

# Jesus Heals the Ten Lepers

Luke 17:11-19

## PPT Title

### Jesus Heals the Ten Lepers

**Main Point:** We should each be truly thankful for what Jesus has done for us.

**Key Verse:** *When one of them saw that he was healed, he came back. He praised God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked Him. — Luke 17:15*

**Props:** Two pieces of identical white cloth—one that is dirty, tattered and torn, and one that is clean and bright.



**Say:** From the time we are tiny children, our parents are constantly reminding us to have good manners. When you ask for something, what do your parents always tell you to say? *Please.* And when you receive something, what are you supposed to say? *Thank you.*



When your parents remind you to say “please” and “thank you” they are helping you to understand thankfulness. Let’s say you receive a gift you really wanted for Christmas. You are probably very happy that you have received the gift. But being thankful takes it a step further: you’re not just happy that you HAVE the gift, you are filled with thankfulness to the giver as well. You think of all the giver had to do to make sure you could get the gift. They took the time to go shopping. They paid for it. They wrapped it in pretty paper. And because you are so amazed by the giver’s generosity and love, you freely show your thankfulness by giving them a big hug, or saying “thank you” over and over, or writing a note and sending it in the mail.

Today we are going to look at a story in Luke 17 about a time that Jesus gave an amazing gift to ten men. And while all ten of them may have been happy that they received a gift, only one of them chose to show their thankfulness to Jesus. Let’s read together in Luke 17:11-19.

**Teacher Note:** The story of Jesus healing the ten lepers in Luke 17 appears immediately after a teaching conversation Jesus has with His disciples after one asked Him to “increase our faith.” In this conversation, Jesus indicates that obedience to God is not something extra we do to receive His thanks and rewards. Rather, it is our duty to serve Him, just like it is a servant’s duty to serve his master. Our pride sometimes twists this truth and tells us that we should expect God to thank us for all we do to serve Him. But Jesus teaches here that true faith is total dependence on God and a willingness to unselfishly do His will. This conversation, combined with the story of the ten lepers, puts gratitude in its proper perspective. God is the one deserving of gratitude because of the grace and mercy He freely gives to those who do not deserve it.

### JESUS HEALS 10 LEPERS



**Say:** *Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. He traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he was going into a village, ten men met him. They had a skin disease. They were standing close by. And they called out in a loud voice, “Jesus! Master! Have pity on us!”*

*Jesus saw them and said, "Go. Show yourselves to the priests." While they were on the way, they were healed. — Luke 17:11-14*

**Say:** Before we read on, it is important to understand exactly what leprosy was and why it was such a big deal that Jesus healed these ten men.

In all of our lives, bad things happen from time to time. Sometimes these bad things are consequences for bad choices, but other times bad things happen simply because we live in a sinful world. The Bible says that the men in this story had a skin disease called leprosy. It doesn't say that they deserved leprosy but just that they HAD leprosy. It was a disease they suffered from because they were living in a sinful, fallen world.

When God created the world, it was perfect. There was no sickness; there was no death. Everything was beautiful, happy and good. But when sin came into the world, it spoiled everything! There are accidents and cancer and divorce. There are tornadoes, tsunamis, hurricanes, earthquakes, crime and sickness. It is not hard to see how awful sin is!

So because we live in a fallen, sinful world, there are terrible diseases. The disease of leprosy is one of them.



**Say:** Some of you are probably wondering what this disease really is. Leprosy is a terrible condition where a person's skin begins to rot and fall off. Many lepers lose all of their fingers and toes because of the disease. It is very painful and smelly. You could tell if a person had leprosy because their body would be covered with sores. People with these sores are commonly referred to as lepers.

Leprosy was a common skin disease a long time ago, and there are still people in some parts of the world today who have leprosy. There are lepers in India, China, and Japan as well as in parts of Africa and the West Indies and in South America.

Leprosy is very contagious. It is very easy to "catch" leprosy. Even just touching a person who has leprosy or touching something that they touched could make you get the disease. So whenever a person caught leprosy in Bible times, they had to live outside the community. In fact, one of the laws that God gave the Israelites in the Old Testament says, *"As long as he has the infection [of leprosy] he remains unclean. He must live alone. He must live outside the camp."* - Leviticus 13:46

If Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ (adult volunteer) found out that he had leprosy, he could no longer be in here with us, he would have to leave our building and even leave our town! He couldn't hug his wife and children, because they might get the disease. Wouldn't that be sad?!



You can see that leprosy wasn't just bad for a person's body, but it was also terrible for their ability to enjoy friends and family, since they lived alone. Sometimes lepers would get very lonely and seek out other lepers to live with. That's why the ten men in this story were together. They all had leprosy, and they were not allowed to be a part of their original family community. In some parts of the world today, groups of lepers living together are called "leper colonies."

