



3-4-18 Sermon Discussion Guide

“Road to Jerusalem: The Ten Lepers”



Context

Throughout this Lenten season we will look at events in Scripture that happened as Jesus made his way from the region of Galilee in the north to Jerusalem, 90 miles south. While the exact route Jesus took is unclear, these events happened at some point on Jesus' journey.

Checking In

Since the last time your group has met, how have each of you experienced God at work? What have you celebrated? What have you mourned?

Introduction

This event takes place in the region of Samaria, which was sort of hostile territory for Jesus. The Samaritans and Jews didn't get along. Today, this small town of about 7500 is in the West Bank (Palestine). The Greek Orthodox Church of St. Gregorios sits near the site of this miracle and is one of the oldest churches in the world.

Discussing the Text

1. Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem before his death and resurrection. Opposition was mounting, yet despite that he still continued to perform miracles. He didn't let the fear of those around him subdue him. He had a singular calling and purpose. Do you let fear or the “noise” around you hinder your passion?
2. We don't know if all 10 of the lepers were Samaritans or Jews or a mixture of both. But, we do know that the one leper who came back to thank him was a Samaritan. This means that he had two strikes against him: Samaritans were despised by Jews, and lepers were considered unclean and marginalized from society. Yet Jesus said, “your faith has healed you.” Most commentators say that this is an offer of salvation to this man. Jesus showed that he came not just for those inside the community but for everyone. It's certainly hard to love everyone on a daily basis? What are the biggest hurdles for you? Who is easiest to love?

So what?

1. Recommit yourself to the call that God has on your life despite any opposition you might experience or fear you might have. If you don't know your specific calling right now, talk with the group about it.
2. Recommit yourself to love everyone. Try to put down our guard and your preconceived notions. What communities need the love and grace of God the most? At Bible at Breakfast, we thought that the “lepers” of our day could be the homeless, those in prison, those who are addicted to drugs, opiates or alcohol, and those with mental health issues.
3. We might think of ourselves as too broken for God to save or love. I've heard people say, “If I ever darkened the door of the church it would just crumble because I'm too bad to go to church.” (or something to that effect). Remind yourself that nothing you've done is too bad to not be loved by God. Remind yourself that you are a beautiful and beloved child of God. God's grace through Jesus Christ cleanses us of all of our sins.

Prayer

Share something you for which you are thankful and/or something for which you need support. In particular, invite people to pray this week to cultivate a heart full of thanksgiving to God. Spend time lifting up specific thanksgivings to God regarding events that recently happened in your lives.