

When an Encounter with Jesus is Not Enough – Luke 17:11-19

How many of you have ever said,

- If I could only get that person to church...
- If they would only have a true encounter with Jesus, then...

But a person's presence at church doesn't guarantee an encounter w/Jesus!
And even a true encounter w/ Jesus does not guarantee a transformed life!

If these things can't produce the kind of results we desire, then what can?

Let's look again at today's encounter with Jesus found in Luke 17:11-19

What do we know about these 10 lepers?

- They had no place to call home! Vs 11-12 - Jesus encounters them between Samaria & Galilee in an unnamed village!
- They were social outcasts because of their disease! Vs 12 – They had to stand at a distance. They couldn't even get close to people!
- They recognized Jesus as one who had authority! Vs 13 – They called Him **"Master."** This is more than just "teacher" or "rabbi"
- They were looking for something, anything, to give them hope. Vs 13 – **"Have mercy on us."**
- They were willing to respond to Jesus' command! Vs 14 – **"And as they went..."** What was the outcome? **They were healed!**

If anyone was a good candidate for a genuine encounter w/ Jesus, it was these lepers – looking to belong, in need of a new identity, they knew there was more to this Jesus, they were in desperate need & they were willing!

What do we know about Jesus in this passage?

- Jesus responded immediately to their need. Vs 14 – **"Go and show yourselves to the priests."**
- Jesus healed them all, even a foreigner. Vs 14 – **"And as they went they were cleansed."** Jesus gave them everything they wanted!

Jesus' action towards these lepers was life changing for them! If there was ever an encounter w/ Jesus that should have led to return encounters it was this one! If ever there was a time to respond w/ worship it was this moment

How did they respond? **Only 1 of the 10 returned with gratitude and praise!**

Vs 15-16 – "Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; & he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks."

I want to highlight this right response from this Samaritan leper, but first, let me ask, "What happened to the other 9? Why did they not return?"

- **How could they receive so much from Jesus & not return to show gratitude?**

- **What more could Jesus have done to prompt the right response from them?**

These are good questions to ask, but couldn't they also be asked of us today

1) What more could Jesus do to prompt a right response from us?

He laid down His life, He took our sin upon Himself, He gave us His righteousness, & granted us the reward that He Himself earned!

2) How can we receive so much from Him & not return to show gratitude?

Sunday worship, is our opportunity to return – to give thanks & show gratitude to Jesus through our praise, prayers & financial gifts.

It is here that we can, like this 1 leper, fall on our faces at Jesus feet & worship Him! He is so worthy of it, yet so many do not come!

So many have received so much, yet never return to show their gratitude!

What was the difference that led this one leper to return? Faith!

Jesus said to him, **"Rise & go your way; your faith has made you well."**

In the Greek, **"made you well" can also be translated "has saved you!"**

His faith did more than just heal him physically, it healed him eternally!

Faith makes all the difference! It separates the genuine encounters with Jesus from the superficial ones. It separates the true followers from the rest

We can tailor what we do here @ BRC to what we think people want, to what we think will make the difference between coming once & coming to stay. But at the end of the day, **only those with true faith will stick!**

Giving people what they want doesn't always guarantee they will come back. Those who come back, do so b/c they are overwhelmed w/gratitude & nothing is more important than responding to their God with praise!

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