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Preacher: Cody Etter

[0:00] Good morning. It's good to be with you guys today. It's good to actually be back here for the first time in a few weeks. If you have your Bibles with you, we're going to be in Luke today. Luke chapter 17. Before we get there, it was already mentioned about softball.

Obviously, we're having a bit more success than the last time there was a team here. Not that we're having a lot of success. But nonetheless, numerous of you have come out to support us and share in the fellowship, and so we appreciate that.

If any of you aren't aware of when the games are, we play on Monday and Thursday nights in Oakwood. I think there's a couple schedules still out as you enter if you're interested in coming. But nonetheless, obviously, we feel how old we are. I think some of us share in that. But it's a good time of fellowship and just continuing to get to know each other better.

So that's that. But we're going to be in Luke chapter 17 today. We're going to look at verses 11 to 19. If you flip open there, and once you're there, if you'll stand with me, we'll open with God's word here this morning.

[1:19] It says the following. It says, Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him.

They stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, Jesus, Master, have pity on us. When he saw them, he said, Go show yourselves to the priests.

And as they went, they were cleansed. One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him.

And he was a Samaritan. Jesus asked, Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Has no one returned to give praise to God except for this foreigner? And then he said to him, Rise and go.

Your faith has made you well. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for this day once again. We thank you for the opportunity to come into this sanctuary, into this place, and to gather as your people.

[2:18] We thank you for just so many blessings that you bestow upon us. Just life in general. We thank you for salvation, Lord. We thank you for just the opportunity to come together as brothers and sisters in you.

And to study your word and what it means for us. So we pray that we would take the next few moments here to do exactly that. That we'd be able to put maybe the things that we have going on this afternoon, or maybe the things we're concerned or worried about to the side, and just be able to focus on what you desire for each one of us this day.

We pray that you would use this time to equip us and prepare us for the journey that we have ahead in these coming days and weeks, Lord. We pray that you would just have your way this day, that your spirit would move in this place, and that you would just continue to reign supreme in this sanctuary this day.

We just ask all these things in your name, and all God's people said, amen. You can be seated. So here once again, we find ourselves in Luke chapter 17, and we are looking at a passage where Jesus is going to perform essentially a miracle.

And we have, I think, two opportunities today. We can either look at this kind of on the surface and just kind of look at it as a story that many of you probably have read and studied in passing, maybe going all the way back to young children.

[3:33] Or we have the opportunity to kind of look at this passage kind of below the surface, if you will, and see what I think it really kind of

more means for each one of us today. I think that this passage is to set an example for us, an example in a variety of ways.

If I had to give today's sermon a title, it would probably be, Be the One. And you can probably think about why that is in those last couple verses. But I think it also is to set an example for us, in how we are to handle different situations and problems that we face in life, and how God plays into that, and how we should seek that.

And we've already kind of experienced that this morning, in our time of prayer and praise. A lot of the things that are going to be discussed here in this passage, we've already experienced this morning. So in that sense, you know, we're on the right track.

But here we find Jesus, and he's on his way back to Jerusalem. He's left Galilee, and he's making what is essentially his final journey back. This is a journey he'd made numerous times, but this will be his last journey before he, of course, goes to the cross.

And so with that said, many people had heard of Jesus. Many people have seen or maybe even witnessed him. Many people had heard of the things he'd done.

[4:50] And obviously, we see that be the case here in this passage. We find that there's 10 lepers who are obviously dealing with leprosy. If you know what leprosy is, you can see their concern here.

And obviously, leprosy is not really something that we deal with here in 2025, at least in kind of the more first-world countries. It is something that is still dealt with in third-world countries and so forth. But it's a very contagious skin disease, essentially. It's a bacterial infection that's passed through a variety of different ways. But it's very contagious. And because of the symptoms of it, obviously, they didn't want it to spread.

And so you have symptoms such as just kind of patches on your skin that don't look very pleasant and blisters. And then you have the fact that it affects the nervous system and it can affect breathing.

And so there's a whole list of reasons as to why you don't want this infection. You don't want this disease. And so with all of that said, especially in this time, those who came down with leprosy were basically sent into exile, if you will.

[5:58] They were separated out from society. They weren't dealing with it. They weren't able to be a part of society anymore. They had a variety of different ways that it affected their lives, right?

It affected their work, right? They no longer were able to really stay in the jobs that they had. So therefore, they essentially were relegated to being beggars and asking for help instead of earning that themselves.

