

Week 12 Supernaturally Transformed

September 7, 2024

Opening Monologue

Has showing gratitude lost its foundation in our American culture? It is my personal opinion and observation... it certainly has lost its edge. I used to hear more, “thank you’s” and or “please” ...I used to see more random small acts of kindness like holding a door for someone and similar things.

Something has invaded our space and turned our heads in a different direction. Rewind the time when the world was put in our hands with smart phones and gadgets of all sorts. All of us... including children and teenagers can easily access negativity and hatred spilled on platforms like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter (X), and alike. Painful images, videos and demonic messages fill these spaces. Such negativity and disturbing interactions eventually desensitize our minds and behaviors. Hence, pushing gratitude out the back door.

Psalm 136:1-4 says this: “Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. His love endures forever. Give thanks to the God of gods. His love endures forever. Give thanks to the Lord of lords: His love endures for ever. To him who alone does great wonders, His love endures forever.”

This week in our Supernaturally Transformed Series we meet 10 lepers who were touched by Jesus; and only one comes back and says thank you... and it’s a foreign Samaritan. Be sure to listen in, to be encouraged, learn and grow ... so we all can be more like Jesus.

Blessings in Christ!

Rev. Brad Standfest

To Listen to this week’s Sermon: “Week 12 - Supernaturally Transformed” Go to the Sermon tab here in our APP or use the links to our website or YouTube Channel where you can

also listen to our Sermons:

Web: <https://www.almontvineyardchurch.org/media>

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Key Sermon Text

Psalm 136:1-4

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%20136%3A%201-4%20&version=NIV>

Philippians 4:6

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians%204%3A6%20&version=NIV>

Luke 17: 11-19

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke%2017%3A%2011-19%20&version=NIV>

John 14:15

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%2014%3A15&version=NIV>

Background to Skin Diseases / Leprosy

Leprosy, also known as Hansen's disease, is mentioned several times in the Bible, reflecting its presence and the social implications it had throughout ancient societies, including those of the Israelites. In biblical times, leprosy was a term used for various skin diseases and conditions, not solely the disease we understand as Hansen's disease today. The Levitical laws, particularly in Leviticus 13-14, provide detailed instructions on how to diagnose and handle leprosy, indicating the seriousness with which it was regarded due to its communicable nature and the physical effects it had on individuals.

People with leprosy were required to live apart from the community, illustrating the social stigma and isolation associated with the disease. Leviticus 13:45-46 says, "The person with such an infectious disease must wear torn clothes, let his hair be unkempt, cover the lower part of his face and cry out, 'Unclean! Unclean!'" As long as he has the infection he remains unclean. He must live alone; he must live outside

the camp.” This separation was not only a public health measure but also a deeply symbolic act, reflecting themes of purity, sin, and the need for restoration.

In the New Testament, Jesus’ interactions with lepers are significant, demonstrating His willingness to break societal barriers and His power to heal. The healing of the ten lepers in Luke 17:11-19 not only showcases Jesus’ compassion and authority but also emphasizes gratitude and faith, as only one of the ten, a Samaritan, returns to thank Jesus, illustrating the broader reach of Jesus’ mission beyond the Jewish community.

Throughout the Bible, the treatment and healing of lepers serve as powerful narratives of purification, social restoration, and the compassionate reach of God’s kingdom, offering hope and inclusion to those marginalized by society.

In the New Testament, leprosy is mentioned in the context of several healing miracles performed by Jesus, as well as in certain teachings. Here are the key accounts:

1. Matthew 8:1-4; Mark 1:40-45; Luke 5:12-16 - These passages narrate the healing of a man with leprosy by Jesus. The man comes to Jesus, showing faith in Jesus’ power to make him clean if He is willing. Jesus, moved with compassion, touches him and says, “I am willing; be clean.” Immediately, the leprosy leaves the man. Jesus instructs him to show himself to the priest and offer the gift Moses commanded as a testimony to them, but to tell no one else. However, the man spreads the news widely, causing great crowds to come to Jesus.

2. Matthew 26:6; Mark 14:3; Luke 7:36-50 - While these passages do not mention leprosy directly, they involve Simon the Leper, in whose house Jesus is anointed by a woman. The accounts focus on the act of anointing and the discussions it sparks rather than on Simon’s condition, which suggests he may have been healed of leprosy by Jesus at an earlier time, as he is hosting a dinner.

3. Luke 17:11-19 - This passage describes the healing of ten lepers by Jesus. The lepers stand at a distance and call out to Jesus for mercy. He tells them to go show themselves to the priests, and as they go, they are cleansed. Only one of them, a Samaritan, returns to

thank Jesus, and He commends the man's faith, telling him that his faith has made him well.

