The One Who Came Back

Luke 17:11-19 | Gratitude as Return

One of them, when he saw that he was healed, came back to Jesus, shouting, 'Praise God!' He fell to the ground at Jesus' feet, thanking him for what he had done. This man was a Samaritan.

Luke 17:15-16 NLT

OPEN

Ten lepers are healed. All ten are set free from the disease that had exiled them. All ten receive exactly what they asked for. Only one comes back. And the one who comes back -- the outsider, the Samaritan -- is the one Jesus calls whole.

1. Think of a time when someone did something significant for you. Did you go back and thank them? What made it easy or hard to return?
2. Have you ever received something good from God and moved straight on without returning to him? What does that feel like to admit?

UNDERSTAND THE TEXT

iaomai vs. sozo

Greek iaomai means physical healing. All ten received it. Greek sozo means wholeness, completeness, salvation -- body and soul together. Only the one who returned received this.

The Outsider's Gift

The Samaritan was a religious outsider, someone the Jewish lepers would have considered beneath them spiritually. And yet he is the one who understood what the healing meant -- and what it demanded.

3. Why do you think ten people cried out for mercy together -- and then nine scattered? What does that tell us about how people relate to God when they are desperate vs. when they have received what they needed?
4. Jesus asks: Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? He is not angry. He sounds almost... wistful. What do you hear in that question?
5. Jesus tells the Samaritan: Your faith has made you well. The Greek word here is sozo -- made you whole. What is the connection between the act of returning to give thanks and the wholeness that follows?

GO DEEPER

6. The sermon introduced the idea that familiarity inoculates against wonder. The nine Jewish lepers may have known the scriptures and the temple worship. The Samaritan was the outsider who saw the gift with fresh eyes. Where in your own spiritual life might familiarity be dulling your sense of wonder?
7. Gratitude as return means going back to the giver, not just appreciating the gift privately. How does that change the shape of gratitude for you? What does returning actually look like in your relationship with God?

8. The lepers were healed on the way -- as they went. They did not wait until they were in front of Jesus to begin walking. Sometimes our healing, our blessing, our answer comes in motion. When have you experienced something coming through on the way?

CONNECT TO YOUR LIFE

9. Think about your own history with God. What has he healed, restored, or provided that you may have received and then kept moving without returning to acknowledge? Take a moment to name it here.
10. The Samaritan's return was physical -- he came back, he fell down, he gave thanks loudly. Gratitude has a posture. What would an embodied posture of gratitude look like for you this week?
11. Is there a person in your life to whom you owe a return -- someone whose kindness or sacrifice you received but never fully acknowledged? What would it mean to go back?

APPLY

12. Choose one specific thing God has done for you -- something you may have received and kept moving past. Write it here and commit to returning to him in prayer about it this week.
13. How might the practice of a daily moment of return -- going back to God with specific thanks for specific things -- change the texture of your life over time?

This Week I Will	
My Honest Admission	
I Want to Ask God	

Ten were healed.
One came back.
The return
is what made him whole.