

## SERMON NOTES

### Luke 17:11-19

New International Version

#### Jesus Heals Ten Men who were affected with Leprosy

<sup>11</sup> Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus travelled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. <sup>12</sup> As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy<sup>[a]</sup> met him. They stood at a distance <sup>13</sup> and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!"

<sup>14</sup> When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed.

<sup>15</sup> One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. <sup>16</sup> He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan.

<sup>17</sup> Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? <sup>18</sup> Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?" <sup>19</sup> Then he said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."

This story is taught in the context of Jesus talking about the Kingdom of God, and that it is faith which brings us in, and it will surprise us who has faith.

***The reading is Luke 17:11-19***

***You would read the sermon to yourself a few times to feel comfortable with it. You may want to leave margins and space for you to write notes/comments which you may find helpful. The sermon notes are a guideline for you to use and adapt accordingly.***

#### Introduction:

Jesus used to travel about the villages with his disciples. They would go from hamlet to town. And many people heard about HIM. HE was heading to Jerusalem and was about to go into a village. Before HE entered the village, ten men who were affected with leprosy started shouting at HIM. They had to shout because they weren't allowed in the village. The law and custom discriminated against them because of their disease. So, they shouted at Jesus from a distance "Jesus, Master, have pity on us". Were they calling out to be cured? Or did they just want to be noticed by Jesus? Just to be noticed by someone might have been all they wanted. Ever since the priest had told them they had leprosy they had had to leave their families. They had left their wives, their children, and their friends. They weren't allowed to go into villages, or towns. They had to keep their distances from people. So maybe they just wanted Jesus to notice them.

Leprosy is one of the oldest diseases in the bible. We don't know for sure if the ten men with leprosy in Luke 17 had leprosy, like we know it for today. But we do know they were left stigmatised and isolated the same way people affected by leprosy are today. It's a disease of stigma, isolation, rejection, and fear. Because of that, it's a disease of the heart, the soul as well as the body. Leprosy means your nerves end up being damaged, and you can end up with severe disabilities if left untreated and undetected.

At the start of the 1990s there were over 15 million people living with the effects of leprosy. Thanks to the implementation of Multi Drug Therapy – a combination of 3 antibiotics, better screening for people affected by leprosy, it is now down to 5 million people living with the effects of leprosy. People used to have to take dapsone for life, but now they take Multi Drug Therapy (MDT) for 1 year.

***But every year there are still thousands of people who are diagnosed with leprosy. People just like Marianne. Like the 10 men with leprosy, all she wanted was to be noticed. She was desperate to be helped and healed.***

### **Hoping to be noticed: desperate for help!**

Someone else who wanted to be noticed and was desperate for help was Marianne. Abandoned in Bougainville, lost and left for dead, four children stripped from her care... *this is what happened to Marianne... this is her story.*

When Marianne visited her local health clinic, she says, “the nurse noticed some skin lesions on my face. She referred me to the general hospital. There, the Sister ran some skin tests and confirmed I had leprosy. I was very distressed and very sad to be told that.”

Marianne began her year-long course of multi-drug therapy (MDT) to cure her leprosy, yet just as hope was dawning... **She began to suffer the tormenting effects of Leprosy Reaction. As the leprosy bacteria died in her body, they caused a severe inflammatory response. It was agony.** “My condition became much worse. I could hardly sit up.”

Marianne had to give up taking her MDT. That gave her leprosy the green light to start disabling her hands and feet ... and for her husband, this made the age-old fears come flooding back.

It was all too frightening and overwhelming for him. He abandoned Marianne completely, breaking her heart and shattering it to tiny pieces by taking their four children with him ... forbidding her from ever seeing them again. The youngest was just eighteen months...

***Like the 10 men with leprosy this decision was devastating. It meant Marianne would end up living at a distance from her community, being shunned and abandoned.***

### **Working Hard**

The 10 men with leprosy wouldn't have wanted to live at a distance from their family. Marianne didn't want to live at a distance from her family and community nor to be shunned and abandoned.

They would have wanted to keep working hard. Like Marianne did.

**Unable to feed herself, grieving for her children, tormented by her inflamed body, Marianne was left for dead.** Her mother heard this and came from her home village to rescue Marianne from starvation. No respite, though, from her advancing leprosy or the agony of Leprosy Reaction.

One of the leprosy mission volunteers working in the Bougainville Healthy Communities Programme heard about Marianne, wasting away on her sickbed. He found her. He discovered that her uncured leprosy was beginning to cause disabilities ... and he knew exactly what to do for Marianne. She started her MDT again, for her cure, with extra medication to control her Leprosy Reaction.

Even though Marianne is still very weak and tired from her ordeal, she is recovering ... and she is being cured of her leprosy!

She now has the strength to do minor chores in her garden and she is able to eat again.