4. Teachings and Symbolic Uses - Leprosy in the New Testament also serves as a powerful symbol of sin and its effects—separation from God and the community. The miraculous healings of leprosy by Jesus highlight His authority over sin and uncleanness and His role in bringing spiritual healing and restoration.

These accounts of leprosy in the New Testament illustrate not only Jesus' miraculous power but also His willingness to reach out and touch those who were marginalized and considered unclean by society, offering them healing and restoration. They underscore the themes of faith, gratitude, and the breaking down of barriers between Jew and Gentile (as seen in the healing of the Samaritan leper), which are central to the message of the Gospel.

Commentary

JESUS HEALS TEN MEN WITH LEPROSY / 17:11-19

Ten lepers were healed, but only one leper—a Samaritan—returned to thank Jesus. This story, unique to Luke, highlights the faith of a foreigner in Israel. One of the major themes of Luke is the remarkable faith of Gentiles. Although many of the Jewish religious leaders rejected Jesus, a number of foreigners wholeheartedly placed their trust in him (7:1-10). This theme is continued in the book of Acts, where Luke wrote how the gospel message spread to the Gentiles after the initial rejection of it by many of the Jews (see Acts 1:8; see also Cornelius's conversion in Acts 10).

17:11 Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. Jesus was still on his way to Jerusalem, knowing that he had an "appointment" there in order for his ministry to be completed (9:51; 13:22). Jesus was traveling along the border between Samaria and Galilee. Galilee was Jewish; Samaria was occupied by Samaritans, who were despised by the Jews (see the commentary on 9:52-53). The exact location is unknown, but that Jesus was near the border accounts for a Samaritan (a "foreigner," 17:16, 18) in the group of lepers.

17:12-13 As he entered a village there, ten lepers stood at a distance, crying out, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”

People who had leprosy (called lepers) were required to try to stay away from other people and to announce their presence if they had to come near (see the commentary on 5:12-13). Thus these ten lepers were standing at a distance, outside the city, and they were crying out to Jesus for mercy. They called Jesus Master—they knew who he was and what he could do for them. They did not try to get close, however, perhaps because of the crowd that was probably still following Jesus (14:25).

17:14 He looked at them and said, “Go show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went, their leprosy disappeared.

Sometimes leprosy would go into remission. If a leper thought his leprosy had gone away, the leper was supposed to present himself to a priest, who could declare him clean (Leviticus 14). Jesus sent the ten lepers to the priest before they were healed, for as they went, their leprosy disappeared. Jesus did not touch these men or even speak words of healing as he had done for most of his healings. This time he simply gave them the command to go ... to the priests. Jesus was asking the men to respond in faith that, by their obedience, what they desired would happen. All the men responded in faith, and Jesus healed them on the way. Consider your own trust in God. Is your faith so strong that you act on what he says even before you see evidence that it will work?

17:15-16 One of them, when he saw that he was healed, came back to Jesus, shouting, “Praise God, I’m healed!” He fell face down on the ground at Jesus’ feet, thanking him for what he had done. This man was a Samaritan. Jesus healed all ten lepers, but only one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned to thank him. It is possible to receive God’s great gifts with an ungrateful spirit—nine of the ten men did so. Only the thankful man, however, learned that his faith had played a role in his healing, and only grateful Christians grow in understanding God’s grace. God does not demand that his people thank him, but he is pleased when they do so. And he uses their responsiveness to teach them more about himself.

The grateful man returned to Jesus, praised God, fell face down, and

thanked Jesus. Luke added, almost as a parenthesis, that, by the way, this man was a Samaritan. As noted in the commentary at 9:52-53, the Samaritans were a race despised by the Jews as idolatrous half-breeds. The surprise of this story is that this Samaritan, used to being despised by Jews (except perhaps for his fellow lepers), would dare to go to this Jewish healer and prostrate himself before him. But this man's faith went deep enough that he saw God's hand in the healing. Once again Luke was pointing out that God's grace is for everybody. The Samaritan not only portrayed the same trust that Jesus brought to the story of the Good Samaritan (10:30-37) but also set the stage for Jesus' mission to all people (see Acts 8:4).

17:17-19 Jesus asked, "Didn't I heal ten men? Where are the other nine? Does only this foreigner return to give glory to God?" And Jesus said to the man, "Stand up and go. Your faith has made you well." Jesus had been distressed many times with his own people's lack of acceptance and faith (7:9; 8:25; 12:28). This time was no different. Ten men had been healed, but only one, the foreigner (referring to the man from Samaria), came back to give glory to God. Jesus was not so much concerned about being thanked as he was about the men's understanding of what had happened. The other nine went off, free from leprosy but not necessarily free from sin through the salvation Jesus could offer. This one man was freed, so Jesus sent him on his way with the knowledge that his faith had made him well. He not only had a restored body, his soul had been restored as well.

