

## “Only one came back” Luke 17:11-19 Protector Noster 2025

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, today we will examine this passage from the Gospel of Luke to see what it says about being thankful people. So first, let's take a moment and think about what we can be grateful for. I know many moms would be thankful for automatic dishwashers, because they make it possible for us to get out of the kitchen now and again. You married ladies can be grateful for husbands who attack small repair jobs around the house because they usually make them big enough to call in the professionals. We can be thankful for children who put away their things & clean up after themselves. We can even be grateful for smoke alarms, because they let you know when the turkey's done.

Everyone, of course, has their own list of things to be thankful for, but I'm convinced that if we began to make a communal list, we would find that we have much more for which to be grateful than just our material possessions.

Let's get into God's word here and see how we can benefit from what is said in this passage in the gospel of Luke. At the start of this passage, we are given the impression that Jesus is continuing on a journey, and that his final destination will be Jerusalem. He's travelling along the border between Samaria and Galilee. There are two main routes going from Galilee to Jerusalem. One route went through Samaria, and the other route went on the other side of the Jordan River through Perea. Jesus wasn't on either road, but kind of in between them both.

As he entered a certain village, ten lepers yelling together and asking for help from Jesus. People were constantly coming up to Jesus and asking for his help and for his touch. Today, it's this group of lepers. Leprosy was a highly contagious disease, and until the 1970s, it was completely incurable and ultimately fatal. Sin can be like leprosy, if you think about it. If you have contracted leprosy, you are considered an outcast, and you have to stay away from all the other people who do not have leprosy. Sin is like that as well, if we

are sinners, then it keeps us away from God, and we are isolated from him. That’s just the way sin is in our lives; if we sin and do not repent, then there is a natural gap between sinners and God. In today’s scripture, the lepers were asking for Jesus to come and heal them, and we, as sinners, need to do the same thing. We need to ask God to come and heal us from our sin problem.

The lepers had to ask Jesus to heal them! Jesus didn’t come up to them and say “You are healed!” They had to put their plan into action and genuinely ask Jesus for his healing touch. We as sinners must ask Jesus to forgive us. If we ask, we have a loving Father who will forgive us of any sin we’ve ever committed and he will heal us from our sins.

Now in verse 14, Jesus doesn’t say, “go - you are healed”, instead he tells them to go and see the priest. Why would Jesus do that? Why doesn’t he just heal them? It goes back to that scripture in Leviticus 13. The priest was the only one who could judge that the former leper was clean. Jesus knew that, and he always sent them to the priest so they could get that certificate of cleanliness. Jesus could have said to them, “Your faith has healed you”, but he didn’t do that. He tells them to go and see the priest. This becomes a step of faith on behalf of the Lepers. They had to immediately act on the command of Christ. They could have just not believed him and stayed put, but if they did do that then they wouldn’t have been healed. As they were obedient to Christ, they were healed. Jesus set them free, but only after they started off to see the priest. How would you have reacted if Jesus told you that? Would you have gone immediately to see the priest, or would you have stayed put and waited for the answer you wanted to hear?

That’s the way salvation comes to us, God talks to our hearts, and we get moving towards repentance and forgiveness and he saves us and blesses us with

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eternal life. But we have to act on the touch of God’s hand in our lives first, then we will begin to see the blessings of God come.

I like verse 15; it says “one of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice.” There are two things that I like about this verse. The first thing is that they were on their way to the priest, and one notices that he is healed, and he begins to praise God. Verse 16 says, “He threw himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him - and he was a Samaritan. He went back and thanked him. What a great response! That’s a problem area in many of our own lives; we are too quick to take care of our own needs, and we don’t take time to thank God for his blessings.

Just think of all the things that God has done for us and continues to do for us. How do you respond to his blessings? Do you run and make sure all your needs are taken care of, or do you spend the proper amount of time in thanksgiving to him? We cannot stand for that; we need to be extremely thankful to the Lord all the time and we need to show him our appreciation. We need to act like this Samaritan and dive down to the ground and praise him and thank him for what He does for us. He sent his son to die for us, he created us, he provides us with all our needs, he constantly blesses us all the time, and we cannot afford to just stand there and not thank him.

This leads to the penetrating question in verse 17. Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? The other nine that were healed may have taken this blessing from Jesus for granted. Maybe they felt they deserved to be healed because of their faith. Sometimes we can run into that same trap, we get a blessing from God, and we think or say that it’s something we are owed. Let’s always try to do better.

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Jesus blessed the Samaritan even more when he came back with a thankful heart. Some bible experts think that he not only healed his physical difficulties, but he also healed his soul from the disease that was corrupting it. Jesus totally healed him and made him whole. Jesus enlarged his faith. When Jesus heals, he completely heals us, mind, body and soul. We need to call on God to bless us, but before we do that, we need to be thankful people. Jesus paid it all, all to him I owe. Be thankful people, not 10% of the time, but all the time. Amen.