

## 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 Shanne. 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 Shanne. Shanne's life has been devastated by leprosy. Shanne is suffering from 'leprosy reaction', a painful inflammation in the nerves caused by leprosy bacteria which has caused a severe inflammatory response. This sudden unpredictable swelling, blisters and disfigurement in the hands, feet and face brought Shanne close to death.

*"It was so severe that I almost passed away, said Shanne," I felt so sad that I would not fight against this condition anymore. All my dreams shattered, I thought hard about myself, my studies, my friends and family, my heart sank each day as I faced this ugly experience. My family felt hopeless with nothing much to do to save me."*

***Like the 10 men with leprosy this situation was devastating. It meant Shanne would end up living at a distance from her community, feeling shunned and abandoned, her face disfigured from the leprosy reaction she was terrified and afraid.***

### **Working Hard**

The 10 men with leprosy wouldn't have wanted to live at a distance from their family. Shanne 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 Shanne did.

Shanne grew up in an impoverished community. A community where many children will never see the inside of a classroom. *Shanne was a hard-working student and was accepted at university.* To be diagnosed with a brutal disease like leprosy in such a tough environment is a test of strength no young woman should go through.

Yet Shanne is one of the strongest women you could meet. She told me: "I was so scared. It was a positive leprosy case. My face was disfigured from the swelling, I was nervous. I was so terrified and sad. My face was swollen and looked so ugly ... I developed swollen face, high fever, and hotness inside my body ... I did not like myself.

But because of your love, Shanne received help through our community health programme in Bougainville! We are so thankful that you have helped get the cure to many people like Shanne. The community health programme you support in Bougainville provides multi-drug therapy to cure leprosy. The team know exactly what to do – get her steroid medication to stop this painful reaction.

Like the 10 men with leprosy, were it not for somebody who cared enough and loved enough, Shanne would have ended up totally isolated from her community, unable to participate in life and especially her dream of attending university 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 Shanne. She didn’t have anyone to call out to though. ***Instead, someone called out to her!***

It’s Always Darkest Before the Dawn as we know... Ending leprosy for everyone is on the horizon, but for Shanne and so many others, it still feels darkest before the dawn. To see Zero Leprosy by 2035, and prevent long term disability and suffering, we know we need to find and cure leprosy cases early with multi-drug therapy. Then we need to treat leprosy reaction with high dose steroids, administered by a specialist medical team. Caring for those living with leprosy long-term is where our dedicated teams spend much of their time. I know it’s your heart too – to reach out with compassion to someone like Shanne suffering so much pain.

**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 person can easily fight off leprosy. You are an important partner in enabling Bougainville’s community 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.

***These volunteers heard about Shanne, wasting away on her sickbed. They found her. You found her! Someone called out to her!!***

They reached out to Shanne ... and the team knew exactly what to do for Shanne... get her steroid medication to stop this painful reaction.

**Because of your prayer, Shanne’s torture of bacterial inflammation is now fading away.** You’ll walk with Shanne until she fully recovers, and hopefully see her graduate from university. What an honour it will be to walk with her on this journey. You get to share in her joy!

Jesus

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

***4000 YEARS OF LEPROSY...11 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 Shanne 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.***

Shanne 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, Shanne has come back to say, “Thank You”.* Shanne was close to death, felt terrified and afraid. You found her! Her greatest hope is coming closer: to see her graduate from university. Please keep bringing hope and a cure to others like Shanne 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, pain and hopelessness that Shanne 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...11 MORE TO GO!**

**PRAY**

Amen.

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