Their lives, as far as their family was concerned, was flipped upside down. And so was their relationships with friends. And so we find that being a leper in this time was not something that you sought after or desired.

And so therefore, these ten lepers, they see Jesus. Maybe they hear Jesus traveling. And of course, word has made back to them that Jesus might be able to help them with this.

At this time, we could look back and we would see that there's numerous other teachings and miracles that have been recorded. So they would have understood that Jesus was someone who could potentially help them.

[7:00] And so that's exactly what they seek after here. And it starts there in verse 11. It talks about how he's traveling. And in verse 12 and 13, it says, This is their plea.

He says, And so if you don't know what pity is, a lot of times we think about pity and we think about it, you know, it's people feeling sorry for someone else, right?

The dictionary definition of pity is the feeling of sorrow or compassion caused by the suffering or misfortune of others. And so they're obviously calling out to Jesus here, and they're hoping that he essentially will feel sorry for them, for the problems that they are dealing with as far as this leprosy is concerned.

And at this point, once again, they know who Jesus is. They've seen maybe some of his works. It's made its way to them through the grapevine or whatever it might be. And so they have hope that he can be healed, that they can be healed, right?

And so what we find here is interesting. I find Jesus' response here to be very interesting. It says the following in verse 14. It says, When he saw them, he said, Go show yourselves to the priests. [8:18] I find that to be an interesting response because if we flipped over to Leviticus chapter 14, we would find that the first step in being brought back into society, if you will, as far as leprosy is concerned, is that you are to go show yourselves to the priests.

But obviously, there's kind of a missing step in here, a missing point. And that is that you are to first suspect that you have overcome leprosy. Well, at this point in time, they're still actively dealing with leprosy, the last I checked.

Yet Jesus is telling them to go and show themselves to the priests. And so if I put myself into their shoes, and the light bulb would have went off here in this moment, and I would have started to question, Well, why should I go and show myself to the priests if I still have leprosy?

I have nothing to show them. Yet Jesus, what he's really doing here, he's trying to get them to trust him and have faith that as they go, they will be healed. And that's obviously exactly what happens. And so it says, As they went, they were cleansed, right? And so we see Jesus is asking them to kind of be trusting and faithful to him and to his leading.

[9:23] And because of that, as they go, they are cleansed. But once again, if I put myself in their shoes, I would have been like, Well, why should I go show myself to the priests when I still have this leprosy?

I have nothing to show. Yet they have faith and trust that Jesus is going to do work here. And so it continues here. And we find that all ten are cleansed.

But we find that one handles the situation a little bit different. It continues there in verse 15. It says, One of them, when he saw he was cleansed, came back praising God in a loud voice.

So they're all healed, but one notices it. And instead of continuing on to the priests to be brought back into society, instead he stops what he's doing, he returns back to Jesus and he thanks him for what has been done.

He praises God for what has been done. And it says that it's done in a loud voice. And I don't think that those few words there are in there by accident. You know, he obviously could have come back and he could have very privately thanked Jesus and he could have done that on his own.

[10:24] But instead he comes back and he doesn't in a loud voice. Because not only does he want Jesus to know that, but he wants everyone else to know what Jesus has done for him. And I think that sets an example for each one of us as God answers our prayers.

And we'll get to this in just a moment. That we are to be sharing those things. And it's something that obviously we've already done this morning. We've brought our needs before the Lord. And then we've also had a time to share of what God has done for each one of us.

Continuing here, Jesus' reply is very interesting. Once again, I think for us, it stands more as a rhetorical question because we can see the whole event as it's transpired here.

But this is a question for those who were there with him to question and ponder. Verse 17 says, Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine?

Has no one returned to give praise to God except for this foreigner? So Jesus poses the question. He presents the question. Where are the other nine? Were they not cleansed?

[11:25] Obviously, Jesus knows they were in fact cleansed. But with that said, why didn't they return to give praise to God for what had been done? And so I think that's where the example for us kind of exists.

Or one of the examples, right? That we are to be this one. We are to be this one individual who returns and praises God and doesn't just take it for granted as to what has been done.

And so that's kind of the story, right? That's kind of the event that transpired many, many, many years ago where we find that Jesus has, you know, performed this miracle for these individuals.

And this is probably a story that we've kind of looked at on the surface numerous times. But I think it stands here not only as a story to learn from, not only a story to see how when we're faithful that God does bless and answer prayers, not only is it an example of, you know, just what God desires to do in our lives through the power of prayer and through miraculous healing and so forth.

