

## LESSON 5

JULY 4, 2021

### UNIT II. JESUS TEACHES ABOUT FAITH EXPRESSING THANKS

**DEVOTIONAL READING:** Isaiah 56:1-8

**BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES:** Leviticus 13–14; Luke 5:12-16; 17:11-19

**PRINT PASSAGES:** Leviticus 13:45-46; Luke 17:11-19

#### KEY VERSE

One of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God. (Luke 17:15, KJV)

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One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. (Luke 17:15, NIV)

#### LESSON AIMS

As a result of experiencing this lesson, you should be able to do these things:

- Explore reasons why only one of ten healed lepers turned back to Jesus in thanksgiving.
- Sense the need in your life for increased expressions of gratitude to God.
- Develop a plan for showing thanksgiving to God and others on a daily basis.

#### KEY TERMS

**Compassion (Luke 17:13)**—Greek: *eleeó* (el-eh-eh'-o): “pity” (NIV) or “mercy” (KJV).

**Lepers (Luke 17:12)**—Greek: *lepros* (lep-ros'): persons afflicted with leprosy (a skin disease); “men who had leprosy” (NIV).

**Lifted (Luke 17:13 [KJV only])**—Greek: *airó* (ah'-ee-ro): to raise, take up, lift—in this case the voice.

**Met (Luke 17:12)**—Greek: *apantaó* (ap-an-tah'-o): to have gone to meet; encountered.

**Show (Luke 17:14)**—Greek: *epideiknumi* (ep-ee-dike'-noo-mee): to show; to prove; display; “shew” (KJV).

**Unclean (Leviticus 13:45)**—Hebrew: *tame* (taw-may'): impure; contaminated.

#### PREPARING THE LESSON

- Refer to the *Townsend Press SS Commentary Teacher's Edition* for an additional lesson plan—with word studies, insights on teaching adults, learner matrices, etc.
- Review last week's student assignments (“Your Life” and Your World!”).
- Thoroughly review your student book for your adult or young adult class.
- Please note that you have the option of using your subscription bundle supplements, i.e., Lesson Scenario, Student Activity Sheet, SSL-AAG

#### WHY THIS LESSON MATTERS

People who receive mercy sometimes neglect to acknowledge the one who helped them. Do you show appreciation? Ten lepers, isolated by their skin diseases, were healed—but only one, a Samaritan, returned to Jesus and offered thanks.

## **THE LESSON IN FOCUS**

Many of us have experienced the sting of being treated as an outcast because of a personal trait or limitation that others find undesirable. People shun others because of physical appearance, race, reputation, political beliefs, moral values, income, education, or any other point of difference. Those who would be honest can admit that, at some level, they harbor some type of discomfort or prejudice toward some individuals or groups. The most common prejudices are based on conditions beyond a person's control, such as skin shade or color, physical disability, lower mental functioning, and even aging. Christians should demonstrate the kind of love that is not hindered by another's differences. We should readily offer warmth and assistance to those who are rejected by others or are unable to fend for themselves. Throughout history, prejudice has been a source of abuse and discrimination and untold human misery. God loves His entire human creation and calls us to do the same—love one another.

## **THE LESSON IN CONTEXT**

Lepers were required by Jewish Law to take several precautionary steps to forewarn others of their condition, minimizing the likelihood of infecting others. According to Leviticus 13:45-46 (NIV), the Law required, "Anyone with such a defiling disease must wear torn clothes, let their hair be unkempt, cover the lower part of their face and cry out, 'Unclean! Unclean!' As long as they have the disease, they remain unclean. They must live alone; they must live outside the camp." Lepers' common experience of shared misery brought them together despite any religious or ethnic differences. The group in the lesson text was a mix of Jews and Gentiles who encountered Jesus in the borderlands between Samaria and Galilee. Their physical location is suggestive of their social location; they were literally marginalized by their disease and forced to forge their own community of outcasts on the outskirts of Jewish and Samaritan communities. Jesus showed no hesitation or discomfort regarding the lepers. His openness toward them is an example for every believer; we should likewise extend ourselves to those who are rejected by society. At least one of the ten lepers was a Samaritan. Jews ordinarily despised Samaritans to the point of having no dealings with them and even would avoid travelling through their country (see John 4). Jesus made no difference between the men and healed them all. Jesus instructed the men to show themselves to the priests so they could certify that the lepers had been cleansed and were therefore officially eligible for restoration to the community (see Leviticus 13:6). Unlike the other nine lepers, the Samaritan's heart was filled with praise and thanksgiving for the blessing he received.

