

**Life-Sharing /Pioneers Hope Has Come--Embarrassment John 8:1-11
Commentary John 8:1-11**

7:53–8:3 The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery.^{NIV} Scribes (*the teachers of the law*) often gathered in the outer court of the temple to teach the crowds of worshipers, so it was natural for Jesus to be there. The religious leaders did not bring this woman to Jesus to promote justice; they used her to try to trap Jesus. (The others involved in this attempt simply mingled with the crowd; see a similar trap in [Mark 12:13-17](#).)

Though indignant toward this woman's sin, the religious leaders brought her to Jesus with political, not spiritual, motives in mind. They forgot the obvious fact that catching someone in the very act of adultery involves catching *two* people. Their devaluation of the woman (while ignoring the man's sin) made her no more than a pawn in their efforts to trap Jesus.

Of course I had a deep respect, indeed a great reverence for the conventional Jesus Christ whom the Church worshipped. But I was not at all prepared for the *unconventional* man revealed in these terse Gospels.

J. B. Phillips

How unfortunate that they were so quick to point out the sins of another and so blind to their own sins—especially the sin of not recognizing and accepting their own Messiah. But Jesus was about to teach them a lesson they wouldn't forget.

LIFE APPLICATION

DOUBLE STANDARD

The details of this event are painfully common. Traditionally, women have borne an undue burden of blame for sins in which men participated equally. Today, radical feminism shifts the balance of blame to men. However, placing more blame on one person than the other covers a hidden motive: blaming others shifts the load of our own guilt. God stands against double or separate standards for women and men. He rejects the hypocrisy that holds others to a different standard than we hold for ourselves. When we accept our own blame, we take the first step toward experiencing forgiveness.

8:4-6 They said to him, " . . . the law . . . commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" They said this to test him, so that they might have some charge to bring against him.^{NRSV} The Jewish leaders had already disregarded the law by arresting the woman without the man. The law required that both parties to

adultery be put to death ([Leviticus 20:10](#); [Deuteronomy 22:22](#)) and specified stoning in the case of a betrothed virgin ([Deuteronomy 22:23](#), but see [22:24](#) for an important condition). But the proceedings before Jesus had little to do with justice. The leaders were using the woman's sin as an opportunity to trick Jesus and destroy his credibility with the people. If Jesus were to say that the woman should not be stoned, they could accuse him of violating Moses' law.

If he were to urge them to execute her, they would report him to the Romans, who did not permit the Jews to carry out their own executions ([18:31](#)). But Jesus was aware of their intentions and did not give either of the expected responses to the dilemma they placed before him.

Aversion for the truth exists in different degrees, but it may be said to exist in every one of us to some degree, for it is inseparable from self-love.

Blaise Pascal

Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground.^{NRSV} What was Jesus writing in the dirt on the ground? Many have speculated: maybe he was listing the names of those present who had committed adultery (and scaring them to death that he knew it); he might have been listing names and various sins that each person had committed; maybe he was writing out the Ten Commandments to point out that no one could claim to be without sin. In any case, Jesus made the accusers uncomfortable.

8:7-8 "Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her."^{NRSV} The religious leaders could have handled this case without Jesus' opinion. Jesus was fully aware that the woman was only brought to him so the Pharisees could test him. They thought they had him in a no-win situation: no matter what he said, he would offend someone and thus give them a crime of which to accuse him. But Jesus' calm words caught them completely off guard. They never anticipated his turning the tables on them.

Jesus' statement of permission balanced several crucial points of truth. He upheld the legal penalty for adultery (stoning), so he could not be accused of being against the law. But by requiring that only a sinless person could throw the first stone, Jesus exposed what was in the accusers' hearts. Without condoning the woman's actions, he highlighted the importance of compassion and forgiveness and broadened the spotlight of judgment until every accuser felt himself included. Jesus knew the execution could not be carried out.

How are we to apply Jesus' statement about only sinless persons rendering judgment? Jesus was not saying that only perfect, sinless people can make accurate accusations, pass judgment, or exact a death penalty. Nor was he excusing adultery or any other sin by saying that everyone sins. This event illustrates that wise judgment flows out of honest motives. Jesus resolved an injustice about to be committed by

exposing the hypocrisy of the witnesses against the woman. By making the accusers examine themselves, he exposed their real motives.

Jesus did confront the woman's sin, but he exercised compassion alongside confrontation. As with the woman at the well ([chapter 4](#)), Jesus demonstrated to this woman that she was of greater importance than what she had done wrong.

LIFE APPLICATION

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

diligence to "keep the law" lay hidden the drive to protect their power. Their conflict of interest made them inept judges.

The religious leaders who tried to trap Jesus were treating neither the sin nor the sinner with the necessary respect. The same blindness that caused them to not see their own sins made them unable to recognize who Jesus was.

Behind their

Sin calls for compassion as well as judgment. But final judgment is God's prerogative alone. Sins may be abhorrent, but sinners have been offered forgiveness in Christ. When we must confront sin, we ought not condemn, but rather present the need and opportunity for forgiveness.

After Jesus made his statement, **once again he bent down and wrote on the ground.**^{NRSV} Jesus allowed the blunt truth to sink in and have an effect. There was no further need for argument; the sides had been clearly drawn. The trap snapped shut, and those who set it found themselves caught!

8:9-11 **When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders.**^{NRSV} When Jesus invited someone who had not sinned to throw the first stone, the leaders slipped quietly away, from oldest to youngest. Evidently the older men were more aware of their sins than the younger. Age and experience often temper youthful self-righteousness. Each person, no matter what age, should take an honest look at his or her life. We all have a sinful nature and are desperately in need of forgiveness and transformation. None of us would have been able to throw the first stone; none of us can claim sinlessness. We, too, would have had to walk away.

The accusers slinked away **until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there.**^{NIV} After everyone had left, Jesus stood and spoke to the accused woman, **"Has no one condemned you?"**^{NIV} Apparently no one could claim sinlessness so as to stone this woman. Imagine the scene: anyone who tried would immediately be condemned by someone who knew of a sin that person had committed. Even those pious religious leaders—"the teachers of the law and the Pharisees" ([8:3](#) NIV) who brought this woman to Jesus—could not save face. Jesus

had exposed their hypocrisy and embarrassed them, and there was nothing for them to do but go back and try to think of some other way to trap Jesus.

LIFE APPLICATION

HYPOCRISY

How quickly and self-righteously we bring before Jesus the sins of others while overlooking and denying our own sins. These hypocrites were guilty of sin in their own lives and were unwilling to face it. They claimed concern for truth and justice, but were arrogantly using the woman who had fallen into their hands. In their anger at Jesus they made her life cheap.

When you find yourself enraged at others, you may be on the verge of a healthy discovery. You should examine what is behind the rage. Are you covering sins or excusing faults that have made you unusually sensitive to the faults in others? What wrong motives are you masking by your anger?

No one had accused the woman, and Jesus kindly said, "**Neither do I condemn you.**"^{NRSV} But there was more—she was not simply free to go her way. Jesus didn't just free her from the Pharisees, he wanted to free her from her sin, so he added, "**Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.**"^{NRSV} Jesus didn't condemn the woman accused of adultery, but neither did he ignore or condone her behavior. Jesus told the woman to leave her life of sin.

LIFE APPLICATION

TRUE LOVE AND GOOD INTENTIONS

God hates sin; we must make no mistake about that. But he loves sinners—and that includes each of us. In fact, he loves us so much he sent his Son to die—to take the penalty our sins deserved. Jesus stands ready to forgive any person, but confession, repentance, and a change of heart are the properly prepared ground for forgiveness.

Our intention must be to *not sin again*. This does not mean that God expects us to never sin again, but he does expect that our life-styles are no longer sinful. Our desire should be no longer to live for ourselves and our pleasures, but to live for God. With God's help we can accept Christ's forgiveness and stop making a practice of wrongdoing. Only then will we be really free to *not sin again*.

Commentary 2 John 8:1-11

Grace and Law (John 8:11)

The Feast of Tabernacles had ended, but Jesus took advantage of the opportunity to minister to the pilgrims in the temple. During the feast, word had quickly spread that Jesus was not only attending but openly teaching in the temple (see [Luke 21:37](#)). He taught in the court of the women at the place where the treasury was situated ([John 8:20](#)). The scribes and Pharisees knew where He would be, so they hatched their plot together.