Leprosy made a person "unclean". Because leprosy was so contagious, people long ago would shout "UNCLEAN! UNCLEAN!" when they were walking on the road or were in the company of people who did not have leprosy. No one wanted to be near a person with this terrible disease, so they would hurry away from anyone shouting the word "unclean." The religious leaders, who liked to add rules to the laws that God had given His people, said that lepers could not even go to the Temple like everyone else

UNCLEAN!  
UNCLEAN!

could. This wasn't just because they were afraid of catching leprosy, it was because the religious leaders also thought lepers were "unclean" spiritually. How sad for those with leprosy. Not only did they have a terrible disease, but they were also falsely accused of having unclean hearts, too.

**APPLICATION:** Wouldn't it be terrible if someone accused you of being a bad person, just because you had a cold or strep throat? What if getting sick meant you could never see your family again? What if someone told you that God didn't want anything to do with you because you were sneezing and coughing? That would be terribly unfair, wouldn't it?

**Say:** That's why the men in our story stood at a distance from Jesus and called out to Him. These ten lepers knew that they could not go near anyone because they had a contagious illness. But they also believed they were bad people who were unacceptable to God.

The men had probably been waiting for Jesus at the edge of the village. When they saw Jesus crossing the border between Galilee and Samaria, they yelled, "Jesus, Master, have mercy upon us."



When the lepers saw Jesus, they yelled, "Jesus, Master, have mercy upon us." Jesus then told them to show themselves to the priest. At some point, as they were going to do that, the ten lepers noticed that their leprosy was gone. They had been healed!

**Say:** Their skin changed from being full of sores and disease (show the cloth that is dirty, tattered & torn) to being clean and healthy (put that cloth down & hold up an identical, brand new clean piece.)

### ONLY ONE LEPER SHOWS GRATITUDE

**Say:** Now let's continue reading to see what happens next. Look at Luke 17:15-19.

*When one of them saw that he was healed, he came back. He praised God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked Him. The man was a Samaritan.*



*When Jesus saw the Samaritan, He immediately wondered about the other nine men who had also been healed.*

*Jesus asked, "Weren't all ten healed? Where are the other nine? Didn't anyone else return and give praise to God except this outsider?"*

*Then Jesus said to him, "Get up and go. Your faith has healed you."*

**Say:** It is hard to believe that only one of the ten men Jesus healed came back to thank Him. Certainly, the other nine men noticed that they were healed, but they did not take the time to return to say, "Thank you."

It's very likely that once the other nine saw they were healed, they ran home to their families and friends. After all, they had been living far away from them for some time. Can you imagine how excited they were? Can you imagine how happy their families must have been to see them again?

Though these nine other men were so, so happy to be healed, they didn't return to Jesus to publicly GIVE THANKS. They didn't "praise God with a loud voice and throw themselves at His feet" like the leper who did return to thank Jesus.



**APPLICATION:** When Jesus gave His life for you and me, His blood healed us from a disease much more hideous than leprosy. Do you remember when we talked earlier about how sin spoils everything? Well, sin spoils us too! Like a terrible disease, sin ruins us.

Sin is a great spiritual need that requires healing. We seem to recognize physical needs better than spiritual needs. When we're hungry, we eat. When we're sick, we go to the doctor. When we're tired, we sleep.

In each of our lives, there are sins like hate, anger, greed, lying, and selfishness. Just like leprosy is a physical disease, these sins are spiritual diseases that need to be healed. And Jesus wants to heal them! He wants us to call out to Him for help, just like the ten lepers called out to Him for help.

And like the one leper who returned, we should worship, praise, and thank God at all times. We can do this when we're alone, but God also wants us to give thanks to Him publicly and with other believers.



**Say:** The ten lepers in Luke 17 were given a great gift. The problem was, nine of them didn't receive it with true thankfulness. Sure they were happy that they had received the gift of healing, but they didn't CHOOSE to thank the gift giver. When Jesus asked, "Where are the other nine?" He clearly was asking, "Why aren't they giving thanks to God?"

The same question could be asked of us today: "Why aren't these people giving Me thanks?" Jesus has given us the unbelievable free gift of forgiveness. We didn't have to do anything to earn it. Even though our sin deserves to be punished, Jesus took that punishment for us when He died on the cross. How many of you think that's the biggest, best gift we will ever receive?

But the problem is, many people accept the free gift of forgiveness and never do anything to show their THANKFULNESS to Jesus.

The message from God is clear: we should have a heart filled to overflowing with thanksgiving to God, AND we should also tell God and others how thankful we are! God has done so much for us! He deserves our thanks!

Here is what Psalm 107:1-2 says about thankfulness:



*Give thanks to the Lord, because He is good.  
His faithful love continues forever.  
That's what those who have been set free by the Lord should say.*  
— Psalm 107:1-2a



**Say:** Jesus was publicly crucified to heal our sins. We should find the time to publicly thank Him for that amazing gift. We should live a life of thankfulness, just like the one leper who returned to give thanks to Jesus. We should do what Colossians 2:7 tells us: "Grow strong in what you believe, just as you were taught. Be more thankful than ever before."

**PPT Key Verse**

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**PPT Main Point**

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