

The Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity

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Date: 06 September 2026

Preacher: Fr. Wade Miller

[0:00] In the very opening words of Leviticus chapter 14, we read, 'The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, And then what follows in Leviticus chapter 14 are detailed directions for the sacrifices that are required for the healed leper that the priest would then offer in the tabernacle and eventually the temple.'

Leprosy was a disease with no cure in the ancient world. It affected one's skin and could cause discoloration and even disfigurement of the body.

Lepers were often viewed as suspects. Most Israelites thought that this disease happened only to those who had sinned or those under the judgment of God.

And if this disease was not bad enough, this humiliation made lepers live a very lonely, difficult, and hard life.

Such people were unclean and they were sent to live outside of the city or the camp or the village, away from the population being shunned by their neighbors.

[1:41] We read in our gospel text of Luke chapter 17 how ten lepers stood from afar and they cried out to Jesus to have mercy upon them.

Jesus tells these ten ostracized lepers to go and to show themselves to the priest, fulfilling the law that we just read about here in Leviticus chapter 14.

And as they made their way to the priest, suddenly they were healed from their disease. And yet only one of these healed lepers went back to offer thanks and praise to Jesus.

And this one leper happened to be a Samaritan. He was twice considered unclean by the Israelites. But this man runs back to Jesus and we read the following.

When he saw that he was healed, he returned and with a loud voice, he glorified God, fell on his face at our Lord's feet, giving him thanks.

[2:54] And for good measure, we go on to read, for he was a Samaritan. Jesus inquires about the other nine. Why had only one of these ten lepers come back to give glory to God for such healing?

There are a couple of observations I want us to consider this morning from this text of Luke chapter 17. The first is that our Lord is.

He is the great and eternal high priest who brings healing to those who long for mercy. The priest in the old covenant would offer various sacrifices, atoning for sin, for healing.

But Jesus now stands as the eternal high priest who not only pronounces a declaration of healing upon someone, He is the source of all healing because He is the source of all life.

He is God who has come for His people in order to bestow grace and healing upon them by changing them from being alienated and diseased people due to sin to now being children of God who share in His life.

[4:22] You see, we were like the lepers in this story. Sin has had devastating consequences upon us all. We were estranged from God because of the effects of sin.

Sin ravages our relationships with others and bars us from God. But God became man in order to offer the final and ultimate sacrifice for our sins by way of His death upon the cross.

Jesus is not only the priest, He becomes the sacrifice. The once and for all sacrifice. And Jesus restores us by taking our disease of sin that leads to death upon Himself and now makes us His children who now have life in and through Him because of His cross.

And this life is given by our Lord who is not only the final and sinless sacrifice, He is both God and man who defeated death by way of His resurrection, His victory over death.

Therefore, our Lord transformed death into life. The dwelling place of God is not found in a temple with a priest offering bloody sacrifices day after day.

[5:57] The dwelling of God is made present by the Holy Spirit who imparts life and grace as we are now united with Christ, our eternal high priest.

Hebrews chapter 10 verses 19 through 22 spells this out beautifully. Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that He opened for us through the curtain, that is, through His flesh, and since we have a great high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

So the second observation I want us to see has to do with the response of this Samaritan. What this Samaritan teaches us. We do not read that the Samaritan goes back, casually shakes Jesus' hand, and goes about His day as usual.

We read that this man, with a loud voice, glorified God and fell down on his face at our Lord's feet, giving Him thanks.

One of the reasons that we do not simply sit in comfy chairs, listen to some lively music and a lecture, is because we follow what the church has always done, and that is to worship, to worship our God by humbling ourselves before the mighty throne of God.

[7:47] This Samaritan recognizes that he is not merely in the presence of a prophet or some self-help coach. He stands in the presence of God Almighty, the Creator and Maker of all things visible and invisible.

And the right response is not only to fall on one's face before God, it is to give Him thanks and praise throughout our lives, every day, every day, every day.

The Greek word here is Eucharistone, where we get the word, as you can imagine, Eucharist. Giving thanks. A life of giving thanks is to be our life.

Offering up thanks and praise to our God for the healing that we have received. So here we have an unclean man who falls on his face before Jesus and gives thanks to the eternal high priest because he has been cleansed.

And likewise, we are called to glorify God, approaching our Lord with deep reverence, participating in this meal called the Holy Eucharist, where we receive healing and grace.

[9:11] And we do this offering our praise and thanksgiving to the one who has overcome death and the grave. The one who has given us eternal life.

The one who is life. The one who now brings us into this living life. Reflecting once again on those words from Hebrews chapter 10.

They are amazing words. The writer of Hebrews says, We can draw near with a true heart. Why? Because our hearts have been sprinkled clean and our bodies washed with pure water.

Baptism. And we can enter with confidence because Christ has opened the curtain, heaven, through his own flesh, the Eucharist.

Therefore, let us be like this Samaritan. Let us be like this leper. Let us live our lives perpetually giving thanks to our eternal high priest, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

[10:22] Because he has healed us. He has made us well. And he has given us life eternal. Amen. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

Amen. Amen. Amen.