They would not be likely to catch a couple in the "very act" of adultery; so we wonder if the man (who never was indicted!) was part of the scheme. The Law required that *both* guilty parties be stoned ([Lev. 20:10](#); [Deut. 22:22](#)) and not just the woman. It does seem suspicious that the man went free. The scribes and Pharisees handled the matter in a brutal fashion, even in the way they interrupted the Lord's teaching and pushed the woman into the midst of the crowd.

The Jewish leaders, of course, were trying to pin Jesus on the horns of a dilemma. If He said, "Yes, the woman must be stoned!" then what would happen to His reputation as the "friend of publicans and sinners"? The common people would no doubt have abandoned Him and would never have accepted His gracious message of forgiveness.

But, if He said, "No, the woman should not be stoned!" then He was openly breaking the Law and subject to arrest. On more than one occasion, the religious leaders had tried to pit Jesus against Moses, and now they seemed to have the perfect challenge (see [John 5:39-47](#); [6:32ff](#); [7:40ff](#)).

Instead of passing judgment on the woman, Jesus passed judgment on the judges! No doubt He was indignant at the way they treated the woman. He was also concerned that such hypocrites should condemn another person and not judge themselves. We do not know what He wrote on the dirt floor of the temple. Was He simply reminding them that the Ten Commandments had been originally written "by the finger of God" ([Ex. 31:18](#)), and that He is God? Or was He perhaps reminding them of the warning in [Jeremiah 17:13](#)?

It was required by Jewish Law that the accusers cast the first stones ([Deut. 17:7](#)). Jesus was not asking that sinless men judge the woman, for He was the only sinless Person present. If our judges today had to be perfect, judicial benches would be empty. He was referring to *the particular sin of the woman*, a sin that can be committed

in the heart as well as with the body ([Matt. 5:27-30](#)). Convicted by their own consciences, the accusers quietly left the scene, and Jesus was left alone with the woman. He forgave her and warned her to sin no more ([John 5:14](#)).

We must not misinterpret this event to mean that Jesus was "easy on sin" or that He contradicted the Law. For Jesus to forgive this woman meant that He had to one day die for her sins. Forgiveness is free but it is not cheap. Furthermore, Jesus perfectly fulfilled the Law so that no one could justly accuse Him of opposing its teachings or weakening its power. By applying the Law to the woman *and not to themselves*, the Jewish leaders were violating both the letter and the spirit of the Law—and they thought they were defending Moses!

The Law was given to reveal sin ([Rom. 3:20](#)), and we must be condemned by the Law before we can be cleansed by God's grace. Law and grace do not compete with each other; they complement each other. Nobody was ever saved by keeping the Law, but nobody was ever saved by grace who was not *first* indicted by the Law. There must be conviction before there can be conversion.

Nor is Christ's gracious forgiveness an excuse to sin. "Go, and sin no more!" was our Lord's counsel. "But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared" ([Ps. 130:4](#)). Certainly the experience of gracious forgiveness would motivate the penitent sinner to live a holy and obedient life to the glory of God.

Life-Sharing /Pioneers Hope Has Come--Embarrassment John 8:1-11

1. When was at time in your life when someone seem to come out of nowhere and resued you in a particular situation?

I had paid money to have my car fixed a couple of times, but the problem of it dying on me continued to happen. One day after my car died, a stranger stopped by, looked under the hood and showed me what my problem was. The car never had the same problem again. I was glad to be rescued from my dilemma.

2. What do you think of when you hear, "there is hope."

I think of something coming to an end with a positive conclusion to the ending. It may look as though we have lost in a situation, but the end has not yet happened and in the end we will still prevail. Somehow, somebody is going to change the situation.

John 8:1-11 Today's New International Version (TNIV)

8 ¹ *but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.* ² *At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them.* ³ *The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group* ⁴ *and said to Jesus, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery.* ⁵ *In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?"* ⁶ *They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him.*

But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. ⁷ *When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her."* ⁸ *Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground.*

⁹ *At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there.* ¹⁰ *Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman,^[a] where are they? Has no one condemned you?"* ¹¹ *"No one, sir," she said. "Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin."*

3. What is the first thing suspicious about the Pharisees bringing in the woman?

Where is the man? It is very difficult to catch a person in the act of adultery without there being two people. Why is the man not also standing there? The Law required that both guilty parties be stoned ([Lev. 20:10](#); [Deut. 22:22](#)) and not just the woman. It

Why did the Pharisees feel the need to get Jesus's input on this situation when they were not recognizing his authority in the first place?

4. If you had of been the woman, what kinds of thoughts may have been going through your mind? What is she probably hoping for?

I would have been thoroughly embarrassed. I would be wondering, where the guy was and was he part of a scheme to get her caught. I would have been wondering if I had been betrayed by someone I thought cared for me. I would be wondering if this was going to be my last day alive. I would have been wondering about my family and how humiliating this was going to be for them. I think she was hoping that whatever was going to happen, would happen quickly and be over with as soon as possible.

5. What are we hoping for when we choose to sin?

We are hoping the sin will bring us all the enjoyment we anticipate in getting. We are hoping that we are not going to be exposed in our sin. We are hoping that we are going to remain in charge of the situation after we have sinned. We are hoping that we can ask for forgiveness and that will end the matter. We are hoping to be the exception to the rule, "you will reap what you sow." We are hoping that we can continue on with our relationship with God with no consequences.

6. Why are we unable to predict all the consequences which might come from our choosing to sin? Why does our sin embarrass us?

We do not know the future. We can never know what the actions of another person are going to be when we have chosen to sin with the person whatever the sin may be. The person may have a change of heart and wants to confess to the sin or to the crime to ease his/her conscience. We do not know when God has already determined to reveal our actions to someone else. We never can cover our tracks completely, so we are not aware of what clues we may have left behind.

Numbers 32:23 (NIV)

²³ "But if you fail to do this, you will be sinning against the LORD; and you may be sure that your sin will find you out.

Proverbs 15:3 (NIV)

³ The eyes of the LORD are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good.

Our sin embarrasses us because it shows others that we are far less than what we appeared to be in the eyes of others. There is a shame over having let others down or disappointing others. When we sin, sin robs us of our character in the eyes of others. We are exposed in a way that degrades us.

7. What do you think is the trap that the Pharisees are attempting to set? What are the Pharisees hoping is going to happen?

The Pharisees would like to do any of the following 1) alienate Jesus from the people, 2) expose Jesus as being in disobedience to the law or 3) get Jesus in trouble with the Romans and let them take care of Jesus. If Jesus says let the woman go, he would be placing himself above the law of Moses. If he said stone her, he would be going against his message of grace and forgiveness. He would also be violating Roman law by carrying out an execution without Rome's permission. The Pharisees are hoping to bring Jesus' popularity to a screeching halt. They even hope to end his career.

8. What do you think Jesus may been writing on the ground?

I think personally Jesus was writing either a list of sins on the ground or something like, "May God forgive us of our sin." None of us will ever know what he wrote until we get to heaven and have the opportunity to ask.

9. What is Jesus hoping for when he gives them permission to stone the woman?

Jesus is hoping that they will be reminded of their own sin and would be willing to put themselves in the place of the woman not as an adulterer, but as a sinner in need of God's mercy. When we see our sinful condition, it makes us easier to identify with the failures of others. Jesus wants to satisfy their insistence that the Law be upheld, yet

he is hoping they will see grace in action. No one can accuse Jesus of rejecting the law of Moses. Jesus has managed to balance truth and grace in perfect harmony.

10. What are the Pharisees thinking when they start to walk away? What are they hoping for?

I think they are thinking about the personal failures in their own lives. I think they are thinking they are hoping to receive God's forgiveness for their own sin. I think they are thinking even what they have done to this woman has been done in disregard for the law of God. They had used this woman for their own political goals without concern for her as a person. I think they had started to understand Jesus a little bit better than they had before they arrived. Jesus was much more intelligent than they had given him credit for.

11. What do you think the woman is feeling when she's standing there with Jesus? Why doesn't she simply run away and escape?

