

Bringing Glory To God
Luke 17:11-19

A question as we begin our study of this scripture passage today, "How important is it that we bring 'glory' to God, that you, that I, bring 'glory' to God, in the person that we are and in the things that we do?"

If you are like me, too often, and unfortunately so, within the busyness of all the matters that take place in our day, bringing glory to God probably seldom even enters our minds.

And folks, may I say with great concern that such a response is not only troubling, it must never be allowed to take place.

As I read the words of the scripture passage that we will study today, I am reminded of how God recorded some very simple, but at the same time very demanding requirements within the words of our scriptures, words that inform us of an event and then reveal and instruct us as to what our response really should always be.

Here in this scripture passage, Jesus very generously healed ten men of the very painful disease of leprosy. And while yes, He had compassion on those men for their suffering, it seems that our Lord has also given us this account for another very important reason. And that is to help us to know just how important it is to remember that all the many blessings we receive each day actually come from our Lord and that we must always remember to turn and give Him the "Glory" for all those blessings He gives to us.

Listen to this account of the healing of these men given here in Luke chapter 17, and let's consider their response to the blessing He gave to them. Here, beginning in verse 11,

¹¹ Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

¹² Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off.

¹³ And they lifted up *their* voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!"

¹⁴ So when He saw *them*, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed.

¹⁵ And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God,

¹⁶ and fell down on *his* face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan.

¹⁷ So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where *are* the nine?"

¹⁸ Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?"

¹⁹ And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."
(Luke 17:11-19)

In the "Doxology", that is sung in many of our churches each Sunday, we bring glory to God with the words,

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

And also, in the Westminster Catechisms, the first question of those Catechisms asks,

"What is the chief end of man?"

And the answer is,

"The Chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever."

And then also, in Romans chapter 11, speaking about the Lord Jesus, are the words I quote for us often,

³⁶ For of Him and through Him and to Him *are* all things, to whom *be* glory forever. Amen. (Romans 11:36)

And then, here in our scripture passage, Jesus asked the question,

¹⁸ Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?" (Luke 18:18)

Dear Christian, as we can see from these and so many, many other scriptures like them, "giving glory to God" for who He is and for all that He does is the most important thing we could ever do!

And that is one of the very special truths that God has given to us within these words that we'll study here today. Here in this passage about the healing of these ten lepers, may we first embrace the understanding that there is always much more taking place beneath the surface of an encounter with Jesus than is understood with our ordinary senses.

These are brief words, but they are filled with unspoken meaning.

First of all, may we acknowledge again that God is sovereign over all His realm. And further, that He inserts His providential hand into all of the matters that take place within it. We need only to ask God to open our "spiritual eyes" that we might see His loving hand.

Here, Jesus and His disciples were traveling through Samaria, on their way to Jerusalem when they encountered these ten lepers. We know that this was not a "chance encounter" as we so often want to think. But rather this was a very divine appointment, one in which ten men would receive a blessing and then in which their response would be measured back to them.

How do we know that this was not a chance encounter? We know that because of the simple words of the Lord Jesus that I quote for us so often, here given in John chapter 6 verse 44, where He tells us that,

⁴⁴ "No one comes to me except my Father draws him".(John 6:44)

And also, in John 6:65, He tells us that

⁶⁵ . . . no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father".(John 6:65)

Those men with leprosy may not have known why they ventured along that roadway that day, but we do. God drew them to be there, so that they might receive a divine healing from their disease and suffering. But also even more, so that they might have the opportunity to receive a far greater healing, a healing of their soul.

But we also see here that God allowed the freedom of these men's will to enter into their response. It is God's desire that with the freedom of our will, we will turn and bless Him back for the blessings we have received.

We observe here that at least one of these ten men responded rightly to the great blessing he had received. But unfortunately, the other nine fell short. Yes, they received the healing of their bodies, but they missed out on the far greater blessing of the healing of their souls.

