

## Bermudian Church of the Brethren

**WEDNESDAY'S WORD** – a midweek thought from Pastor Larry M. Dentler  
to share a word of inspiration ... encouragement ... challenge ... a smile ... in the middle of your week  
January 30 in the year of our Lord 2019 - #774

### Short Memory

Can't find my car keys. Can't remember where I put that paper. Can't remember what meetings I have today. I walk from the desk in my office at the church to the secretary's office down the hall ... and then can't remember why I've come there. Many of us can relate to having notoriously short memories. And for nearly all of us this is especially true when it comes to our God. When we have a crisis or a special need we are quick to cry out, "*Lord help me!*" But when the help comes, and life is more on the right course ... do we remember to take time to say "*Thank you Lord!*"???

The story is recorded in the Gospel of Luke about a time when a group of lepers approached Jesus pleading for healing. Now you have to understand a bit culturally about "*leprosy*" in Jesus' day. The term "*leprosy*" was used for almost any skin disease. Real leprosy, today called Hansen's Disease, is a terrible disease that causes a wasting of body tissue. Persons with this disease often lose fingers, toes, hands, and feet. But in Jesus' day there was so much fear of the disease that any skin problem might find one labeled a "*leper*." Psoriasis, eczema, ring worm, poison ivy ... almost any rash could get you labeled! And the Old Testament Law called for these folks to be quarantined so the infection wouldn't spread. To be declared a "*leper*" was to become an outcast. And Old Testament Law was clear about their interaction with others.

***"The leprous person who has the disease shall wear torn clothes and let the hair of his head hang loose, and he shall cover his upper lip and cry out, 'Unclean, unclean.'"*** Leviticus 13:45 ESV

So "*lepers*" lived together isolated from their families, friends, and former towns. Bells were sewn into their garments so people could hear them coming. And they cried out as the Law required, "*Unclean! I'm unclean!*," and the "healthy" would scatter to avoid being contaminated!

The event recorded in Luke 17 found 10 "*lepers*" who approached Jesus and the Disciples as they traveled towards Jerusalem. Perhaps they had heard stories of Jesus' healing power for they stood at a distance and cried out,

***"Jesus, Master, have pity on us!"*** Luke 17:13 NIV

One can imagine Jesus' men ushering Him away from the contamination. But Jesus stopped ... He always "stops" when we cry to Him ... and said to them,

***"Go show yourselves to the priests."*** Luke 17:14 NIV (This was what was required if a person was healed of leprosy or any of the skin conditions declared as "*leprosy*," a priest had to declare them "*healed*" and lead them in the process of sacrifices & examination in order to be considered "*clean*.")

Dr. Luke, the writer of this Gospel, adds almost matter-of-factly, “**And as they went they were cleansed.**” Luke 17:14 NIV From Jesus’ mouth to God’s ear! Healed!

Ugly rashes were replaced by fresh flesh. Decaying fingers become straight & whole. The stench of rotting flesh that they had learned to live with, immediately gone from their nostrils. Healed! Cleansed! Lives changed! Of the ten ... experiencing this miraculous healing instantaneously as they walked ... of the ten, **ONE** man, a hated Samaritan. Looks at his restored flesh, and jubilantly turns and runs back to Jesus! He is shouting praise to God and falls at the feet of Jesus, to the Disciples’ horror, and begins profusely thanking Jesus!

Jesus’ response is fascinating. “**Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner? Then He said to him, ‘Rise and go; your faith has made you well.’**” Luke 17:17-19 NIV

Jesus’ desire, first, foremost, and always is for God to be praised. And you can hear a bit of sadness in His voice that the other nine miss this golden opportunity to praise God.

Now what about you? Me? Are we like the **nine**? Are we like the **one**? When we have experienced God’s blessing, His intervention, His grace, His love, His mercy, His healing ... are we quick to give thanks & praise? Or are we so elated that a crisis or problem is past that we rush on with life forgetting to give thanks? For blessings huge? And blessings simple? For the mountain moving power of God’s intervention? And for daily bread?

At Christmas 2017 my newest grandson, Jaxsen, lay in the newborn intensive care unit in the hospital. He had a lung problem. I reached through the wires and hoses with my finger to touch him. I wanted to touch him. I wanted him to feel Pap’s touch. I tearfully, silently prayed to my Lord to please heal my grandson. When we finally brought him home Jessie placed him in a crate by the Christmas tree for a picture. He looked like a little china doll. So pale & frail. This Christmas 2018 Jaxsen is one year old and has become a big, active, healthy boy! Jes put him in the same crate for a Christmas picture. I can hardly look at the two pictures without tearing up. And I want to declare as loudly and publicly as I can, “*Thank you Jesus!*”

How about you? Got problems? Sure! Big problems? Many do! Heartaches? Yes! Crisis? Some do! But when you look at your life and journey ... can you find a hundred moments, a thousand times, 10,000 reasons to celebrate God’s constant & daily love & care? Of course! Blessings of His love for you? Signs of His care for you? Answers to prayers? Certainly! Without a doubt! Brother, Sister ... **be the one!**

Thankful! Pastor Larry <><