FAITH AND HEALING

Jesus' miracles of healing provide wonderful encouragement, for they reveal his power and his compassion. The difficulty comes from applying these accounts today. How should believers pray for themselves and loved ones who are sick or terminally ill? How should they believe? This story provides not all the answers but some insights into Jesus' healing of the sick.

- These lepers recognized Jesus' authority. They did not demand that he heal them. They called out for Jesus to have mercy on them

(17:13).

- Jesus emphasized the necessity of faith (17:19). Just as in the parable of the mustard seed (13:18–19), it is not the size of faith but the presence of genuine faith that is important.
- Jesus stressed public testimony. He directed the lepers to go to the priests (17:14) to demonstrate what God had done. Believers also must be prepared to give God the credit when they are healed.
- Jesus highlighted the need for gratitude and praise to God (17:18). Will your attitude be grateful to God despite the outcome of your prayer? Can you trust fully in God’s care each day, living or dying? Christians should always be the ones who return to Jesus and thank him for his mercy and power.

The Cleansing of Ten Lepers [17:10-19]

The healing of the lepers (11-14)

As He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers: It was not unusual for these lepers to congregate with one another. They were outcasts from society at large, and had no company other than other lepers—so, they stood afar off.

Who stood afar off: “They kept at a distance, because forbidden by law and custom to come near to those who were sound, for fear of infecting them. See Leviticus 13:46; Numbers 5:2; 2 Kings 15:5.” (Clarke)

Passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee: “The words *dia meson* are best translated ‘through the middle of,’ or ‘between,’ referring to Jesus’ travel along the border between Samaria and Galilee.” (Pate)

And they lifted up their voices and said, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”: They came to Jesus together and they prayed together, even though they were a mixed group of Jews and Samaritans (Luke 17:15–16). Bonded by their misery, their national and other prejudices vanished as they came together in prayer.

“A common misfortune had broken down the racial and national

barriers. In the common tragedy of their leprosy they had forgotten they were Jews and Samaritans and remembered only they were men in need.” (Barclay)

Go, show yourselves to the priests: It was remarkable that Jesus asked them to go to the priests while they were still lepers. This was truly stepping out in faith, as in putting on the new man even when we still look and feel like the old man.

“The one condition of healing was obedience. Ordered, they must obey. If He was master as they had cried He was, then let them prove their faith by their obedience.” (Morrison)

“God highly honours this kind of faith, and makes it the instrument in his hand of working many miracles. He who will not believe till he receives what he calls a reason for it, is never likely to get his soul saved. The highest, the most sovereign reason, that can be given for believing, is that God has commanded it.” (Clarke)

And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed: Just as God blessed the faith of the lepers to step out as the new man even when they feel like the old, so will He bless our faith.

“It is as we go on the commanded road that we experience the commanded blessing. Let the Church obey the command of the Lord Jesus, and with enthusiasms evangelise the nations, and, as she goes, she will be healed.” (Morrison)

Only one out of ten of the lepers return to give thanks (15-19)

And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God: Only one came back to give thanks; and he was the unlikely one—a Samaritan. And, though he was the only one, at least he was very loud about his thanks.

All ten were willing to do a religious ceremony; that is go to the priest. Only one was filled with true praise and thanksgiving. “External religious exercises are easy enough, and common enough; but the

internal matter, the drawing out of the heart in thankful love, how scarce a thing it is! Nine obey ritual where only one praises the Lord.” (Spurgeon)

Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Jesus missed the nine who did not return to give thanks. He wondered where they were. Jesus also notices our lack of gratitude.

“The question was asked, and it at once proves the value He sets upon the service of praise ... One wonders whether it is not so that our Lord has been asking this question very constantly.” (Morgan)

“Christ keeps count how many favors men receive from him, and will call them to a particular account thereof.” (Trapp)

We can always find reason for gratitude before God. Matthew Henry, the famous Bible commentator, was robbed of his wallet once. He wrote in his diary that night all the things he was thankful about:

- First, that he had never been robbed before.
- Second, that though they took his wallet, they did not take his life.
- Third, because even though they took it all, it wasn't very much.
- Finally, because he was the one who was robbed and not the one who did the robbing.

“Lastly, if we work for Jesus, and we see converts, and they do not turn out as we expected, do not let us be cast down about it. If others do not praise our Lord, let us be sorrowful, but let us not be disappointed. The Savior had to say, ‘Where are the nine?’ Ten lepers were healed, but only one praised him. We have many converts who do not join the church; we have numbers of persons converted who do not come forward to baptism, or to the Lord's Supper. Numbers get a blessing, but do not feel love enough to own it.” (Spurgeon)

Your faith has made you well: There was an extra healing for this tenth leper. When Jesus said this, He likely meant God's work within the man's heart. The other lepers had whole bodies, but sick hearts.