I think she's thinking who is this guy. I think she's thinking is that about over or is something even worse about to happen. I think she's thinking is he going to give me a lecture on my behavior. I think she's thinking what on earth is this guy thinking about me. She knew this was not the way to make a good first impression. I think she didn't run away to escape because her chances with Jesus was a lot better than with the guys who had walked away. She may not have had anywhere to exactly run to. If she was married, her husband would not be ready to receive her back. If she was not married, then she would have brought shame on her father's home. She had not had enough time to work through what being set free was going to be like.

12. What does Jesus actually mean when he says "neither do I condemn you"? What does Jesus' statement do for the woman's future?

He's saying that he is not going to pick up a stone and begin delivering the punishment called for in the law. He is not saying that what she did was okay or even understandable. He is simply extending grace to her. Jesus' statement opens the door for her to go back to her family. When this episode is thrown in her face, Jesus' words remind her that He still sees something of value in her that is worth continuing her life and her future. If Jesus did not condemn her, then nobody else could either, because with the standard Jesus had set, nobody but Jesus could reach it.

13. Do you think this passage is teaching that we are not suppose to tell each other that our behavior is wrong when we sin?

No. So many people have thought this passage means that we are not to judge others. Jesus did not stop the Pharisees from judging the woman's behavior. He kept them from imposing a death sentence upon her. He wanted them to demonstrate grace and compassion and to see her as a person even as he did. This is not a passage about people coming to Jesus with clean hands and asking what to do. This is a passage in which the people demanding righteousness were completely unrighteous in their actions and their intentions. They wanted to use the woman and to use Jesus as a tool for their own purposes. The bible is clear that we have a duty to correct and confront one another.

- *We find in Galatians Galatians 6:1-8 Today's New International Version (TNIV)*

6 Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. ² Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. ³ If any of you think you are something when you are nothing, you deceive yourselves. ⁴ Each of you should test your own actions. Then you can take pride in yourself, without comparing yourself to somebody else, ⁵ for each of you should carry your own load.

14. Why does Jesus tell the woman to "go now and leave your life of sin." What is that Jesus is hoping is going to happen in this ladies life?

Jesus is hoping that the grace that has been extended to this woman would cause her to want to follow after God and to turn her life in a new direction. He let the woman

know that she still had a choice to make. God's extension of an offer of grace is not proof that we have chosen to walk with him. Jesus called the woman's behavior sin, and he told her to leave behind the life she had been living. Grace is given to us to lead us to repentance.

15. What is it that Jesus is hoping going to happen in your life this week?

Life-Sharing & Pioneers Lesson 2 “Hope Has Come” Be Thankful

Luke 17:11-19

Commentary1 Luke 17:11-19

17:11 Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee.^{NIV} Jesus was still *on his way to Jerusalem*, knowing that he had an "appointment" there in order for his ministry to be completed ([9:51](#); [13:22](#)). Jesus was traveling *along the border between Samaria and Galilee*. Galilee was Jewish; Samaria was occupied by Samaritans, who were despised by the Jews (see the commentary on [9:52-53](#)). The exact location is unknown, but that Jesus was near the border accounts for a Samaritan (a "foreigner," [17:16](#), [18](#)) in the group of lepers.

17:12-13 As he entered a village there, ten lepers stood at a distance, crying out, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!"^{NLT} People who had leprosy (called lepers) were required to try to stay away from other people and to announce their presence if they had to come near. Leprosy was a feared disease because there was no known cure for it, and some forms of it were highly contagious. Leprosy had a similar emotional impact and terror associated with it as AIDS does today. (Sometimes called Hansen's disease, leprosy still exists today in a less contagious form that can be treated.) If a person contracted the contagious type, a priest declared him a leper and banished him from his home and city. This also excluded him from participating in any social or religious activities (according to the law in [Leviticus 13–14](#)). The leper went to live in a community with other lepers until the disease went into remission or he or she died. Quarantine was the only way the people knew to contain the spread of the contagious forms of leprosy. Even the mention of the name of this disabling disease terrified people because they were afraid of catching it. Because leprosy destroys the nerve endings, lepers often would unknowingly damage their fingers, toes, and noses. This man with leprosy had an advanced case (he was "covered"), so he undoubtedly had lost much bodily tissue. It was against the law for lepers to enter a town, so either this man met Jesus outside, or he ignored the law and entered the town in order to find Jesus.

Along with being outcasts from society, lepers were also considered "unclean," meaning that they were unfit to participate in any religious or social activity. Because the law said that contact with any unclean person made that person unclean too, lepers were required to call out "Unclean" to keep people away ([Leviticus 13:45](#)). People did not want to become ceremonially unclean through any contact with lepers, otherwise they would be unable to worship until the correct cleansing ceremonies had been performed.

Life Application Bible Commentary - Life Application Bible Commentary – Luke. Thus these *ten lepers* were standing at a distance, outside the city, and they were *crying out*

to Jesus for mercy. They called Jesus *Master*—they knew who he was and what he could do for them. They did not try to get close, however, perhaps because of the crowd that was probably still following Jesus ([14:25](#)).

LIFE APPLICATION

ON THE PERIPHERY

Ten lepers cried out for mercy. On the edges of our lives, at a distance, but within shouting range stand needy people whom Jesus loves. What can you do to reach them?

- A street kid in Brazil, courted by druggies.
- A prostitute in Bangkok, her youth spoiled.
- A refugee in Zaire, undernourished and without work.
- A homeless drifter a mile from your home, a block from your church.

Their cry is barely audible, "Christian, have mercy. . . ."

How easy it is for believers to go on with "business as usual" in their daily lives when so many people live in desperate need, poverty, and suffering. Because there are so many needs and so few resources, believers must ask God for direction and depend upon his resources. Work through your church and actively seek some way you can help.

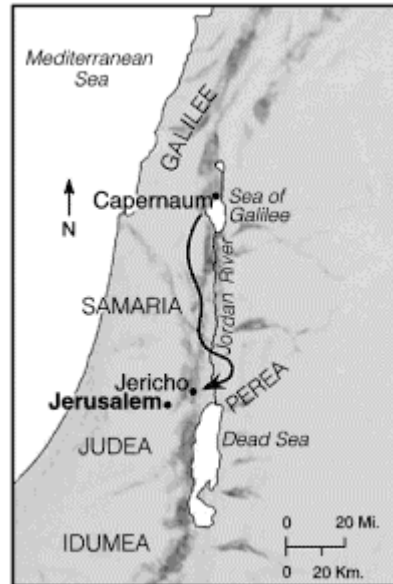
[17:14](#) He looked at them and said, "Go show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, their leprosy disappeared.^{NLT} Sometimes leprosy would go into remission. If a leper thought his leprosy had gone away, the leper was supposed to present himself to a priest, who could declare him clean ([Leviticus 14](#)). Jesus sent the ten lepers to the priest before they were healed, for *as they went, their leprosy disappeared*. Jesus did not touch these men or even speak words of healing as he had done for most of his healings. This time he simply gave them the command to *go . . . to the priests*. Jesus was asking the men to respond in faith that, by their obedience, what they desired would happen. All the men responded in faith, and Jesus healed them on the way. Consider your own trust in God. Is your faith so strong that you act on what he says even before you see evidence that it will work?

[17:15-16](#) One of them, when he saw that he was healed, came back to Jesus, shouting, "Praise God, I'm healed!" He fell face down on the ground at Jesus' feet, thanking him for what he had done. This man was a Samaritan.^{NLT} Jesus healed all ten lepers, but only *one of them, when he saw that he was healed*, returned to thank him. It is possible to receive God's great gifts with an ungrateful spirit—nine of the ten men did so. Only the thankful man, however, learned that his faith had played a role in his healing, and only grateful Christians grow in understanding God's

grace. God does not demand that his people thank him, but he is pleased when they do so. And he uses their responsiveness to teach them more about himself.

The grateful man returned to Jesus, praised God, *fell face down*, and thanked Jesus. Luke added, almost as a parenthesis, that, by the way, *this man was a Samaritan*. As noted in the commentary at [9:52-53](#),

the Samaritans were a race despised by the Jews as idolatrous half-breeds. The surprise of this story is that this Samaritan, used to being despised by Jews (except perhaps for his fellow lepers), would dare to go to this Jewish healer and prostrate himself before him. But this man's faith went deep enough that he saw God's hand in the healing. Once again Luke was pointing out that God's grace is for everybody. The Samaritan not only portrayed the same trust that Jesus brought to the story of the Good Samaritan ([10:30-37](#)) but also set the stage for Jesus' mission to all people (see [Acts 8:4](#)).