But I think it sets it up as an example really as we are to handle any situation in life. And what I mean by that is there's kind of like four or five different parts to this story. They kind of piece

together and I think we can apply it to many of the problems that we deal with in our lives.

[12:43] And so I hope it will take the next few minutes to just kind of look at it and see this process that Jesus lays out here. And I hope it's a process that you'll then put into practice in your life as we face many problems in this world.

And so once again, I think there's five pieces to this process. And it starts with just right there in verse 11 and 12 where there's a need that is presented. And in this situation, the need is leprosy, right?

Healing from leprosy. That is their need. And so in this situation, it's a need that they can't fix on their own. We can look throughout Scripture and we find that there are a couple instances where we know that people have been healed of leprosy.

But once again, for the most part, it is something that once you have it, you have it for the rest of your life. And so therefore, it's not something that is able to be overcome. You know, here in 2025 and in the years prior, you know, there's simple things like antibiotics that can help you overcome that.

But they don't have that in this time. They don't have that. And so they have a need and this need is really kind of a miraculous need because it's not something minor, but instead it's something very large.

[13:56] And so from that need, that's kind of the first step in this process, from that need is the desire for help. And in this situation, they're asking for Jesus' help in that. They're asking for his pity.

Now, for us today, obviously they could physically go to Jesus and ask him to feel sorry for him, essentially. But here today, we get the opportunity to still go to the Father.

It's just we don't have to physically go to him. We can do that anywhere, anytime. We can bring our needs before him. And so we have the need, but then also the desire for help in that.

You know, I can think of many times in my life where I have seen people with a need. They've even told me they have a need. And when I ask them if they would like me to pray for them in that need, in that moment, they have no interest in it.

Because they don't want God's help in it. Apparently, they just want people to feel sorry for them. Right? They just want pity in that situation. They don't actually want help in it. And so, it's not only having the need, and that need can be our own need.

[14:56] That need can be a need of a fellow brother and sister in Christ. It could be of a family member or even a stranger. Right? A co-worker. Whatever it might be. But it's also having the desire for God's help in that situation.

And so, it's both and, right? It's not only having the need, but it's also bringing that then before the Father. And then we move on. We move through this story. We continue through it. And Jesus gives them a command.

And I think this command here is for us to essentially, is setting the example for each one of us to be obedient to Him. And I think we get these, the third and fourth portion of this process.

We get them out of whack sometimes. Or sometimes we expect God to do things our way. And so, the third portion here is obedience. And then the fourth portion is the answer to the prayer.

And I think oftentimes in our lives, as we bring things before God, especially if they're big things, we say, God, if you answer my prayer this way, or if you perform this miracle, then I will do this for you.

[16:00] Right? That's how we lay it out oftentimes. And we say, you know, I'll get my life on track and I'll start going to church and I'll start, you know, I'll help out in this way from a charity standpoint, whatever it might be, right?

But that's not how it's to work. What we find here is that it's obedience first, then the answer to prayer. Jesus very easily could have healed right then, right there.

But instead, He wanted to set an example not only for them, but also for us. That as you're obedient to God, then their blessings are to follow.

And we can look all throughout Scripture and we can think of numerous times where, especially in the Gospels here, where Jesus had people come to Him with needs. In every single instance, He expects obedience before the answer.

Every single one. That's what we find. And so I don't think it's a mistake that that is the case. You see, Jesus desires our obedience. He desires a relationship with us in our day-to-day life.

[17:05] And He doesn't want that to be just because He's done things for us. He wants it to be because of what He's already done for us. And so because of His love for us, we ought to love Him.

And so that really goes back here to this idea of obedience. And so whether it's just kind of in general, as we think about Scripture and being obedient to, you know, turning away from sin and following in His ways and being faithful to Him, or whether it be in a specific situation where He is commanding you to go and do a specific thing for someone, right?

Or maybe it's listening to someone, or maybe it's saying something to someone, or doing something for someone. Whatever the situation, however He is expecting you to be obedient, it's important that we are doing exactly that.

And through that, we find once again that there's an answer to the prayer, right? And so it starts with the need, then it goes to bringing that before the Lord, desiring help.

Then we find obedience being brought into it, and then finally we find the answer to prayer. And oftentimes, that is where it ends, right? We leave it right there oftentimes, right?

[18:17] We just spent, I don't know how much time, but we spent numerous minutes here bringing our needs before the Father. And that's great, and that's wonderful, and I will say, it's one thing that our church does better than most I've ever been to.