Resources: Rev. Brad Standfest, David Guzik, Luke, David Guzik's Commentaries on the Bible, Bruce B. Barton et al., Luke, Life Application Bible Commentary

Sermon Notes:

We have been Journeying with Jesus all summer and read about Supernatural Transformations through Miracles, Conversations, Preaching & Teaching...

The bottom line is this... Real Supernatural Transformation only comes through Jesus Christ

Sadly...We are living in a Toxic Environment...

I'm not talking about Air Pollution... I'm talking about Hatred, Negative News, Propaganda, Political Theatre... War & Violence...

If we allow the Worlds chaos to get into our minds...it will drag us down...

Constant Negativity will drag our Hearts and Homes down...

If you work in a Toxic Environment and Come home to a Toxic Environment... What kind of Attitude will this breed?

We would all do our Souls some good to put more Praise on our Plates

Let me Ask: When is the Last time you gave Thanks to God besides praying a blessing over your food?

The Word of God Declares in Psalm 136: 1-4

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good. His love endures forever. Give thanks to the God of gods. His love endures forever. Give thanks to the Lord of lords: His love endures forever. To him who alone does great wonders, His love endures forever.

Apostle Paul tells us in Philipians 4:6

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Where has Americas Gratitude gone?

How about the Please & Thank you Club?
Telling someone you Appreciate them.

[Story of Restaurant Owner]

Maybe it's just me... But I think we live in an Entitlement type of Society...

[Story of US Open Tennis player]

In our Main Text for today we are going to see 10 Lepers who gain complete Supernatural Transformation... And yet only One shows Gratitude...

Let me give you a little background on the Disease called Leprosy:

"In Biblical times... Leprosy was a term used to describe various skin diseases and conditions. The Levitical Laws in the Old Testament... particularly Leviticus 13-14 gives detailed instructions how to handle leprosy... Leprosy was a serious illness and highly contagious. Lepers were required to live apart from the community and city. Isolation and a deep stigma haunted those known as Lepers."

John 14:15: "If you love me, keep my commands."

They walked in Faith & Obedience to the local priest, and they were healed on the way

Our obedience as Christians plays a role in receiving Supernatural Transformation

Read Luke 17:15-19

I want to close with these Spiritual Applications:

- Put up Spiritual Boundaries that limit your intake of things that negatively impact your mind, heart & home.
 - Look for areas in your life that bring anxiety, fear, worry and doubt and eliminate them.
 - Give More Praise and Thanks to God... and Stop blaming everyone else for your shortcomings or mistakes.
 - Start your Prayers with Praise... Before your petitions. (Philippians 4:6)
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Devotional Questions

Read Luke 17:11-19 and reflect and answer the following questions:

1. Examine the Cry for Mercy: The lepers stood at a distance and lifted up their voices, saying, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!” (Luke 17:13). In what ways do you see yourself in the lepers’ plea for mercy? How do you approach Jesus in your own times of need?

2. Reflect on Jesus’ Response: Jesus responded to their plea by instructing them to show themselves to the priests, and as they went, they were cleansed (Luke 17:14). Jesus often asks us to act in faith before we see the fulfillment of His promises. Can you recall a time when you had to step out in faith before you saw the outcome? What was that like for you?

3. Contemplate Gratitude: Only one of the ten, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God with a loud voice and fell at Jesus’ feet, thanking Him (Luke 17:15-16). Why do you think only one returned to give thanks? What does this teach us about human nature and the importance of gratitude?

4. Consider the Outsider: The one who returned to give thanks was a Samaritan, a detail that highlights the theme of inclusion and the breaking down of barriers in Jesus’ ministry (Luke 17:16). How does this challenge or encourage you in the way you view others, especially those who might be considered ‘outsiders’ in your own context?

5. Ponder Jesus' Words to the Samaritan: Jesus said to him, "Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well" (Luke 17:19). How does Jesus' statement to the Samaritan leper about his faith making him well speak to the deeper healing that comes from faith beyond physical healing? How does this resonate with your understanding of faith's role in your life?

6. Application to Your Life: Reflecting on the themes of mercy, faith, gratitude, inclusion, and healing in this passage, what is one practical step you can take this week to live out one of these themes in your own life?

7. Prayerful Reflection: Spend some time in prayer, asking God to help you develop a heart of faith and gratitude like the Samaritan leper. Pray for the eyes to see those who feel like outsiders and for the courage to show them the love of Jesus.