Last Trip From Galilee

Jesus left Galilee for the last time—he would not return before his death. He passed through Samaria, met and healed ten men who had leprosy, and continued on to Jerusalem. He spent some time east of the Jordan ([Mark 10:1](#)) before going to Jericho ([Luke 19:1](#)).

[17:17-19](#) Jesus asked, "Didn't I heal ten men? Where are the other nine? Does only this foreigner return to give glory to God?" And Jesus said to the man, "Stand up and go. Your faith has made you well."^{NLT} Jesus had been distressed many times with his own people's lack of acceptance and faith ([7:9](#); [8:25](#); [12:28](#)). This time was no different. *Ten men* had been healed, but only one, the *foreigner* (referring to the man from Samaria), came back to *give glory to God*. Jesus was not so much concerned about being thanked as he was about the men's understanding of what had happened. The other nine went off, free from leprosy but not necessarily free from sin through the salvation Jesus could offer. This one man was freed, so Jesus sent him on his way with the knowledge that his *faith* had made him well. He not only had a restored body, his soul had been restored as well.

LIFE APPLICATION

FAITH AND HEALING

Jesus' miracles of healing provide wonderful encouragement, for they reveal his power and his compassion. The difficulty comes from applying these accounts today. How should believers pray for themselves and loved ones who are sick or terminally ill? How should they believe? This story provides not all the answers but some insights into Jesus' healing of the sick.

- These lepers recognized Jesus' authority. They did not demand that he heal them. They called out for Jesus to have mercy on them ([17:13](#)).
- Jesus emphasized the necessity of faith ([17:19](#)). Just as in the parable of the mustard seed ([13:18-19](#)), it is not the size of faith but the presence of genuine faith that is important.
- Jesus stressed public testimony. He directed the lepers to go to the priests ([17:14](#)) to demonstrate what God had done. Believers also must be prepared to give God the credit when they are healed.
- Jesus highlighted the need for gratitude and praise to God ([17:18](#)). Will your attitude be grateful to God despite the outcome of your prayer? Can you trust fully in God's care each day, living or dying?

Christians should always be the ones who return to Jesus and thank him for his mercy and power.

Life Application Bible Commentary - Life Application Bible Commentary – Luke.

Commentary 2

Thankfulness (Luke 17:11-19)

Between [Luke 17:10](#) and [11](#), the events of [John 11](#) occurred as the Lord Jesus made His way to Jerusalem. At the border of Samaria and Judea, Jesus healed ten lepers at one time, and the fact that the miracle involved a Samaritan made it even more significant (see [Luke 10:30-37](#)). Jesus used this event to teach a lesson about gratitude to God.

The account begins with *ten unclean men* ([Luke 17:11-13](#)), all of whom were lepers (see the comments on [Luke 5:12-15](#)). The Jews and Samaritans would not normally live together, but misery loves company and all ten were outcasts. What difference does birth make if you are experiencing a living death? But these men had hope, for Jesus was there, and they cried out for mercy. The word translated "master" is the

same one Peter used ([Luke 5:5](#)) and means "chief commander." They knew that Jesus was totally in command of even disease and death, and they trusted Him to help them.

The account continues by referring to *nine ungrateful men* ([Luke 17:17](#)). Jesus commanded the men to go show themselves to the priest, which in itself was an act of faith, for they had not yet been cured. When they turned to obey, they were completely healed, for their obedience was evidence of their faith (see [2 Kings 5:1-14](#)).

You would have expected all ten men to run to Jesus and thank Him for a new start in life, but only one did so—and he was not even a Jew. How grateful the men should have been for the providence of God that brought Jesus into their area, for the love that caused Him to pay attention to them and their need, and for the grace and power of God that brought about their healing. They should have formed an impromptu men's chorus and sung [Psalm 103](#) together!

But before we judge them too harshly, what is our own "GQ"—"Gratitude Quotient"? How often do we take our blessings for granted and fail to thank the Lord? "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!" ([Ps. 107:8](#), [15](#), [21](#), [31](#)) Too often we are content to enjoy the gift but we forget the Giver. We are quick to pray but slow to praise.

The next time you sing "Now Thank We All Our God," try to remember that Martin Rinkhart wrote it during the Thirty Years' War when his pastoral duties were most difficult. He conducted as many as forty funerals a day, including that of his own wife; yet he wrote those beautiful words as a table grace for his family. In spite of war and plague around him and sorrow within him, he was able to give thanks to the Lord from a grateful heart.

Luke's account closes with *one unusual man* ([Luke 17:15-19](#)). The Samaritan shouted "Glory to God!" and fell at Jesus' feet to praise Him and give thanks. It would have been logical for him to have followed the other men and gone to the temple, but he first came to the Lord Jesus with his sacrifice of praise ([Ps. 107:22](#); [Heb. 13:15](#)). This pleased the Lord more than all the sacrifices the other men offered, even though they were obeying the Law ([Ps. 51:15-17](#)). Instead of *going to* the priest, the Samaritan *became* a priest, and he built his altar at the feet of Jesus (read [Ps. 116:12-19](#)).

By coming to Jesus, the man received something greater than physical healing: he was also saved from his sins. Jesus said, "Your faith has saved you" (literal translation), the same words He spoke to the repentant woman who anointed His feet ([Luke 7:50](#)). The Samaritan's nine friends were declared clean by the priest, but he was declared *saved* by the Son of God! While it is wonderful to experience the miracle of physical healing, it is even more wonderful to experience the miracle of eternal salvation.

Every child of God should cultivate the grace of gratitude. It not only opens the heart to further blessings but glorifies and pleases the Father. An unthankful heart is fertile soil for all kinds of sins ([Rom. 1:21ff](#)).

Bible Exposition Commentary - Bible Exposition Commentary – Be Courageous (Luke 14-24).

Life-Sharing & Pioneers Lesson 2 “Hope Has Come” Be Thankful

Luke 17:11-19

1. Who has done something for you that you wish you could go back and say “thank you” to them because it made a difference in your life?

My high school football coach had more of an impact on my life than he could have ever known. I had wanted to call him up and thank him for what he had done for me, but I waited too late because when I started to trace where he was, I discovered he had died. It was such an encouragement to me, when during a football meeting of looking at a game we had played, he said “Ricky makes up for a lot of our mistakes.” I have tried since then to help cover for the mistakes of others.

2. Looking back over your life, has it been a life of going out of your way to welcome or to be friends with people that others have rejected?

I have been that has tried throughout to reach out to those who others looked down upon. I guess experiencing racism first hand as a child, made me more compassionate. I have always identified with the poor.

Luke 17:11-19

Today's New International Version (TNIV) **Jesus Heals Ten Men With Leprosy**

¹¹ Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. ¹² As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy^[a] met him. They stood at a distance ¹³ and called out in a loud voice, “Jesus, Master, have pity on us!”

¹⁴ When he saw them, he said, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went, they were cleansed. ¹⁵ One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. ¹⁶ He threw himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan. ¹⁷ Jesus asked, “Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? ¹⁸ Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?” ¹⁹ Then he said to him, “Rise and go; your faith has made you well.”

3. What do you think it felt like to have leprosy?

I think it felt like a prison sentence without walls. You were separated from those you loved with no hope of being reunited with them. God must have seemed a long ways away, yet you knew short of a miracle from God, this life was going to be your life until you died. It must have been hard to keep from falling into self-pity and depression. You could see so much of the things you'd like to be able to do, yet you knew you would never get the chance. Your mind could be as intelligent as anyone and your heart could be compassionate and filled with love, yet your physical body's appearance would keep you out of society.

4. Why do you think these ten men are together?

These men are together because they have no other community to turn to. They are as close to family as they are going to get. This is the only place they do not have to declare again and again, "unclean, unclean" when another human being approaches them. Their survival may depend on them somehow working together. Without each other, they may have fully felt isolated.