A lot of times, I fill in at probably 15 different churches on various Sundays now, and in those, many of them have time for prayer and praise.

A lot of them I go to either have no prayers, or maybe one or two, and rarely have any praises. It's unfortunate. I'm not sure why that's the case, but obviously that's not something that we deal with here, right?

We get to spend, you know, 10, 15, 20 minutes some Sundays hearing about the things, the needs that we each have in our lives, but also hearing of what God's been doing.

And I think it's good to hear of what God's been doing. I think just as in this passage, we find that Jesus has them return, and he's praising them in a loud voice.

[19:17] They could have seen what God had done, right? They could have, you can physically see that someone has been healed of leprosy, right? That they have overcome that. But at the same time, to hear that and to know that of what God has done is pretty amazing.

Instead of kind of catching it out of the glimpse of your eye, instead now everyone is focusing in on that. And so as we get the opportunity to share, especially in public, about what God has done in our lives and how he's answered our prayers, it's important for us to do so.

But once again, I know that's something that we do a pretty good job at here. But once again, it's something that shouldn't really even be contained within these walls, right? That's something that should go forth throughout all aspects of our life, whether it be in our work life or in our family, right? At the dinner table, or as we gather with loved ones, or even just kind of in passing as we see each other. It's important that we share what God has done. And so that's kind of the process, if you will. And what we find is only 10%, essentially, of these individuals follow through with that process. All 10 were healed, but only one thanked God for what had been done.

[20:30] And I think, you know, it kind of matches up with our lives, right? It's very easy for us to bring our needs before the Lord sometimes, right?

For some of us, even, it's difficult to ask for help. But oftentimes, it's a lot easier for us to bring those needs before the Father than it is for us to thank Him for what He has done. Or thank others for coming alongside us and praying in that.

And so it's important that we do all of that. There's a variety of different reasons we are to praise God. The list is really endless. We could spend the entire day here.

Over in Psalm 145, David writes about praising God a bit. And so I think it's going to potentially show up on here, but Psalm 145, 1-7, David talks about a variety of different reasons to praise God. And obviously, this list is much more vast than even he mentions here. But it goes from things that are very basic to more specific. It says the following.

[21:32] It says, I will exalt you, my God the King. I will praise your name forever and ever. Every day I will praise you and extol your name forever and ever. Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise.

His greatness no one can fathom. One generation commends your works to another. They tell of your mighty acts. They speak of your glorious splendor of your majesty. And I will meditate on your wonderful works.

They tell of the power of your awesome works. And I will proclaim your great deeds. They celebrate your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness.

Once again, David lays out a variety of different reasons that he praises God. And that list is much more vast than that. But these same reasons exist for us today.

There are so many different things. I love, one of the things I love in here is it talks about how different generations are singing of that praise and how it goes beyond just one individual.

[22:35] But instead, it kind of is contagious, if you will, as we think about leprosy being contagious. Our praises should be contagious too. If we spend time with people who are bringing those needs, and not only the needs, but also the praises back to the Father, then I think we will then too just naturally be encouraged to do the exact same.

And I think that's part of the reason why here at this church we spend numerous minutes giving our prayers and bringing our praises before the Lord.

And maybe that's why at other churches I don't exactly experience that or see that. But once again, whether it be these things that are listed here or whether it be specific instances in our lives, there are many things for us to praise God about.

Whether it be just simple answers to prayer, whether it be for His salvation that He has given to us, whether it be for His goodness, whether it be for fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, whether it be for the fruits of the Spirit, whatever it might be.

The list is long and very vast, and it's important for us to be returning those praises to Him each and every day. So I encourage you to do exactly that, that we learn from this passage that we don't just simply look at it from the surface, but instead that we will look and see that He is really kind of laying out how we are to handle different situations in our lives.

[23:57] As we face these situations, it's important that we don't just deal with these on our own, but instead that we bring our needs before the Father because He desires to help us in that.

But He does want us to kind of do that, do our part in asking of that. He's desiring to be in a relationship with us each and every day. He doesn't want it to be, He doesn't want to be treated essentially as like a genie in a bottle or a wishing well where we bring our needs before Him and just expect Him to be answered.

He's desiring a relationship. And so I hope that each one of us as we go throughout the days and weeks ahead that we will participate in that relationship. And I think it's important for that word, right, because sometimes we have relationships with other people, but if we're not actively participating in those, then is it really that much of a relationship?