## **OPENING INQUIRY (Choose from the questions below.)**

1. Share a time when you expected gratitude from someone who failed to offer it.
2. What was your response to the ingratitude?
3. Share a time when you were overwhelmed with gratitude for someone's kindness toward you.

## **INSIGHTS**

As Christians, we boldly seek God's power to heal and restore us. Many of us have been taught from childhood to properly acknowledge acts of kindness with gratitude. As followers of Christ, we minister to the needs of persons who are regarded as outcasts without prejudice or ungodly motives. The duty of every Christian is to find ways to minister to persons who are in need. The God who is love has called us to love everyone and commissioned us to share the Good News (see 1 John 4:8).

## EXPLORATION

**Our responsibility as Christians is to continually examine ourselves to ensure that our hearts are free of ungodly attitudes and prejudices against other people. Doing so may contradict our thoughts or upbringing, but we cannot be faithful to God's mandate to love others with impure hearts. Also, we must realize that every act of kindness we receive from others is still a blessing from God that we must neither take for granted nor neglect to be thankful for.**

## ADDITIONAL EXPOSITORY INSIGHTS FOR THE TEACHER

### Commentary on *Leviticus 13:45-46*

#### KJV

**45** And the leper in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, *Unclean*, unclean.

**46** All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be defiled; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be.

#### NIV

**45** "Anyone with such a defiling disease must wear torn clothes, let their hair be unkempt, cover the lower part of their face and cry out, '*Unclean!* *Unclean!*'

**46** "As long as they have the disease they remain unclean. They must live alone; they must live outside the camp."

The plight of the leper in ancient times was miserable. Lepers were forced to live in complete exile outside of the city and were essentially regarded as dead to the people with whom they had shared their lives (see Numbers 5:2-4; 12:10-12). Since not all skin diseases were the result of leprosy, each case of suspected leprosy had to be authenticated. Leprosy in biblical times was likely related to the skin disease we now know as Hansen's Disease. The complete law concerning leprosy and those afflicted with the disease can be found in Leviticus 13:1-46 and Leviticus 14:1-32. Apparently, those who recovered and were declared clean were allowed to return to their places in society. Samaritans who lived in central Palestine were distant relatives of the Jews. Although the tension was high between Jews and Samaritans (see Luke 9:51-53; John 8:48; 9:51-53), the Samaritans followed the regulations of the book of Leviticus, thus submitting to Levitical Law and other laws of Moses. This includes the same exclusion of lepers from society observed by Jews. Both groups dealt with leprosy seriously; it was a horrible disease that was largely deemed incurable. Spiritually, leprosy was also viewed as a dramatic picture of sin and the operation of sin in the lives of humanity. Thus, the diagnosis and the specification to show one's self to a priest, even for the Samaritans, was very serious, as shown by the depth of detail given in Levitical Law concerning the disease. The great physical toll, emotional burden, and rejection from public life made leprosy one of the worst fates a person could suffer.

## DISCUSSION STARTERS

(Please review the appropriate student book's related biblical exposition section.)

- **Adult Questions:**

What are the pros and cons of labeling people and isolating them as outcasts? Name some groups who have received such treatment. How can the church minister to them?

- **Young Adult Question:**

In your opinion, what is the likely emotional impact of being condemned and isolated from the religious, social, and family community? Explain your answer.

### Commentary on *Luke 17:11-14*

#### KJV

**11** And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

**12** And as he entered into a certain village, there *met* him ten men that were *lepers*, which stood afar off:

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

**14** And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go *shew* yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.

#### NIV

**11** Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. **12** As he was going into a village, ten *men who had leprosy* met him. They stood at a distance

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

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

Luke resumes the narrative of Jesus’ journey to Jerusalem (see Luke 13:22), which quite possibly began at Luke 9:51. It is the part within His journey to Jerusalem where He instructs and prepares His disciples for what is to come. Jesus traveled along the border between the two providences across the Jordan, and down the east side of the river toward Jericho (see Luke 19:11). Jesus did not avoid Samaritans, though He was once rejected there (see Luke 9:52-52). On various occasions He made a special point to go through Samaria, as on the occasion of His encounter with the woman at the well (see John 4:1-42). As Jesus traveled, He likely met other Jews who had traveled westward seeking to avoid going directly through Samaria. Hebrew law forbade lepers to approach anyone who did not have the disease. The ten stood at such a distance from Jesus that He did not notice them until they called out to Him. Both Jewish and Samaritan lepers respected the Law; they stood calling to Jesus from a distance—far enough to be safe, yet close enough to get His attention. Depending on how far away they were, they likely cried out in unison so that Jesus could hear them. Their need was so desperate that the lepers overcame any misgivings they may have had concerning Jesus in order to seek His help.