5. What hopes do the 10 men who have leprosy have in calling out to Jesus?

Somewhere these men had heard about Jesus and the power that Jesus had. The word "master" with which they address Jesus is the word "commander in chief". They recognized that Jesus had authority over sickness, disease, and nature. Even though they were not allowed to be with others, they had found a way to hear the stories about Jesus. Not only did they know of his power, they also had heard of his compassion. They were hoping that Jesus would heal their bodies so that they could return to their families. They wanted to participate in society again. They wanted to be seen as a person and not as a leper. They were hoping Jesus could put them in a place to receive a life they had been dreaming of having. They were hoping not just for a change, but for a whole new life. They wanted a total makeover.

6. What sins do some people carry that cause some people in the church to treat them as though they have leprosy?

For years the church has treated people with some sexual sins as though they had a form of leprosy. Some people have difficulties when prostitutes and homosexuals come into the church. Some people have difficulties receiving people who have been convicted of sexual sin involving children. Some have difficulties with the wino's and the drug addicts who have not yet been cured. Some have difficulties with people with long prison records. We forget the power of Christ to change and transform any person's life.

7. What do people hope to find when they come to church after being labeled a leper by society?

They are hoping to find a group of people who are willing to give them a second chance in life. They are hoping to find a God who will accept them, and give them hope to believe in something better for their lives. They are hoping to leave their past behind and find a community in which they can find the love and grace of God actually being shown to society's outcast. They are hoping to find people who remember where God has brought them from.

When the apostle Paul mentions the following list of sins in verse 9, he wants us to emphasize what has happened in verse 11.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 (NIV)

⁹ Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders ¹⁰ nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

8. What do you think was going through the mind of the nine when they saw they had been healed?

I think they wanted to run even faster to find the priest. I would have been thinking about going home for the first time in years. I would have been thinking that my life is never going to be the same again. I would have been thinking that God has shown

me has favor. I would have been thinking everything is going to get better from now on. I would have been thinking, thank you God.

9. Was the one who returned to Jesus being disobedient since Jesus had told them all to go show themselves to the priest? Why or why not?

Here is a situation in which we need to be careful in reading of the Scripture passage and not build a theology around a small passage. The passage never tells us at what point the man came back to Jesus. It could have been after he had seen the priest. It could have been before. If Jesus was entering the village, did he send the men further inside the village or did he send them away from the village to find a priest located outside of it. Then again since this man was a Samaritan, he may not have been accepted by a Jewish priest so he might not have been allowed to go to a priest. Jesus did not instruct the 10 to only go directly to the priest, so there was no prohibition against coming back to say thank you before making it to the priest. It's possible that some of the 9 may have felt their healing was completely dependent on going to see the priest and that is where their healing would be completed. Without the priest declaration that they were clean, they would still be considered to be lepers.

10. Why does our healing sometimes come as we do what God told us to do, rather than praying and immediately seeing a change?

Faith is doing what God told us to do even when we do not see the results taking place. God's desire is to have us grow in our relationship with Him. God is not seeking to be a genie in which we instantly get our needs met. In the story of the centurion soldier, people were begging Jesus to go and heal the centurion's family member, but the centurion sent word to Jesus, if you just "say the word" that will be enough. When we are obedient to God, we find God working in our lives in ways that we never could have imagined. We begin to see our weakness or illness as a tool that God is using in order for us to either change a direction we were headed in or as a means for us to touch the lives of others that we would not have been able to touch before. Over time we learn to be thankful even in the midst of something we had wanted God to heal or to change. All healings do not take the form of what we had originally hoped for, but we see them as healing nevertheless.

11. What was the one who was healed hoping for when he turned back to thank Jesus?

He was hoping to express his full gratitude to Jesus. He was hoping to return to what he considered would be a normal life.

12. Why does the Scriptures point out that the man who returned was a Samaritan?

We see two things happening. The power of the disease had overcome the prejudice of the ten men of Jews and Samaritans despising each other. When we are in real pain in the same boat, we let go of some of the petty prejudices we have against each other. We see the compassion of Jesus in reaching out to people whom his culture had said were outside of the people of God. The Samaritan seemed to have recognized who Jesus was more fully than the Jews had. The Jews saw Jesus as having some kind of miraculous powers, but the Samaritan saw Jesus as God in that he fell down on the ground before him as a form of worship.

13. What was Jesus hoping for in healing the ten men?

Jesus hoping that they would give God credit for what had happened in their lives, and that they would be motivated to live their lives for God. No only would their faith be strengthened, but through their testimonies, others would praise God as well.

14. When was the last time you praised God in a loud voice for something God has done for you? Why are we more reserved in saying thank you?

15. Is Jesus adding something to the man's healing by saying "your faith has made you well? "

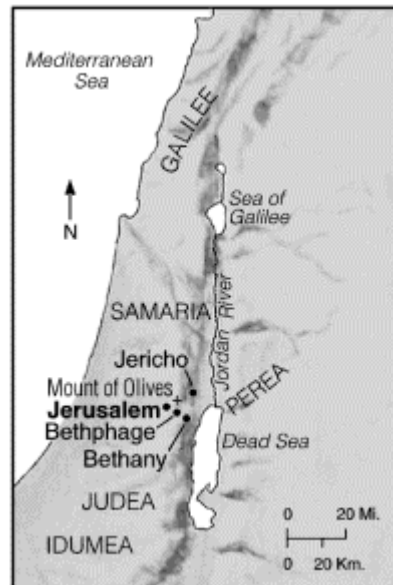
Yes. The other men did not know it was not a magical trick that changed them. It was their faith in the word of God that healed them. Upon returning to say thanks, Jesus says the same thing to this man as he did to the woman who had anointed his feet in

Luke 7. She was the woman who had crashed the party of Simon the Pharisee. Jesus had declared her sins had been forgiven. Jesus is giving this man a new lease on a spiritual life to go along with his physical healing.

16. Who is Jesus asking you to be more welcoming of into your life? What is Jesus hoping for you in the process?

Life-Sharing Lesson 3 Hope Has Come “When Jesus Cries” Luke 19:28-44 Commentary

19:28-31 After telling this story, Jesus went on toward Jerusalem, walking ahead of his disciples. As they came to the towns of Bethphage and Bethany, on the Mount of Olives, he sent two disciples ahead.^{NLT} Jesus continued *on toward Jerusalem*, which we already know to have been his ultimate destination (9:51). They approached Bethphage and Bethany, two towns about one mile apart, situated *on the Mount of Olives* to the east of Jerusalem. Bethany was the home of his friends Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, whom Jesus had visited before (10:38; see also [John 11:1](#)). When Jesus spoke these words, they were probably in Bethphage. *He sent two disciples ahead* to Bethany, telling them, "**Go into that village over there,**" he told them, "**and as you enter it, you will see a colt tied there that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks what you are doing, just say, 'The Lord needs it.'**"^{NLT} By this time Jesus was extremely well known. Everyone coming to Jerusalem for Passover had heard of him, and, for a time, the popular mood was favorable toward him. "*The Lord needs it*" was all the disciples had to say, and the colt's owners gladly turned their animal over to them. Jesus had walked all the way from Galilee, so this switch to riding a colt the last mile into Jerusalem was a deliberate gesture, filled with meaning for the Jews. The specification that this be a colt *that has never been ridden* is significant in light of the ancient rule that only animals that had not been used for ordinary purposes were appropriate for sacred purposes ([Numbers 19:2](#); [Deuteronomy 21:3](#); [1 Samuel 6:7](#)).



Last Week In Jerusalem

As they approached Jerusalem from Jericho (19:1), Jesus and the disciples came to the villages of Bethany and Bethphage, nestled on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, only a few miles outside Jerusalem. Jesus stayed in Bethany during the nights of that last week, entering Jerusalem during the day.

[19:32-35](#) So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?" They said, "The Lord needs it." Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it.^{NRSV} The two disciples did as they were told, and found the colt exactly as they were told. As Jesus had warned them, they were indeed asked by the owners why they were taking the colt. Donkeys and colts were valuable; what the disciples did amounted to coming along and taking someone's car. But they said what Jesus told them to say. Mark wrote that Jesus also said the colt would be returned ([Mark 11:3](#)). The owners let the colt go, and the disciples brought it to Jesus.

In Matthew, a donkey and a colt are mentioned ([Matthew 21:2](#)), while the other Gospels mention only the colt. This was the same event, but Matthew focused on the prophecy in [Zechariah 9:9](#), which indicates a donkey and a colt, thus affirming Jesus' royalty. The disciples then threw their *cloaks* over the colt, making a seat for Jesus. With this act of entering Jerusalem on a donkey's colt, Jesus was fulfilling prophecy and affirming his messianic royalty. He came in royal fashion, not as a warring king on a horse or in a chariot, but as a gentle and peaceable king on a donkey's colt.