Right? We can look at that from our family, our spouses, our relationships with our kids, our work life, whatever it might be. It requires our effort. It really requires both people's efforts.

And so God is always willing to give His effort, and it's important for us to follow through with our part as well. And it goes from us in our conversations with each other, but also in our relationship with God just directly and bringing our needs before Him, but also bringing our praises before Him and just actively being obedient to Him, not only to specific situations, just really with our entire life.

[25:26] And so I hope as we go throughout the days ahead and really just throughout this specific day that we will start and be able to look inward and see, you know, have I been doing my part?

Have I been bringing my needs before the Lord? Are there things that I'm facing I think I can handle by myself, or have I been bringing all of those needs before the Father and asking for His help in it? But also, as I seek after faithfully His answers to those prayers, am I being obedient in the other aspects of my life? Because obviously, as we have needs and some of the needs that are mentioned, you know, weekly here, they're needs that have been mentioned for months or even sometimes years, but we need to faithfully and diligently continue to seek after those answered

prayers and trust and believe that those answers will come.

So let's close in prayer as we kind of close this portion of the service out. Lord, we thank You for this day. We thank You for the time that we've had to open Your Word. We thank You for the truth of Scripture. We thank You that in this instance that we see a miracle that transpires, but we also see faithfulness that transpires, Lord.

We see not only Your faithfulness, but also the faithfulness that is exemplified by those lepers. You know, as I put myself in their shoes, Lord, I could have questioned.

[26:55] I could have said, well, why do I need to go to the priests? I haven't been healed yet, but instead they trusted that You were going to heal them. And so, Lord, we pray that we would learn from that example, that we would be able to look at this passage as a whole as an example for our lives, that as we face different trials and tribulations, that we would know that we don't need to face those on our own, but instead that we can bring them before You and that You desire to help us in those.

So we pray that we would bring those needs, but also that we would be faithful all the way through, that we would be faithful to You, that we would be obedient to You, that we would see the answers to those prayers, but also that we wouldn't keep those to ourselves, but instead that we would return praise and glory to You, not only in private, Lord, but also in a very public setting.

That way others can be encouraged of the work that You are doing and just reminded that You, in fact, are still in control many, many years after an event like this transpired.

So, Lord, we pray that we would just reflect on our own lives, that we'd be able to reflect and see have we been handling things that are on our own, or have we been bringing these needs before You? Lord, if there are things and aspects of our lives that we need to bring before You, maybe sin that we are dealing with, the ways that we are not being obedient to You, we pray that You would bring that to the light, that You would show us that and that we would be able to return that to You, that we would accept that we cannot face all of this on our own, that we, just like these men that day, they couldn't fix leprosy on their own, and they understood that they needed the help of the Savior, of the Father.

And so, Lord, we pray that we would learn from that example and that we would be able to bring those needs, even that we have, whether they're big or small, that we would bring them before You each and every day.

[28:47] So, Lord, we pray that You would just have Your way in our lives. We pray, Lord, that the many needs that we have, that we've already brought before You, that You would continue to do a good work in those. Whether that means us patiently waiting for weeks or months or even years, Lord, or whether that means they get answered today.

We just praise You for that. We thank You for answered prayers. We pray that You would just continue to work in our lives this day. And all God's people said, Amen. As we close out this morning, I want to read a verse from Ephesians 6, verse 18.

It says, And pray in the Spirit on all occasions, with all kinds of prayer and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. So as we go forth throughout these days ahead, I just encourage you to do the first part in that process, right?

Because that's really where it starts. And bring your needs, but also the needs of others before the Lord. But then continue all the way through that process and make sure to return that praise to the Father as He answers our prayers.

Let's close in prayer. Lord, we thank You once again for this day. We pray that You would just go before us, that You would guide us, that You would give us opportunities to be Your hands and feet this day. Give us opportunities to serve You throughout the week ahead.

[30:06] Give us the words to say when You have things that You want us to say. But just close our lips, Lord, when You want us to listen. Help us to be faithful to You, but also just faithful to Your leading, Lord, that You would guide us where we are to go for Your name's sake.

And so, Lord, we bring these needs before You. We trust and believe that You will have Your way in our lives. We pray that You would give us safety and protection throughout this day ahead and that You would just do, continue to do a good work in our lives.

And so we praise You for that. We bring all these needs before You and ask them in Your name.
And all God's people said, Amen. Have a good week, everyone.