

INTRO: Englishman (Ale), Frenchman (Merlot) & Irishman (Whiskey). Swig. New. Spit out thief! Catholic Priest. Baptist Preacher. Jewish Rabbi. Free Bread/Wine. Pond. Ouch!

A Presbyterian there too, but he didn't participate in the bet, since he doesn't believe in forced or manipulated conversion, but wait/see who's elect. Stayed and enjoyed His Scotch & Pipe.

THESIS: Different Cultures, Personalities, Backgrounds.

Jesus loves and shows Mercy on them all. No one is too much for Jesus.

I. A Leper (1-4)

- A. **Behold! A Leper!** Whoa! Shock? Culturally outcast. Trouble. He came to Jesus.
- B. Jesus just finished **preaching** the **Sermon** on the Mount. **Lunch/Nap. GOLF.**
- C. If you are willing, you can do this (**Only God or one sent by God could do that**). Faith.
- D. **"I am willing"**. Jesus is always willing to heal & forgive. Might not look like this, but yes!
- E. **Jesus TOUCHED Him. UNCLEAN!**
- F. **For everyone else, when we touch something unclean, it makes us unclean.** When Jesus touches something unclean, He makes it clean.

ILLUSTRATION: FREEZE TAG. Sharks & Minnows. Dodge Ball. When Jesus tags you, you're back in. You're alive!

APPLICATION: No one is too detestable for Jesus. He shuns no one. He welcomes all who come in their need. Your sin. Your history. Your shame. What you've done or what's been done to you. *Nothing. The things about you, that disgust you, don't disgust Jesus. They draw Him in.*
"We come not in our Merit, but in our Misery, begging for the Mercy of Jesus."

II. A Centurion (5-13)

- A. **A Pagan.** Gentile. Roman. Enemy Leader. **Police Chief in Capernaum. Several in NT.**
- B. **Leader of 80-100 Roman Soldiers.** Well trained. Proven leader. Faithful to Rome.
- C. **Tax collection.** Law enforcement. **PAX ROMANA. Construction of Synagogue.**
- D. **Servant. "Slave-Boy."** Paralyzed, suffering terribly. **Injury? Sickness?**
- E. **Authority.** Over nature? Who has that but God/Creator? TRUE FAITH. Jesus amazed!
- F. **He's a True Prophet.** But He's also God in the Flesh. His Words are Trustworthy & True.

APPLICATION: Jesus' authority. He doesn't have to be there physically. He doesn't have to be seen. He doesn't have to see the servant. He just speaks the Word. Just like at Creation, by the Word of His Mouth. He has authority. Does he have that same authority over you? Do you trust His Word? Follow His Word? Convicted by His Words? Listen to His Words? When His Word addresses your life, do you listen to Him? Do you obey?

- **His Commands:** -Honor You Parents. -Don't Covet/Envy -Don't Steal -Don't Lie, Slander or Gossip -Don't Lust/Purity -Don't Hate/Despise -Love -Show kindness -Serve -Go/Make
- **Conviction? Guilt? REPENT? BELIEVE?**

III. A Mother-in-Law (14-17)

- A. **Just keeps getting worse!** Haha! :-). Jk Jk Jk. Lol.
- B. **Is she a widow?** Alone? Peter's caring for her.
- C. **Jesus caring for Peter & wife.** He knows what's coming for her? Ministry wife.
- D. **Willing & Wanting to serve/help but she couldn't.** Helpful for Peter/Wife.
- E. **She was the loved one of a loved one.** And He loved her.

ILLUSTRATION: C.S. Lewis. Narnia. "Death itself would begin to work backwards." The big turn: *Eucatastrophe is a "good catastrophe"—a sudden, joyous, and unexpected turn of events in a story that saves the hero from seemingly inevitable ruin. Coined by J.R.R. Tolkien in the 1940s, it represents the highest function of fairy stories, reversing a hopeless situation into a triumphant victory, often characterized by a profound emotional shift from despair to joy.*

CONCLUSION:

1. **The Kingdom is Taking Over.** Jesus is on the move. **Reverse the Curse. Death.**
2. **We are a part of His Redemption Story.** We serve the King of Healing. Helping, Tending, Killing, Caring, Stewarding, Repenting, Reclaiming Creation for Him. Repenting. Believing.