

**Luke 17:11-19**  
**April 5, 2020**

**Open with Prayer**

**HOOK:**

Q: What is the purpose of social distancing? [Let people engage]

Q: Has that been hard for you? If yes, why? [Let people engage]

Imagine being diagnosed with COVID-19, and the doctor says you must self-quarantine. Your family members should not be in contact with. Or let's make it more severe. You are diagnosed with COVID-19 and need hospitalization. Doctors are NOT letting family members even come to the facility for your protection and everyone around you!

Q: How isolated would you feel? [Let people engage]

**Transition:** In Jesus's day, COVID-19 wasn't around, but leprosy sure was. It takes social distancing to whole new level! It takes "lockdown" to whole new level. As you probably already know, if someone had a skin disease, the priest required them to be removed from all social contact and the only people they could associate with was with other lepers. The people they needed the most, your loving family and friends, couldn't come near. They couldn't associate with other people in the synagogue or any social environment anywhere. It was devastating for anyone to be declared unclean and then have to live in a leper colony somewhere, where they felt cursed by God. **They typically had no hope, until Jesus came along.** Let's begin.

**BOOK:**

**Ten Healed of Leprosy**

<sup>11</sup> Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. <sup>12</sup> As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance <sup>13</sup> and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!"

<sup>14</sup> When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed.

<sup>15</sup> One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. <sup>16</sup> He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan.

<sup>17</sup> Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine?" <sup>18</sup> Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" <sup>19</sup> Then he said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."

**Process Observations/Questions:**

Q: What did you most like about this passage? What resonated with you? [Let people engage]

Q: What did you least like about this passage? [Let people engage]

Q: What did you find in this passage that you didn't understand? [Let people engage]

Q: What do we learn about Jesus in this passage? [Let people engage]

### **LOOK:**

Every child of God should cultivate the grace of gratitude. It not only opens the heart to further blessings but glorifies and pleases the Father.

### **Close in Prayer**

### **Commentaries for Today's Lesson:**

**Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible Exposition Commentary (Vol. 1, pp. 244-245)*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.**

### **Thankfulness (Luke 17:11–19)**

Between Luke 17:10 and 11, the events of John 11 occurred as the Lord Jesus made His way to Jerusalem. At the border of Samaria and Judea, Jesus healed ten lepers at one time, and the fact that the miracle involved a Samaritan made it even more significant (see Luke 10:30–37). Jesus used this event to teach a lesson about gratitude to God.

The account begins with *ten unclean men* (Luke 17:11–13), all of whom were lepers (see the comments on Luke 5:12–15). The Jews and Samaritans would not normally live together, but misery loves company and all ten were outcasts. What difference does birth make if you are experiencing a living death? But these men had hope, for Jesus was there, and they cried out for mercy. The word translated “master” is the same one Peter used (Luke 5:5) and means “chief commander.” They knew that Jesus was totally in command of even disease and death, and they trusted Him to help them.

The account continues by referring to *nine ungrateful men* (Luke 17:17). Jesus commanded the men to go show themselves to the priest, which in itself was an act of faith, for they had not yet been cured. When they turned to obey, they were completely healed, for their obedience was evidence of their faith (see 2 Kings 5:1–14).

You would have expected all ten men to run to Jesus and thank Him for a new start in life, but only one did so—and he was not even a Jew. How grateful the men should have been for the

providence of God that brought Jesus into their area, for the love that caused Him to pay attention to them and their need, and for the grace and power of God that brought about their healing. They should have formed an impromptu men's chorus and sung Psalm 103 together!

But before we judge them too harshly, what is our own "GQ"—"Gratitude Quotient"? How often do we take our blessings for granted and fail to thank the Lord? "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!" (Ps. 107:8, 15, 21, 31) Too often we are content to enjoy the gift but we forget the Giver. We are quick to pray but slow to praise.

The next time you sing "Now Thank We All Our God," try to remember that Martin Rinkhart wrote it during the Thirty Years' War when his pastoral duties were most difficult. He conducted as many as forty funerals a day, including that of his own wife; yet he wrote those beautiful words as a table grace for his family. In spite of war and plague around him and sorrow within him, he was able to give thanks to the Lord from a grateful heart.

Luke's account closes with *one unusual man* (Luke 17:15–19). The Samaritan shouted, "Glory to God!" and fell at Jesus' feet to praise Him and give thanks. It would have been logical for him to have followed the other men and gone to the temple, but he first came to the Lord Jesus with his sacrifice of praise (Ps. 107:22; Heb. 13:15). This pleased the Lord more than all the sacrifices the other men offered, even though they were obeying the Law (Ps. 51:15–17). Instead of *going to* the priest, the Samaritan *became* a priest, and he built his altar at the feet of Jesus (read Ps. 116:12–19).