[19:36-37](#) Then the crowds spread out their coats on the road ahead of Jesus. As they reached the place where the road started down from the Mount of Olives, all of his followers began to shout and sing as they walked along, praising God for all the wonderful miracles they had seen.^{NLT} The custom of spreading coats on the ground ahead of a royal personage can also be seen in [2 Kings 9:12-13](#). This was Sunday of the week that Jesus would be crucified, and the great Passover festival was about to begin. Jews would come to Jerusalem from all over the Roman world during this weeklong celebration to remember the great Exodus from Egypt (see [Exodus 12:37-51](#)). Many in the crowd had heard of or had seen Jesus and were hoping he would come to the temple ([John 11:55-57](#)). People lined the roads, and Jesus already had a crowd of followers who, when they saw what he was doing, *began to shout and sing as they walked along*. According to the other Gospels, many others joined the celebration of praise. The Gospel of John ([12:13](#)) also describes the people cutting down branches from the trees, probably from olive or fig trees, to wave in welcome.

Jesus approached Jerusalem fearlessly, knowing what awaited him there: death at the hands of people who should have recognized his true identity. This glorious celebration was temporary, and few understood its meaning. Most wanted to believe that liberation from Rome was at hand. Any who had heard Jesus' parables should have understood that time would elapse between his first and second comings; the disciples should have remembered what he told them about going to Jerusalem to die. At this point, however, Jesus clearly fulfilled prophecy and showed himself to be the Messiah.

19:38 Saying: "**Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the LORD! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!**"^{NKJV} The expression "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the LORD" may have been recited as part of the Passover tradition—as a blessing given by the people in Jerusalem to the visiting pilgrims (see [Psalm 118:25-26](#)). The people lined the road, praising God, waving branches, and throwing their cloaks in front of the colt as it passed before them. "Long live the King" was the meaning behind their joyful shouts because they knew that Jesus was intentionally fulfilling prophecy. The people who were praising God for giving them a king had the wrong idea about Jesus. They expected him to be a national leader who would restore their nation to its former glory; thus they were deaf to the words of their prophets and blind to Jesus' real mission. When it became apparent that Jesus was not going to fulfill their hopes, many would turn against him.

LIFE APPLICATION

THE STONES WILL CRY OUT

Jesus confronted these Pharisees who rejected his authority. They had political interests to protect, so any praising and confessing of Jesus as the Messiah threatened their position. Today, believers still face pressures that make them uncomfortable when they should witness for Jesus. If you truly know who Jesus is and love him as God's true Messiah, speak out for him.

19:39-40 And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples." But He answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."^{NKJV} The Pharisees thought that the crowd's words were sacrilegious and blasphemous. They didn't want someone challenging their power and authority, and they didn't want a revolt that would bring the Roman army down on them. So they asked Jesus to keep his people quiet. But Jesus said that if the people were quiet, *the stones would immediately cry out* (see [Habakkuk 2:11](#)). Habakkuk had prophesied the judgment of God upon Judah just before the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians in 586 B.C. He had said, "The stones of the wall will cry out" (NIV) concerning all the sins the people rebelling against God had done. So Jesus' words may have a double meaning. Praise for the true Messiah could not be repressed, and the stones of the wall would bear witness to the city's rejection of him.

19:41-42 As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes."^{NIV} Only Luke recorded this lament by Jesus as he *approached Jerusalem and saw the city*. In contrast to the great joy of the crowd, the

man on the donkey *wept* at the sight of the city. The name of the city has "peace" as part of its meaning ([Hebrews 7:2](#)), but the people of the city did not know what would bring them *peace*. The "city of peace" was blind to the "Prince of Peace" ([Isaiah 9:6](#)). If the people had known *on this day* what was truly happening and had recognized it for what it was, they could have found peace. But the Jewish leaders had rejected their Messiah ([19:39, 47](#)); they had refused God's offer of salvation in Jesus Christ when they were visited by God himself. Now the truth would be *hidden*, and soon their nation would suffer.

LIFE APPLICATION

ON THIS DAY

Christian faith often seems like a long, long process. God's Word had been delivered to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for many centuries. Jesus wept because the people of Jerusalem had failed to see God's truth. Those who delay their commitment to Christ make the same mistake. Encourage others not to postpone Christ as if he were second priority. Their acceptance of the Savior is of utmost importance, and their service to his kingdom is needed.

People highly desire this peace that only Christ can give. Share with others the good news of God's gift to them. Urge them to accept the gift before the opportunity passes.

[19:43-44](#) "The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you."^{NIV} About forty years after Jesus said these words, they came true. In A.D. 66, the Jews revolted against Roman control. Three years later Titus, son of the emperor Vespasian, was sent to crush the rebellion. Roman soldiers attacked Jerusalem and broke through the northern wall but still couldn't take the city. Finally they laid siege to it, and in A.D. 70 they were able to enter the severely weakened city

and burn it. Six hundred thousand Jews were killed during Titus's onslaught. This would occur as judgment *because* though some of the people believed (such as the disciples and other faithful followers), most *did not recognize the time of God's coming* to them. But God did not turn away from the Jewish people who obeyed him. He continues to offer salvation to both Jews and Gentiles.

JESUS CLEARS THE TEMPLE AGAIN / [19:45-48](#) / [184](#)

Jesus directly confronted those who dared to try to make an exorbitant profit in the very temple of God. He had expelled these peddlers and money-mongers during a previous visit (see [John 2:12-25](#)). Here Jesus again stood for what was right, confronting those who dared to participate in wickedness under the guise of religiosity.

[19:45-46](#) Then Jesus entered the Temple and began to drive out the merchants from their stalls. He told them, "The Scriptures declare, 'My Temple will be a place of prayer,' but you have turned it into a den of thieves."^{NLT} This is the second time that Jesus cleared the temple (see [John 2:13-17](#)). Jesus entered Jerusalem and *entered the Temple*. Always on a divine mission, Jesus went to the temple for a specific reason—to *drive out the merchants from their stalls*. These "merchants" were the people who sold goods to worshipers. People came to the temple in Jerusalem to offer sacrifices. The temple was run by the high priest and his associates. All adult male Jews were required to go to Jerusalem for three annual celebrations: Passover in late spring, the Feast of Tabernacles (or Booths) in the fall, and the Feast of Weeks in early summer. God had originally instructed the people to bring sacrifices from their own flocks ([Deuteronomy 12:5-7](#)). The religious leadership, however, had established four markets on the Mount of Olives where such animals could be purchased. Some people did not bring their own animals and planned to buy one at the market. Others brought their own animals, but when the priests managed to find the animal unacceptable in some way (it was supposed to be an animal without defect, [Leviticus 1:2-3](#)), worshipers were forced to buy another.

Then a marketplace was set up in the temple area itself, in the Court of the Gentiles, the huge outer court of the temple. The Court of the Gentiles was the only place where Gentile converts to Judaism could worship. They could go no farther into the temple because they were not "pure" Jews. But the market filled their worship space with merchants so that these foreigners, who had traveled long distances, found it impossible to worship. Because both those who bought and those who sold were going against God's commands regarding the sacrifices, Jesus drove them out.

Jesus told them, in no uncertain terms, why he was so angry and why he acted as he did in throwing these merchants out of the temple. He quoted from [Isaiah 56:7](#), explaining God's purpose for the temple: *a place of prayer*. The merchants had turned it into *a den of thieves*. Their treatment of pilgrims who had traveled and needed to count on them for service, their exorbitant rates, and their cheating of the customers

had made them no better than thieves hiding out together in a "den." But this "den" was God's temple—no wonder Jesus was angry.

LIFE APPLICATION

HOUSE OF PRAYER

Jesus said that the temple was to be a place of prayer. How do people describe your church?

- I Great youth group, exciting missions trips?
- I Superb counseling and a terrific singles group?
- I Wonderful music and sound system?
- I What about a place of prayer?

Has busyness or neglect turned your church away from its mission to pray?
What can you do to understand prayer better? practice prayer more regularly?
lead others in the church toward prayer as a priority?

