

Thanksgiving Eve or Day
Sermonic Bible Study by Pastor Ginkel
Luke 17:11-19, “Lord, Make Me like The Samaritan!”

*(Pastor – be sure to add your own comments.
Feel free to edit this study as you see fit. When using this study at a
worship service, consider being informal, not using the pulpit or wearing a robe.)*

Why do parents have to so persistently coach their children when they receive a gift, “Say thank you.”? Do you get the feeling that God has to persistently coach us, too?

The children are older and when they receive gifts from Grandpa and Grandma, the mother will say, “Be sure you write a note.” Why does she do that? A week later, mom again reminds them to write a note. Two weeks later, and now there is conflict brewing. Mom is mad because the note has not been written. Are you like those children when it comes to properly thanking God for His gifts?

Verse 11: Now on His way to Jerusalem (*to suffer and die*), Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee.

Verse 12: As He was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met Him. They stood at a distance.

Leprosy was the dreaded disease in Jesus’ day just as cancer is today. None of us want to hear the “C” word from our doctor. That’s the way it was in Jesus’ day about leprosy. Nobody wanted to hear the “L” word. Leprosy was highly contagious. It could come in a mild or a serious form. It was mild when it involved red or white blotches on the skin. It was serious when it involved the lose of toes, ankles, fingers, hands, etc. The way they treated leprosy was to quarantine you. You were separated from your family, from everyone, and you lived in a leper colony. You would cover your body with rags, let your hair grow, and no one could come within twelve feet of you. You were untouchable. Leprosy was THE dreaded disease in Jesus’ time. People regarded leprosy not just as a medical condition but also as God’s judgment. That made them less compassionate, because they regarded leprosy as punishment for sin.

Verse 13: ...and called out in a loud voice, “Jesus, Master, have pity on us!”

We read in **Luke 5:12b-13**, “While Jesus was in one of the towns, a man came along who was covered with leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he fell with his face to the ground and begged Him, ‘Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.’ Jesus reached out His hand and touched the man. ‘I am willing,’ He said. ‘Be clean!’ And immediately the leprosy left him.”

Verse 14: When He saw them, He said, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went, they were cleansed.

Verse 15: One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice.

Verse 16: He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked Him — and he was a Samaritan (*a despised heathen foreigner*).

Verse 17: Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine?"

The nine got the healing, but not the Healer! They ran away from Jesus when He had even greater gifts to give them.

Verse 18: Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?"

Verse 19: Then He said to him, "Rise and go; your faith (saving) has made you well."

The nine apparently did not have faith, and yet, they were healed. God did not tell the Israelites in Egypt, *"If you only had enough faith, I would lead you to the promised land."* God led them out of slavery to Canaan. God acted, not Israel. God did not tell us, *"If you only had enough faith, I would send Jesus to suffer and die for your sins."* It was because we had no faith that he sent us Jesus. As Paul writes in Romans 5:8: *"God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us."* God doesn't wait for us to have enough faith. God acts first. God's actions are to lead to a faithful response.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What similarities do you see between leprosy and sin?
2. The ten men cried, "Jesus, have pity on us." About what do we earnestly need to ask Jesus for His mercy on us? Matthew Henry: *"A sense of our spiritual leprosy should make us very humble whenever we draw near to Christ."*
3. Why would these ten men be fools if they would not have asked Jesus for healing? What is the spiritual application for us today?
4. Is there any significance in the thankful leper praising God in a "loud voice" and then **"he threw himself"** at Jesus' feet?
5. What applications can we make from this in our lives today?
6. The nine ungrateful lepers received the same miracle and owed Jesus the same gratitude, but in their hearts they did not respond. Why?
7. Why do new Christians sometimes out-do older Christians in expressing their joy to Jesus?
8. Helen Keller made this observation: "It would be a blessing if each human being were stricken blind and deaf for a few days." Why does she say this?
9. When we start a new day we often start hitting the ground running. We're busy! Why, in starting each new day, is it good to make it a habit to first thank God for blessings received and then come with requests?