

10/12/25
18th Sunday after Pentecost
For Group Meetings from October 5th – October 11th

OUR MISSION: As a missional congregation we *celebrate* Christ's presence, *invite* people into a growing relationship with Jesus, and *equip* them to *serve* in a broken world.

Prayer of the Day: Almighty and most merciful God, your bountiful goodness fills all creation. Keep us safe from all that may hurt us, that, whole and well in body and spirit, we may with grateful hearts accomplish all that you would have us do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

BIBLICAL EQUIPPING TOGETHER

Share: How did last week's scripture (Luke 17:5-10) work in your life this week?

Mission:

- What was most satisfying about your ministry last week?
- Where do you see God at work?
- How did you participate in God's missional activity?
- How did inviting go last Sunday?

Hear: Luke 17:11-19

Explore Questions: (Use these or develop your own.)

1. Where is Jesus traveling when the story begins?
2. How do the lepers approach Jesus, and what do they call him?
3. What does Jesus say about the nine lepers who do not return to give thanks?

Connect Questions: (Use these or develop your own.)

1. What practices or habits help you express gratitude in your daily life?
2. Who in your life has modeled gratitude for you, and what did you learn from them?
3. When has someone thanked you in a way that really stood out? How did it affect you?

Memorize this verse: "Then he said to him, "Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well." (Luke 17:19) How has your faith helped you through a difficult time?

BIBLICAL EQUIPPING APART:

Obey: During this week follow through on your intentions.

Meditate: Meditate on Psalm 111. How does this speak into your life?

Reflect: What have I learned in my week of living with this text? What can I share with my group when we next meet?

Notes for ChristCare leaders:

At the outset of this relatively short story from Luke's Gospel, there are ten men who are suffering from some form of skin disease. That disease made them ritually unclean, which meant that they couldn't participate in the Temple services and rituals at the center of their faith. And not able to practice their faith, these men stood on the outside of their community as well, likely feeling alone, abandoned, and desperate. And so, when these ten men realize Jesus is coming near them, they call out to him, not simply for comfort or companionship or someone to listen to them but instead asking if he would have mercy on them and cure them. And he does. All of them. Then Jesus gives them instructions to show themselves to the priests. After their trip to the temple, one of the ten comes back to give thanks to Jesus.

That's great. Except.... Well, except that it's only one. And Jesus notices that. Immediately, asking, "Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" Jesus' response is pretty understandable. He just cured ten men, instructing them to go to the Temple – something they have not been able to do for who knows how long – and show themselves to the priests so that they might return to both their faith and their community. And yet of the ten he made clean, only one bothers to come back and thank him. And at this point in the story, I'm curious: is Jesus confused, do you think? Or hurt? Is he a little peeved, or disappointed, or even angry? Frankly, we don't know for sure. What we do know is that he gets over it pretty quickly, shifts his attention to the one in front of him, and then offers this blessing, saying, "Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well." Again, great. Except.... Well, except that, like we already said, Jesus healed all the men. All of them. Luke was really clear about that. So why does Jesus say, "your faith has made you well" if they've already all been made well?

As it turns out, it all comes down to how you translate a single Greek word. That word – *sozo* (pronounced more like *sod-zo*) – can indeed be translated as "made well," in the sense of being healed. But it can also be translated as "saved," in the sense of being brought through mortal danger. And it can be translated as "made whole," in the sense of being completed and made to be what you were meant to be all along. So, ten were indeed made clean, but only one was saved. Ten were made clean, but only one was made whole. Ten were made clean, but only one recognized it and gave thanks and, in giving thanks, became what God had intended all along. And that, I believe, is pretty much the secret to life: gratitude. Noticing grace, seeing goodness, paying attention to healing, stopping to take in blessing, and then giving thanks for the ordinary and extraordinary graces of our life together. This, I believe, is the secret to a good life and the heart of saving faith. I know these things I've mentioned can seem like such small things, and yet I swear to you that they make all the difference. And I know this because I've seen it. In new parents and those in Hospice care, in the face of a child receiving an unexpected treat as well as the expression of a very ill patient recognizing the extraordinary care of a nurse.

Which is what I find so amazing. This gratitude which restores and heals and completes and saves. It's available to us at every single moment of our lives. In our health or with those who are caring for us when we aren't well. In those near and far who have contributed to who we are. In the fellowship we share. In both the rain and sunshine we enjoy. When you open your eyes to look, blessing is all around. And so, I don't think Jesus is angry or upset with the nine who didn't come back. I think his heart aches for them. That though they were made clean, they weren't yet brought through the peril of an ungrateful life and so had not yet been made whole and had not yet become the people God hoped for them to be. Because we are made for gratitude. It completes us and saves us and transforms us and makes us whole. The one who returned to give thanks knew that. Jesus knew that. And we know that as well.

Thanks be to God,

Pastor Thadd (tbook@desertcross.org)

Traditional version:

Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come,
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from
evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power,
And the glory, forever and ever. Amen

Contemporary version:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,
your will be done on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those
Who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial
And deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the
power, and the glory are yours,
Now and forever. Amen