. It's not those near to the Temple, but those far-off.**

It doesn't matter where you've come from, what community in which you were raised or have participated in, what leprosy of sin rots your soul or what deviance has oozed from your heart's **desires**. When you are humbled by your absolute need of rescue, and hear the voice of Jesus calling you, when your regenerated heart sees his beauty and your soul sings in grateful joy for his mercy, glorifying God for the riches of his kindness towards you and you fall on your face in delighted humility before him, you are saved. It is not the religious community that saves you, it is not the shared experience of your desires, or your achievements, or your social status. It is only the King that can rescue you, and he has tuned his ear to pleas for mercy and answers every God-glorifying gratitude with declarations of salvation and an inheritance among the community of the redeemed sinners purchased by his holy blood. He pronounces you clean according to His own works! He washes you white as snow, for he is the fountain of living waters. He sprinkles his own holy blood to redeem you from your sins. He was raised to life to present you to the Father holy and blameless to gratefully enjoy God forever. He is gloriously beautiful and his mercies are gloriously sufficient and his power is gloriously overwhelming. He is great, and greatly to be praised. Amen and Amen.