And that is one of the instructions that God intends for you and me today. That we too often probably grab hold of the more surface blessings of God and quickly go running off to enjoy them, while we leave the greater blessings still in His hand.

As we view these ten men, we can probably assume that all ten really did believe in God, at least in a traditional sense. But is that ever really enough?

It is one thing to know that God is God, that Jesus is the Christ, the one who came to seek and to save those who are lost. And even to also know, as the doxology tells us, "from whom all blessings flow". And then for us to even go to that source of healing water and to find relief for our suffering. But to go all the way and receive all of the blessings that God is willing to give to us is probably a rare occurrence, here, only one in ten.

Leprosy was then and is now a very different and unique form of disease. It manifests itself in a very visible and very painful rotting of the flesh. And it is usually terminal.

But beyond the physical suffering that came with leprosy in those days was also the prevailing belief that leprosy was a direct punishment from God for spiritual misconduct.

And when we read here that these lepers "stood afar off", we know that they did that for two reasons, first because the disease itself was contagious. But secondly and equally demanding was the assumption that these men were also very spiritually unclean.

And may I say that those ideas and beliefs were not far-fetched. They can be seen clearly within the Laws of Moses.

That is one of the reasons why as Jesus, the original "Giver of the Law" healed these men, He told them to go and abide by the requirements within the Laws of Moses. He told them in verse 14 to,

¹⁴ . . . "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. (Luke 17:14)

The time and the dispensation of the Law were still in effect, and Jesus knew it. And some of these men being Israelites, knew that it was right and proper for them to abide by the law and to go and show themselves to the priest. And then also to go through all the other remaining ritual cleansings prescribed by the law.

But note the response here by the Samaritan. He was not a pure Jew and was not usually accepted by the Jewish priests, especially not in the way the ordinary Jews would have been accepted for cleansing.

So, he did what we non-Jews should do. He turned back immediately and went straight to Christ. And there, this "foreigner" did the very right thing. He gave glory to the one from whom all blessings flow, the Lord Jesus. It was the right thing to do, for it really is, as we read in Romans 11:36,

³⁶ . . . of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen. (Romans 11:36)

A question . . . what does God intend for you and me to gain from these words of this passage today?

He wants you and me to know that when we suffer from one of life's many illnesses, difficulties, and dilemmas, there really is only one source by which and from which we should seek relief.

So often, we quickly run to and then give credit to our available secular cures, our doctors, our psychologists, and our medication. And yes, they often each do have their place.

But here, in this disease of leprosy, God presents us with one of those conditions that is not curable by secular methods. And that was intentional, so that we would recognize immediately that there is only one real and effective source for relief from much of our suffering.

If we are careful as we read these scriptures, we will see clearly that most illness is not random, brought on by a chance encounter with a virus germ. As we can see as we read the account of the awful illnesses suffered by the Old Servant

Job, the devil and his minions can and do bring about all sorts of disease and suffering to our bodies and souls.

And also folks, as much as many of our Christian brethren don't want to accept it, God Himself can and will bring about an illness within us. He ministers to each of us individually and personally. And if it will accomplish a purpose that He has planned for our lives, if our illness or disease will bring glory to Him. Then yes, He, God will bring about suffering in us.

Two accounts that come quickly to my mind are those involving the man who was born blind and was healed by Jesus. Those words in John chapter 9,

¹ As he passed by, he (the Lord Jesus) saw a man blind from birth. ² And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³ Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. (John 9:1-3)

The other, the sickness and the death of Jesus' close friend, Lazarus. You'll recall that when Jesus was told that His friend Lazarus was very sick, He did not rush to save him from death. And that was for a very important purpose, to demonstrate to those people then and to you and me now that Jesus can not only bring healing to us, He is also our God who will resurrect us from the dead. Those words in John chapter 11,

²⁵ Jesus said to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, ²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25-26)

Folks, these precious words of scripture tell us a truth that we must not allow to get past our understanding. This man, the Lord Jesus, is God, the one who created all things and who holds all things together by the power of His might. And to Him belongs all the "glory" and "honor" that we can possibly give to Him.