19:47-48 Every day he was teaching in the temple. The chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders of the people kept looking for a way to kill him; but they did not find anything they could do, for all the people were spellbound by what they heard.^{NRSV}

During his last week on earth, Jesus was still busy—*every day he was teaching in the temple*. He traveled into the city each morning, then retired out to the environs, perhaps to the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus in Bethany ([Matthew 21:17](#); [Mark 11:11](#)). Jesus had many enemies who *kept looking for a way to kill him*. These enemies were the Jewish religious leaders themselves—the people who, above everyone else, should have been the first to recognize and rejoice in the arrival of their Messiah. Luke has already recorded some of Jesus' confrontations with the chief priests (usually Pharisees) and the scribes (or teachers of the law) (see [5:21](#), [30](#); [6:7](#); [11:53](#); [15:2](#)). The *leaders of the people* probably included wealthy leaders in politics, commerce, and law. They had several reasons for wanting to get rid of Jesus. He had damaged business in the temple by driving the merchants out. In addition, he was preaching against injustice, and his teachings often favored the poor over the rich. Further, his great popularity was in danger of attracting Rome's attention, and the leaders of Israel wanted as little as possible to do with Rome.

Despite their plans, however, these people could not do anything. The man they wanted to kill came daily to the temple, but he was far too popular with the people. His teaching held the people *spellbound*. Much of this teaching is recorded in [Luke 20–21](#).

Commentary 2

The King Who Offers Peace (Luke 19:28-48)

The traditional calendar for the events of our Lord's last week of ministry looks like this:

- Sunday—Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem Monday—Cleansing the temple Tuesday—Controversies with the Jewish leaders
- Wednesday—Apparently a day of rest Thursday—Preparation for Passover Friday—Trial and Crucifixion Saturday—Jesus rests in the tomb Sunday—Jesus raised from the dead

Keep in mind that the Jewish day went from sundown to sundown, so that our Thursday evening would be their Friday, the Day of Passover.

Preparation ([vv. 28-36](#)). The owners of the donkey and the colt were disciples of the Lord and had everything ready for Him. The plan was executed quietly because the Jewish leaders had let it be known that anyone confessing Christ would be excommunicated ([John 9:22](#)). The fact that the rulers planned to kill Jesus made it even more important that the owners be protected ([John 7:1, 19, 25; 8:37; 11:47-57](#)).

We think of the donkey as a lowly animal, but to the Jew it was a beast fit for a king ([1 Kings 1:33, 44](#)). Jesus rode the colt ([Luke 19:35](#)) while the mother walked along with it. The fact that the colt had never been ridden and yet submitted to Jesus indicates our Lord's sovereignty over His creation. The laying of garments on the animals and on the road and the waving and spreading of branches were all part of a traditional Jewish reception for royalty.

Celebration ([vv. 37-40](#)). This is the only time that Jesus permitted a public demonstration on His behalf, and He did so for at least two reasons. First, He was fulfilling prophecy and presenting Himself as Israel's king ([Zech. 9:9](#)). How much of this the crowd really understood we cannot tell, even though they responded by quoting their praises from a messianic psalm ([Ps. 118:25-26](#)). No doubt many of the Passover pilgrims thought that Jesus would now get rid of the Roman invaders and establish the glorious kingdom.

The second reason for this demonstration was to force the Jewish religious leaders to act. They had hoped to arrest Him *after* the Passover ([Matt. 26:3-5](#)), but God had ordained that His Son be slain *on* Passover as the "Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world" ([John 1:29](#); and see [1 Cor. 5:7](#)). Every previous attempt to arrest Jesus had failed because "His hour had not yet come" ([John 7:30; 8:20](#); also see [John 13:1; 17:1](#)). When they saw this great public celebration, the leaders knew that they

had to act, and the willing cooperation of Judas solved their problem for them ([Matt. 26:14-16](#)).

The theme of the celebration was *peace*. Dr. Luke opened his Gospel with the angel's announcement of "peace on earth" ([Luke 2:14](#)), but now the theme was "peace in heaven." Because the King was rejected, there could be no peace on earth. Instead, there would be constant bitter conflict between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of evil ([Luke 12:49-53](#)). There would be no peace on earth but, thanks to Christ's work on the cross, there is "peace with God" in heaven ([Rom. 5:1](#); [Col. 1:20](#)). The appeal today is, "Be ye reconciled to God!" ([2 Cor. 5:17-21](#))

Lamentation ([vv. 41-44](#)). While the crowd was rejoicing, Jesus was weeping! This is the second occasion on which our Lord wept openly, the first being at the tomb of Lazarus ([John 11:35](#)). There He wept quietly, but here He uttered a loud lamentation like one mourning over the dead. In this, He was like the Prophet Jeremiah who wept bitterly over the destruction of Jerusalem (Jer. 9:1ff; see also the Book of Lamentations). Jonah looked on Nineveh and hoped it would be destroyed ([Jonah 4](#)), while Jesus looked at Jerusalem and wept because it had destroyed itself.

No matter where Jesus looked, He found cause for weeping. If He looked *back*, He saw how the nation had wasted its opportunities and been ignorant of their "time of visitation." If He looked *within*, He saw spiritual ignorance and blindness in the hearts of the people. They should have known who He was, for God had given them His Word and sent His messengers to prepare the way.

As He looked *around*, Jesus saw religious activity that accomplished very little. The temple had become a den of thieves, and the religious leaders were out to kill Him. The city was filled with pilgrims celebrating a festival, but the hearts of the people were heavy with sin and life's burdens.

As Jesus looked *ahead*, He wept as He saw the terrible judgment that was coming to the nation, the city, and the temple. In a.d. 70, the Romans would come and, after a siege of 143 days, kill 600,000 Jews, take thousands more captive, and then destroy the temple and the city. Why did all of this happen? Because the people did not know that God had visited them! "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not" ([John 1:11](#)). "We will not have this man to reign over us!" ([Luke 19:14](#))

Denunciation ([vv. 45-48](#)). Jesus lodged in Bethany that night ([Matt. 21:17](#)) and came into the city early the next morning. It was then that He cursed the fig tree ([Mark 11:12-14](#)) and cleansed the temple for the second time. (See [John 2:13-22](#) for the record of the first cleansing of the temple.)

The court of the Gentiles was the only place in the temple that was available to the Gentiles. There the Jews could witness to their "pagan" neighbors and tell them about the one true and living God. But instead of being devoted to evangelism, the area was used for a "religious marketplace" where Jews from other lands could exchange money and purchase approved sacrifices. The priests managed this business and made a good profit from it.

Instead of *praying* for the people, the priests were *preying* on the people! The temple was not a "house of prayer" ([Isa. 56:7](#)); it was a "den of thieves" ([Jer. 7:11](#)). Campbell Morgan reminds us that a "den of thieves" is a place where thieves *run to hide* after they have committed their wicked deeds. The religious leaders were using the services of the holy temple to cover up their sins (see [Isa. 1:1-20](#)). But before we condemn them too harshly, have we ever gone to church and participated in religious worship just to give people the impression that we were godly?

Jesus remained in the temple and used it as a gathering place for those who needed help. He healed many who were sick and afflicted, and He taught the people the Word of God. The hypocritical religious leaders tried to destroy Him, but His hour had not yet come and they could not touch Him. In the days that followed, they argued with Him and tried to catch Him in His words ([Luke 20](#)), but they failed. When His hour came, He would surrender to them and they would crucify Him.

The courageous Son of God had set His face like a flint and come to Jerusalem. During His last week of ministry, He would courageously face His enemies and then bravely go to the cross to die for the sins of the world.

He still summons us to *be courageous!*

Bible Exposition Commentary - Bible Exposition Commentary – Be Courageous (Luke 14-24).

Life-Sharing Lesson 3 Hope Has Come “When Jesus Cries” Luke 19:28-44

1. When has God told you to do something, that left you wondering if it was really God or not?

When God told me we had the option as a church of whether to leave the denomination or remain in it, I was confused, because I was so certain the only course of action of being faithful meant leaving. In some ways, as our denomination continued to move further away from biblical teachings, I am tempted to think, maybe I missed God on that one. But when I see all that the Lord has accomplished through us in our present place, I'm sure it was the Lord that gave us the option. We will never know what would have happened if we had taken the other option, but we are still in a place of striving to be faithful and I believe that's okay with God.