“I have lost a tremendous amount of weight and I am still feeling weak, having joint aches and get fatigued quickly, but I feel my strength coming back slowly.”

Like the 10 men with leprosy, were it not for somebody who cared enough and loved enough, Marianne would have ended up totally isolated from her community, unable to participate in life with others.

### **Being Healed**

So, the ten men stood at a distance shouting at Jesus “Jesus, Master, have pity on us”.

When Jesus saw them, he shouted back at them, “Go, show yourselves to the Priests.” Because it was the priest who would determine if they were healed and could go back and join the community. And as the men went, they became healed!

One of them, when he was healed, could not contain himself! He came back, praising God, loudly, shouting louder even than he had before. He threw himself at Jesus’ feet, thanking him, thanking him. And he was a Samaritan. He was the one least likely to come back!

Jesus asked him “Were not all of you healed? Where are the others? Has no one come back to praise God except you, a foreigner?” Then Jesus looked at him and said, “rise and go; your faith has made you well.”

In the same way the ten men wanted to be healed so did Marianne. She didn’t have anyone to call out to though. ***Instead, someone called out to her!***

This young mum from Bougainville has been abandoned by her husband, stripped of her four young children and left for dead ...all because of leprosy. Marianne is an innocent victim of those old fears. Some even said her leprosy was sorcery – that she was cursed. That is why she was left for dead by her husband and her neighbours.

**Your prayers will sustain the very important work to eradicate leprosy and improve health and life for our Pacific neighbours in Bougainville.** The project is called BHCP – the Bougainville Healthy Communities Programme. Through BHCP you are curing leprosy, yes, and you are also protecting people from experiencing this disabling disease in the first place. You are doing this through education. There are far fewer people now who believe leprosy is a curse. They are seeing that it is a curable disease. **You are helping to improve diet and hygiene. A well-nourished child can easily fight off leprosy. You are an important partner in enabling Bougainville’s children to be healthy, with strong immune systems. Thank you for continuing to pray for them.**

The leprosy cure, the awareness of leprosy, the knowledge of nutrition and all the great work through BHCP is being carried from village to village by volunteers supported and prayed for, by you.

***One of your volunteers heard about Marianne, wasting away on her sickbed. He found her. You found her! Someone called out to her!!***

He discovered that her uncured leprosy was beginning to cause disabilities ... and he knew exactly what to do for Marianne. She started her MDT again, for her cure, with extra medication to control her Leprosy Reaction.

**Because of your prayer, Marianne’s torture of bacterial inflammation is now fading away.**

**Even though Marianne is still very weak and tired from her ordeal, she is recovering ... and she is being cured of her leprosy!**

Jesus

Jesus healed the ten men with leprosy. In the same way Jesus healed the ten men with leprosy, Jesus was able to help Marianne.

***4000 YEARS OF LEPROSY...13 MORE TO GO! We’re getting close to reaching our goal, which I’m sure is your goal of a world where no one has to suffer like Marianne from a curable disease. By 2035 we want to make sure that there is NO CHILD WITH LEPROSY. You can make that possible by praying or giving a love gift.***

Marianne experienced the love of Jesus through the Leprosy Mission Bougainville. She was able to experience this love – this love which Jesus shows for the men affected by leprosy in Luke. Like the ONE man in the story, Marianne has come back to say, “Thank You”. Marianne was lost, abandoned, and left for dead. You found her! Her greatest hope is coming closer: to see her children again. Please keep bringing hope and a cure to others like Marianne in Bougainville, by praying today!

### **Closing Message**

Showing Gods Love

Who in your life needs to be touched? Who in your neighbourhood is desperate and needs a loving kind word said to them, or even a kind deed performed for them? We all need to make attempts to love those who often go unloved. Sometimes we might need to ask Jesus to help us learn to love those whom we would rather not love, and to love those who maybe don't get much love. That is what Jesus modelled for his disciples. If we are his disciples, we will do the same thing.

What is so wonderful, and humbling is that Jesus uses normal people like you and I, to continue HIS ministry of mending hands and feet, to help cure people affected by leprosy. With your help we can spread the truth about leprosy. We can make sure that no person ever feels the rejection and pain that Marianne felt.

As we pray together with people around the world this World Leprosy Sunday, we are connected through Gods love with people affected by leprosy. Spreading the message that leprosy can be cured and that all people are loved in God's sight.

Will you partner with us and others all around the world to ensure that in our lifetime we end leprosy? Jesus cured people with leprosy in HIS lifetime. HE is calling us to end leprosy in ours ...  
**4000 YEARS OF LEPROSY...13 MORE TO GO!**

**PRAY**

Amen.

Please go to our website [www.leprosymission.org.nz/wls](http://www.leprosymission.org.nz/wls)