And now here in this passage of scripture that we're studying today, we see that taking place. And it is an instruction to us being demonstrated by this leper who was healed by the Lord Jesus. His long and terminal illness of leprosy being simply spoken out of existence with just a word from the mouth of the Lord Jesus. And all for the purpose of "bringing glory to God".

As we consider those words, "bringing glory to God", please do understand that this "glory" is not the same kind of "glory" that our sports stars and our

entertainers reach for as they perform. No, not at all! Their glory seeking is a corrupt and sinful behavior.

No, the "glory" that we are to ascribe to our Lord has to do with His "Honor" and the "Beauty of His Holiness". He is pure and holy and righteous in all that He is and all that He does and we are to attribute that back to Him at every moment and for all things.

As the words of Psalm 119 tell us, "God is good and He does good". And it is God's deepest desire that you and I join with Him, be "one with Him" in His holiness and His righteousness. And if we do that, then all of the blessings that flow into us from Him and then out from us will bless everyone we encounter. And as we do our part in this blessed transaction, then God is glorified.

And that is absolutely the way it should be with every breath we breathe here in this life. And that is the way it will fully be once we get to heaven. There, all things will be pure, and holy and righteous, and all of us saints will eternally rejoice in that very special "glory of God".

But for now, and for a little while longer, we must continue with the provision that we have. And we must consecrate ourselves to this purpose spoken about here in our scripture passage, that of bringing "glory to God".

As you and I walk daily in amongst the unbelieving world of the pride-filled entertainers, the athletes, the intellectuals, the academics, the scientists, and all the many religionists, and on and on, we must remain faithful to Christ, and we must do as this one leper did. We must turn, fall at His feet and give glory and praise and thanksgiving to Christ.

Before we close for today, may we consider again all that took place here within Jesus' encounter with these men, and then also, what our response is to be?

First of all, within the flesh of these ten lepers, Jesus wrought a powerful miracle. With only a "word from His mouth" He was able to make perfect a thing that was horribly imperfect. He was able to dispel any and all corruption that the world, the flesh and the devil had put upon these men.

But remember also, the even more special miracle of healing. For the Samaritan, Jesus brought “eternal healing”. He not only healed the man’s body, He also healed the man’s soul. Verse 14

¹⁴ So when He saw *them*, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed.

¹⁵ And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God,

¹⁶ and fell down on *his* face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. (Luke 17:14-16)

And in verse 19 Jesus said to the man,

¹⁹ . . . Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole. (Luke 17:19)

This folks is the right way to respond to an encounter with Jesus! Unfortunately, for nine of those ten men that received this great blessing, healing of their bodies was all that they probably received. They seemed to have left the best of His healing still in His hand.

Here, Jesus clearly expresses to us that there is so much, much more to be received from Him. Just as with this one man, we can have not only the healing of our bodies, we can also have the eternal healing of our souls, blessed salvation.

Which then brings us again to the question that is being presented to us within the words of our scripture today . . . Do we stop and take the time to give “glory” to God for the blessings that so generously flow to us each day?

For many of us, we do have reasonably good health. Do we give God the “glory” for our health? As we look across the room at our beloved wife or husband, do we quietly praise our Lord for them? And what about our children? Do we praise our Lord for our children? And what about the home we live in and the car that we drive, the food that we eat and that delicious cup of coffee that we wake up to each morning? Oh dear Christian, it all comes from Him, our Lord. For it is from Him and to Him and through Him that all things flow!

This is our part folks! This is our part! We must humble ourselves and be willing to receive blessings from our Lord’s hands. And then we must be willing to fall at His feet and give glory and praise to Him for each and every one of His “good and perfect gifts” to us.

May we close with these words of the “Doxology”!

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Pray with me.