Luke 19:28-44

Today's New International Version (TNIV) Jesus Comes to Jerusalem as King

²⁸ After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. ²⁹ As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, ³⁰ “Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here.

³¹ If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it.’”

³² Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. ³³ As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?” ³⁴ They replied, “The Lord needs it.” ³⁵ They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. ³⁶ As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road.

³⁷ When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen:

³⁸ “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!”^[a] “Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” ³⁹ Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples!” ⁴⁰ “I tell you,” he replied, “if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.”

⁴¹ As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it ⁴² and said, “If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. ⁴³ The days will come on you when your enemies will build an

embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. ⁴⁴ They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you."

2. Why might the disciples be a little nervous about following Jesus's instructions in verses 28-31."

It is very easy to interpret Jesus' actions as being close to stealing something. I don't know how comfortable I would be going into a parking lot across town, looking for a brand new car with the keys in it and then getting in and driving away. I'd be concerned with getting arrested as I drove away. Simply telling the guard at the car lot, that the Lord needed the car is not all that satisfying as a response. I think I would be doing a lot of praying through the whole process.

3. Why does God call us to do some things that appear to not be such a good idea at the time?

God is always providing us with opportunities to stretch our faith. It is the way that we grow. Sometimes part of picking up our cross means that we make sacrifices that require some long term and hard commitments on our parts. The choice to allow someone to move into our homes, to become a foster parent, to take a less paying job, to turn down what looks like a great opportunity, or to leave when everything looks great can all be a part of God's will for our lives. Our lives can't be based on the pathway that looks like it will make things easier for us. The disciples tried to convince Jesus that it was not a good idea for him to go to Jerusalem at this time. They thought they were looking out for his best interest. What do we do when our best interest, conflicts with what's best for our spiritual well being? Many of the saints of God in the past in the scriptures were most effective when they were willing to do things that were not in their own personal best interest.

4. What can we learn about Jesus from verses 29-34?

We see that Jesus is Lord of space and time. He knew exactly where the animals were going to be, who owned them, and what it would take to get the animals. He made connections with others without the need to be physically in their presence. Jesus is in complete control of what is taking place on Palm Sunday.

5. What was Jesus hoping for in his instructions to the disciples?

Jesus is hoping they will carry out his instructions exactly as He gave them to the disciples. This would be another chance for them to grow in their faith. As long as they did their part, everything would stay on schedule. Just think, if the disciples had of decided to try and buy the animals when they were asked what they were doing, the owner never would have released them. Jesus had prepared the owner's heart to let them go as soon as he heard, the "Lord has need of them." Is it possible for us to miss out on things, by having good intentions to do the right thing, but not doing them in the way God told us to do them?

King David had wanted to bring the ark of God into Jerusalem which was a good thing, but he didn't follow God's instruction on how to do it. That cost Uzzah his life in 2 Samuel 6:1-15.

6. How far out in advance do you think the Lord has provided for our needs to be taken care of?

We are asked to pray for our daily bread. But I think in order for God to be God, God has already made provisions for our needs to be taken care of from now until the day we die. There is no such thing as time with God. God is in the present, the past, and the future all at once. God is not guessing what we might need. God already knows and that is why God works in our lives in the way that He does.

Matthew 6:27-34 (NIV)

²⁷ *Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? .²⁸ "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin.²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these.³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?*

³¹ *So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'*

³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

7. What are the people hoping for in their praise and adoration of Jesus?

They are hoping that their dreams of being liberated from the Romans is on the verge of taking place. They are hoping they are ushering in a new age of independence. They are hoping for a popular uprising in which Jesus would be crowned their king.

8. Why are the Pharisees so upset with Jesus?

The Pharisees did not see Jesus as the Messiah. They saw him as a threat to their leadership and control of the people. For Jesus to receive this kind of praise from the people was on the verge of blasphemy in their eyes. They recognized that Jesus could cause a backlash from the Roman government if they perceived Jesus as a threat to the Roman government. Jesus did not offer the Pharisees the kind of respect and admiration that they were use to having. Jesus operated outside of the religious system that they had built up.

Look at how he had attacked the Pharisees in the Scriptures below:

Luke 11:39-54 (NIV)

³⁹ Then the Lord said to him, "Now then, you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness.

⁴⁰ You foolish people! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also?

⁴¹ But give what is inside [the dish] to the poor, and everything will be clean for you.

⁴² "Woe to you Pharisees, because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone. ⁴³ "Woe to you Pharisees, because you love the most important seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces. ⁴⁴ "Woe to you, because you are like unmarked graves, which men walk over without knowing it."

⁴⁵ One of the experts in the law answered him, "Teacher, when you say these things, you insult us also." ⁴⁶ Jesus replied, "And you experts in the law, woe to you, because

you load people down with burdens they can hardly carry, and you yourselves will not lift one finger to help them. ⁴⁷ "Woe to you, because you build tombs for the prophets, and it was your forefathers who killed them.

⁴⁸ So you testify that you approve of what your forefathers did; they killed the prophets, and you build their tombs. ⁴⁹ Because of this, God in his wisdom said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and others they will persecute.'

⁵⁰ Therefore this generation will be held responsible for the blood of all the prophets that has been shed since the beginning of the world, ⁵¹ from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who was killed between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, this generation will be held responsible for it all. ⁵² "Woe to you experts in the law, because you have taken away the key to knowledge. You yourselves have not entered, and you have hindered those who were entering." ⁵³ When Jesus left there, the Pharisees and the teachers of the law began to oppose him fiercely and to besiege him with questions, ⁵⁴ waiting to catch him in something he might say.

9. With all the people praising Jesus early in the week, why are there none there to speak up on his behalf at his trials later that week?

Part of the reason is that the trial was handled late during the night and early morning. Jesus was already condemned and hanging on a cross before many people even knew what had happened. The religious leaders were very skillful in the way they had handled the arrest and trial of Jesus. A lot took place when nobody was looking.

10. Why do we offer praise joyfully on Sunday, but speak up so little for Jesus later in the week? How do we overcome this.

Unlike the people from Palm Sunday who did not know Jesus needed someone to speak up for him, we know that Jesus could use our voices. We struggle with who are we going to seek to have the approval, God or the people around us. We have to determine if we truly believe God is at work in our lives or not.

11. How did the people in Jerusalem miss what Jesus was trying to offer to them?

They had already made up their minds what they wanted to receive and what they thought they needed. They did not see their own need for spiritual revival. They simply wanted a change in their circumstances. Their hearts were not really opened to Jesus' message of picking up their cross and come follow Him. They refused to see.

12. What causes us to miss out on what Jesus is trying to bring to us as individuals and as a church?

Our great weakness is that we do not see just how much of Jesus we need to have in our daily lives to truly walk the walk God has for us. We are content with staying on the fringes of a relationship with God, that's just enough to make us look religious, but not enough to make us look as though we were sold out to God. It's like going swimming, but never getting beyond hanging our feet in the water over the edge of the pool. We look like we might go into the pool at any moment, but we consistently find reasons to back away. We will listen to lectures on how to swim, and we will do bible studies on swimming techniques, but we will not dive into the pool. Receiving what Jesus has for us to receive means a reorganizing of the priorities in our lives. That's never a fun thing to do.

13. If Jesus rode up to our church today, why might he start to weep over us?

Jesus would probably weep over the circles we run in church. We can confuse being busy with ministry. They are not the same thing. Also, we say we're going to do one thing in the stir of the moment, but we quickly forget the promises we made once we leave the building. Jesus would weep over our view that the church is here to serve me, rather than I am here to serve the kingdom of God. Jesus would weep over the way we sometimes refuse to cooperate with each other. God's desire for us is that we can become a people of greater humility. I think Jesus continues to weep until we can live out the following verses from Phillipians.

Philippians 2:1-5 (NIV)

¹ If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion,

² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in

spirit and purpose. ³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.

⁴ Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. ⁵ Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

14. What do you think is Jesus' hope for our church?

I think Jesus' hope for our church is that we will fall more in love with Jesus. The more we become like Jesus, the more the church is going to take care of itself. We will see Jesus coming alive in our midst. Jesus wants us to be filled with grace, love, and compassion for one another and for people.

15. What is Jesus' hope for you this Palm Sunday?