By coming to Jesus, the man received something greater than physical healing: he was also saved from his sins. Jesus said, "Your faith has saved you" (literal translation), the same words He spoke to the repentant woman who anointed His feet (Luke 7:50). The Samaritan's nine friends were declared clean by the priest, but he was declared *saved* by the Son of God! While it is wonderful to experience the miracle of physical healing, it is even more wonderful to experience the miracle of eternal salvation.

Every child of God should cultivate the grace of gratitude. It not only opens the heart to further blessings but glorifies and pleases the Father. An unthankful heart is fertile soil for all kinds of sins (Rom. 1:21ff).

**Martin, J. A. (1985). Isaiah. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 248)**

a. *A leper returned (17:11–19).*

17:11–14. **Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem ... along the border between Samaria and Galilee.** When asked for help by **10 lepers**, He healed them from **a distance**. This was the second time in the Book of Luke that lepers were healed (cf. 5:12–16). As in the former case, Jesus instructed the men to **show themselves to the priests**. On their way **they were cleansed** from the disease and were made ceremonially clean.

17:15–19. Only **one of** the men—a **foreigner**, that is, **a Samaritan**—came back to thank Jesus. This one understood the significance of what had been done for him. He was **praising God** and **he threw himself at Jesus' feet**, a posture of worship. He apparently understood that Jesus is God, for he placed **faith** in Him. Whether or not he understood that Jesus is the Messiah is not mentioned by Luke. The lack of gratitude by **the other nine** was typical of the rejection of His ministry by the Jewish nation. He alone had the power to cleanse the nation and make it ceremonially clean. However, the nation did not respond properly to Him. The nation accepted

the things that Jesus could do (such as heal them and feed them), but it did not want to accept Him as Messiah. However, those outside the nation (such as this Samaritan leper—a person doubly repulsive to the Jews) were responding.

**Butler, T. C. (2000). Luke (Vol. 3, pp. 280–281). Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers.**

### **B. Dedication Across Boundaries: Overcoming Contagion and Prejudice (17:11–19)**

**SUPPORTING IDEA:** *Dedication overcomes religious and racial prejudice to accomplish God’s work and spread God’s message.*

**17:11.** Jesus maintained his course: “on to Jerusalem” (see 9:21 13:22; 18:31; 19:28). This course did not detour around Samaria, the land populated by people whom Jews considered half-breeds who were unworthy of God’s blessings or their friendship. Entering Samaria and encountering Samaritans made Jesus unclean under the Jewish law.

**17:12–13.** As if he were not unclean enough, Jesus met ten men who suffered from a terrible skin disease (see 5:12). The men knew their condition. Any contact with them made other people unclean (Lev. 13:42–46). Still, they knew Jesus’ reputation for healing, so they shouted from a distance. Calling Jesus “Master” (5:5; 8:24, 45; 9:33, 49), they begged for mercy. Mercy, in their case, would mean empathy and pity that would lead to an act of healing.

**17:14.** Jesus pronounced no great healing formula. He did nothing dramatic. He uttered a simple command: Go let the priests see you. Such a command demanded action from the sick men. To run to the priests meant to show them that they were no longer infected and so could return to normal human contacts. But they had to start to the priests before they were healed. All ten exercised faith in what Jesus said. They started for the priests. When they did, healing came.

**17:15–16.** Healing sent nine of the lepers scurrying to the priests at a rapid clip. But one of the men reversed direction; he returned to thank Jesus. He did not seek a private session to say thank you. He screamed praise and thanksgiving to God so everyone could hear. He knew what Jesus did had come directly from God. The man fell at Christ’s feet to say thank you. Not only was this person an unclean leper, but he was also an unclean Samaritan. Why would Jesus deal with a person doubly unclean? Is this the nature of God, to bring healing and salvation to sinners, unclean people, rather than to the religious self-righteous?

**17:17–19.** Jesus responded to thanksgiving and praise with a surprising question: Where are the other nine who were healed? Did only **this foreigner** return to show what God had done and let God get the glory for it? Note that on Jesus’ lips “foreigner” was not a word of scorn and contempt. of fact to bring to the attention of the town and especially of the disciples the identity of this man. By identifying the foreigner, he showed the “superiority” of the foreign man of faith to the Jewish men who lacked faith.

**The Holy Bible: New International Version. (1984). (Lk 17:11-37). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.**