

=MIRACLES OF CHRIST=
Lesson 8
The Cleansing of the Ten Lepers

Objects to have:

A sign reading: THANK YOU
A black heart, a red heart, and a white heart
Your Bible.

Introducing the lesson:

When someone gives you something, what are you supposed to say? (Hold up your sign reading THANK YOU.) Right, thank you. When someone does something nice for you, what are you supposed to say? Yes, thank you.

I know a real good Bible story about some who forgot to say, "Thank you," and about someone else who remembered to say, "Thank you." Sit up straight and listen to this real good story. (Put down your sign, and with action tell the following.)

Telling the story:

How sad they looked! They had sores all over them. These were not the kind of sores that you get when you fall down while you are running. These were not the kind of sores that you get when you fall off your bike, or catch your finger in a door, or get scratched from a kitty. These were sores that were caused by a terrible disease. These were sores that were eating into their skin, causing a finger to be eaten away, a nose and an ear to be eaten away. This terrible disease caused these people who had it to look ugly and horrible. It was a disease called leprosy.

Whenever a person had leprosy, he could no longer live in the same house with the rest of his family. A person who had leprosy had to live outside the city in a little shack or maybe in a cave or wherever he could find a place to live by himself or herself. Whenever a person had the terrible disease of leprosy, he could not let healthy people come near him—the healthy people might catch the disease from him. The person who had leprosy had to make sure that no healthy person came near him. If a healthy person started walking near the person who had leprosy, then the person who had the leprosy had to call out, "Unclean, unclean!" (Show how they had to do it: They had to cover their upper lip with their hand while calling out.) They were not saying, "Unclean, unclean," because they had dirt on their hands or on their faces or on their knees. They were saying, "Unclean, unclean," because they had the terrible disease of leprosy.

There were ten men who had this terrible disease of leprosy. Each of these ten men had to leave his home. They had to leave their wives and their children, and these ten men were living outside the city where no one who was healthy could come near them. Members of their family would bring food for them, leaving it at a place away from the lepers. They could wave at the lepers, but they could not get close enough to sit and to talk with them. How sad! If only there were something that could wash away this terrible disease! But, the sore places could not be washed away. The sores just either had to heal themselves, or the people died with the disease.

The ten men who had the leprosy, I am sure, would look at themselves each morning when they woke up. Could some miracle have happened that would take away the leprosy? No, it was still there. How sad!

"Have you heard? Jesus is walking on the road that is leading to our village! Jesus is coming!" What is this which someone is excitedly yelling, as he is running down the village street? "Everybody, come out of your houses! Store keepers, come out of your stores! Do you want to see Jesus? He is coming!"

The ten lepers heard. Oh, could it possibly be that they could be healed today? They had heard of Jesus. They had heard people tell how Jesus could perform miracles. Jesus could do anything—things that were impossible to do, things which others could not do. They had heard that Jesus could make crippled people walk. They had heard that Jesus could make blind people see, and Jesus could make deaf people hear. Would Jesus heal them? Would Jesus perform the miracle of healing their leprosy?

“Here He comes! Jesus is very close to our village now. See Him? See Him coming down the road?” I am sure that the crowd was gathering by the side of the road, just like a crowd that is waiting to watch a parade go by. But, the ten lepers could not get into the crowd. They had to stay away from other people. The ten men who had leprosy had to stand back. They could not be close to where Jesus would be walking by.

“There He is!” I think that the people were calling to Him and watching Him, and maybe they were clapping as He passed by. The men who had leprosy wanted so badly to have Him notice them; maybe He would heal them. They knew that He could heal them; they had faith in Him.

“Jesus! Have mercy on us!” Oh, they must call louder to make Him hear them because He was so far away from them! “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.” Jesus was turning to look. Jesus looked right at them! Jesus saw that they had leprosy. Oh, how He loved them, just as He loves everybody. Even though they were unclean with leprosy, and even though they were ugly from the disease, Jesus loved them.

Jesus spoke to the ten men who had leprosy. “Go to the synagogue. Show yourselves to the priest.”

Maybe the ten men thought, “Show ourselves to the priest? The only time that a person who has leprosy can go see the priest is when he has been healed of the disease. The priest then examines him to be sure that he is healed. That means that we are healed! Hurray!” The men hurried to do what Jesus told them to do. They were on their way to see the preacher who was then called a priest.

But, wait a minute. One of the ten men stopped. He turned around. He turned toward Jesus. He shouted, “Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord! He has healed me!” This one man ran to Jesus. He fell down at Jesus’ feet, with his face to the ground. “Thank You, Jesus. Oh, Thank You. I trusted You, and You have washed me clean from my leprosy.”

Jesus said to the man, “Were there not ten of you men? Were there not ten of you who had leprosy, ten of you who asked Me to heal you, ten of you who were just healed of leprosy?” I am sure that the man lifted his head. Where were the nine men who had been with him? They were all gone! This one man was the only one who had thought to thank Jesus for what He had done for him.

Jesus was sad. “Only one person out of the ten came back to tell Me, ‘Thank You.’” Then Jesus said to the man who was kneeling at His feet, “Arise—you may get up—go thy way. Go let the priest examine you, according to the law. Take a bath. Put on all clean clothes. Go back to your family. I will always remember that you have said, ‘Thank You,’ and I will help all My people remember you, too. The story about you will be written in the Bible.”

The man went on his happy way to the priest. The priest examined him, and he said, “You are healed. You no longer have leprosy. Go home. Take a good bath. Put on all clean clothes.” The man was so happy to be healed of his leprosy. Jesus had performed that miracle. How happy was the man’s family, too. The other men were happy, too, but none was so happy as this one who had returned to say, “Thank You.” Jesus had praised him for remembering to say, “Thank You.”

Do you know how we could please Jesus? We can say, “Thank You,” to Him, too. Let’s do it now. (Lead the children in a prayer of thanksgiving for Jesus’ love and for His blessings.)

See this black heart? (Hold up the black heart.) In everybody's heart is something worse than the disease of leprosy. There is sin in everybody's heart; everybody is born with sin in his heart. Just as Jesus loved the ten men who were dirty and ugly with their bad disease, so Jesus loves everybody, even though there is sin in their hearts. Jesus said, "I will make a way to wash that sin out of their hearts. I will shed My blood."

(Hold up the red heart.) Sin could be washed out of that heart. Soap won't wash away sin any more than it could wash away the sores of leprosy. The blood of Jesus is what cleanses hearts. (Hold up the white heart.) If I did not use soap when my hands were dirty, would the soap make my hands clean? No, I have to use the soap in order for it to make my hands clean. The blood of Jesus will not clean your heart, either, unless you ask Jesus to clean your heart of its sin. Won't you ask Jesus to be your Saviour?

Now, after Jesus has saved us, what are we to do? Yes, we are to say, "Thank You," to Him, and we are to tell others what Jesus has done for us. Let's learn our Bible verse, and then always remember to give thanks. (Teach the children Luke 17:15, reading the verse from your Bible as you teach.)