### DISCUSSION STARTERS

(Please review the appropriate student book’s related biblical exposition section.)

- **Adult Questions:**

What obstacles keep people from trusting God and taking the appropriate steps of faith? Why do you think some wait until they are utterly desperate before calling on the Lord for help?

- **Young Adult Question:**

Who are the outcasts in today’s world? Discuss ways that the faith community can effectively minister to the needs of persons who are regarded as outcasts.

## Commentary on Luke 17:15-19

### KJV

**15** And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, 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** And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?

**18** There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.

**19** And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

### NIV

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

**16** He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan.

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

**18** "Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?"

Compare the Luke 5:12-14 parallel case of a different leper's encounter with Jesus. The leper was healed by a touch. When the leper was instantly healed, Jesus commanded the man to show himself to the priest. The lepers in Luke 17 were healed on a word and a walk of faith. Each of them had enough faith to call on the Master and obey His command. They headed toward the priest by faith, accepting that the healing was being accomplished before it had fully been manifested. The overwhelming majority of the ten—90 percent—lacked the gratitude to return and thank the Lord. This a good reflection of society's general tendency to ignore God's many blessings. The final twist in the story was that the only man who returned to Jesus was not a Jew, but a Samaritan. Generally speaking, Jews despised Samaritans and made every effort to shun and avoid them. This lone, non-Jewish worshipper showed his appreciation and love by praising God. Humility and gratitude are appropriate responses to life-changing blessings. With the miraculous healing that bypassed medical possibilities and the constraints of the Levitical Law, Jesus had changed the man's present and future possibilities. Jesus declared him whole in that moment and sent him forth to carry out his life's work.

### DISCUSSION STARTERS

(Please review the appropriate student book's related biblical exposition section.)

- **Adult Question:**

Is there a proper way to thank God for His goodness and grace?

- **Young Adult Questions:**

What do you think of Francis Schaeffer's statement "The beginning of a man's rebellion against God was, and is, that lack of a thankful heart"? Is he correct?

### LIFE APPLICATION

#### Refer to Adult Book

*(See student lesson's "Your Life" section.)*

— This week, consider your personal level of faith and boldness. Are you willing to give God glory even when others are silent or absent?

*(See student lesson's "Your World!" section.)*

— This week, share your personal reflection with a fellow believer and develop a plan to hold each other accountable for doing better at attending Sunday services, attending Bible study, becoming more active in a ministry, and so forth.

### **Refer to Young Adult Book**

*(See student lesson's "Your Life" section.)*

— No matter how many problems you have, you still have many reasons to be grateful to God. Reflect on your life and then identify at least five people who have been a blessing to you. Send them a note, text, e-mail, or post on social media of your appreciation. You will be surprised by the power of gratitude.

*(See student lesson's "Your World!" section.)*

— Allow this week's lesson to be a lasting reminder for you to open your hands and heart to receive those who are rejected by society. No matter who they are, Jesus reminds us that they are still candidates for God's grace and mercy, and still worthy of your compassion

### **NEXT WEEK'S LESSON**

The lesson topic for Sunday, July 11, 2021, is "A Gift to Strengthen You." The Devotional Reading is Psalm 71:1-6, 17-24, the Background Scripture is Romans 1, and the Printed Text is Romans 1:8-17.

### **CLOSING PRAYER**

Lord, help us to humble our hearts so that our hearts may be filled with the gratitude You so richly deserve from us. Thank You for the many ways You bless, heal, and restore us. Help us to be instruments of Your grace and love for others in their times of suffering. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

### **HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS**

#### **The Power of The Gospel**

*(July 5-11, 2021)*

MONDAY, July 5:	"Apollos and Paul, Builders"	(1 Corinthians 3:1-11)
TUESDAY, July 6:	"Entrusted to Take Gospel to Gentiles"	(Galatians 2:1-10)
WEDNESDAY, July 7:	"Grace and Peace to All"	(Romans 1:1-7)
THURSDAY, July 8:	"God's Righteous Wrath"	(Romans 1:18-23)
FRIDAY, July 9:	"God's Actions Are Fair and Just"	(Romans 1:24-32)
SATURDAY, July 10:	"God's Righteous Actions for Saints, Sinners"	(2 Peter 2:4-9)
SUNDAY, July 11:	"The Gospel Changes Jews and Gentiles"	(Romans 1:8-17)