

Luke 17:11-19

Introduction: Between 17:10 and 17:11, the events of John 11:1-53 take place. Lazarus is miraculously raised from the dead. The Jewish leaders plot Jesus' death (John 11:53). So Jesus takes His disciples and heads to a little village called Ephraim, located about 12-13 miles NNE of Jerusalem, about 5 miles ENE of Bethel. He waits here until it is time for Him to travel with the crowds to Jerusalem for Passover at the end of March and early April 33 AD. These verses detail the beginning of the final journey to His death in Jerusalem. He will travel north toward Galilee, east across the Jordan River, south through Perea to the crossing near Jericho, and then west to Bethany and Jerusalem.

- 1) The setting for this healing miracle—17:11-13
 - a) What Jesus was doing?—17:11-12
 - i) He was traveling north of Jerusalem—17:11 ¹¹ *Now it happened during the proceeding (cf. 9:51; 13:22) to Jerusalem that **He** (emphatic) was also passing between Samaria and Galilee.*
 - (1) This reference to Samaria hints at 17:16.
 - (2) This would put Jesus in the eastern end of the Jezreel Valley and the beginning of the Harod Valley leading to the city of Beth-shan and down into the Jordan River valley.
 - ii) He was met by ten anonymous men in an anonymous village—17:12
 - (1) The isolated meet Jesus—17:12 ¹² *And as He entered a certain village, ten leprous men who stood at a distance met Him.*
 - (a) This was in agreement with the Law: Lev. 13:45-46; Num. 5:2-3
 - (b) The exact skin condition is unknown to us today.
 - b) What were the ten miserable men doing?—17:13
 - i) The miserable appeal to His merciful authority—17:13 ¹³ *And **they** (emphatic) raised their voice (they were united in their request), saying, “Jesus, Master [ἐπιστάτης], have mercy on us.”*
 - (1) The last use of ἐπιστάτης was in Luke (5:5; 8:24, 45; 9:33, 49)
 - (2) Instead of crying “Unclean!” they ask for mercy.
 - (3) Many can appeal to God for mercy at the same time. You don't have to wait in line.
 - ii) Truths to remember
 - (1) They have heard of Him and His ability and willingness to heal others. Will He do this for them?
 - (2) This emphasis on their unity is important in light of 17:17-18. They are in agreement concerning what needs to be done.
 - (3) They know they are undeserving of His help. Anything that Jesus might do will be a display of mercy.
 - (4) If you haven't read any further, ask yourself: What will Jesus do with these men? How will He respond to their request?

- 2) Jesus heals all ten miserable men—17:14
 - a) He demonstrates the certainty of the miracle by commanding them to obey the Law—17:14a ¹⁴ *And when He saw them, He said to them, “Go and show (demonstrate the evidence that you are ritually clean from the disease) yourselves to the priests.”*
 - i) Cf. Lev. 13:19; 14:1-11
 - ii) “The command itself shows that Jesus will act as they turn to present themselves to these officials.” (Bock)
 - b) All ten are healed as they obeyed—17:14b *And it happened that as they departed, they were cleansed.*
 - i) Similar to Luke 7:1-10, Jesus heals from a distance.
 - ii) They can feel and see (cf. 17:15) the changes because of Jesus. Others can see the changes because of Jesus.
 - iii) They can return to a life of normalcy.

- 3) Jesus shines the light on a solitary believer—17:15-19
 - a) The grateful response by a surprising individual—17:15-16
 - i) He alone voluntarily and enthusiastically glorifies God—17:15 ¹⁵ *Now one of them, when he saw that he had been healed, turned back, glorifying [δοξάζω] God with a loud voice,*
 - (1) This Samaritan is attempting to cause others to have a good opinion of the God of Israel.
 - (2) This is **good** in that he is trying to do the right thing. It is **bad** in that he is trying to convince the people of Israel concerning their own God.
 - ii) He alone humbly thanks Jesus—17:16a ¹⁶ *and he fell on his face at His feet (whereas before he had kept his distance; cf. 17:12), giving thanks [εὐχαριστέω] to Him.*
 - (1) The man recognized God is working through Jesus.
 - (2) Luke only uses this word for giving thanks to God. (cf. 18:11; 22:17, 19)
 - iii) He alone was a real outsider—17:16b *And he was a Samaritan.* (cf. 17:11)
 - (1) Regarded by the Jews as a half-breed heretic.
 - (2) Clearly this man was not worthy to be healed.
 - b) Jesus responds with a series of questions—17:17-18 ¹⁷ *And Jesus, having responded, said,*
 - i) Jesus assumes a positive answer—“*Were not ten cleansed?*”
 - ii) Jesus highlights the ungrateful—*But where are the nine?*
 - (1) Jesus knows where they are, but He wants people to think about how these Jewish men simply walked away from the One who healed them.
 - (2) Ingratitude is natural to the human soul (cf. Rom. 1:21)
 - (3) Where is their praise to God? Where is their gratitude?
 - iii) Jesus highlights the fact that only this outsider listened and responded to His message and miracle—¹⁸ *Was no one found who turned back to give glory to God except this (Samaritan) foreigner?”*

- iv) Gratitude to God should come before attempting to obtain ritual cleansing.
 - (1) Focus on heart attitude before external ritual.
 - v) Pentecost reminds us: Thanksgiving is the recognition of indebtedness. The giving of thanks is a recognition of blessings bestowed. To give thanks to the bestower is an obligation of the recipient. The thankless one counts any benefit as his just due for which he feels no sense of obligation or need to return thanks.
 - c) Jesus encourages the solitary man—17:19 ¹⁹ *And He said to him,*
 - i) A commanding word of authority—“Rise, and go your way;
 - (1) But where can he go? He’s a Samaritan. To whom can he demonstrate what Jesus has done for him? Jewish priests won’t accept him. To what priests can he turn? His priests won’t accept him.
 - ii) A comforting word of grace and mercy—*your faith has rescued* [pf. act. ind. of σῶζω] *you.*”
 - (1) God apparently worked in this man’s life differently than He did in the lives of the nine Jewish lepers.
 - (2) The nine apparently settled for so little in comparison. Their response never moved beyond receiving kindness to the exercise of faith. Faith responds to God’s goodness and publicly acknowledges God and Jesus.
- 4) Lessons for us to remember
- a) The necessity of faith in the powerful God of mercy
 - i) Mere exposure to God’s grace is not enough
 - b) The daily freshness of His mercies
 - c) The necessity of gratitude for His mercy
 - i) Genuine thanksgiving is an act of worship