TEACHER GUIDE · LUKE 17:11-19; LEVITICUS 13:45-46

The Ten Lepers



Ten men with leprosy begged Jesus for mercy, and He healed all ten. Only one came back to thank Him, a Samaritan outsider. Jesus is good to us every day, so we come back to Him with thankful hearts.

PRINCIPLE: THANKFULNESS · Jesus is kind and generous to us before we ever say thank you. Because He is so good, we turn back to Him with thankful hearts.

Creation God made it	Fall We broke it	**Redemption** **Jesus fixes it**	Restoration Jesus makes it new

Sin broke our bodies and our relationships, leaving people sick, alone and outside. Jesus came to make the unclean clean and to welcome outsiders home, a preview of the day He makes all things new.

MEMORY VERSE

“Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; His loving devotion endures forever.”

Psalm 107:1 BSB

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Class plan

Hook - ten fingers of thanks	5 min
Bible story	10 min
Talk about it	7 min
Ellie's Lab - clean hands	12 min
Review game - the thank-you chain	6 min
Live It and prayer	5 min
Total	**45 min**

Before class

☐ Read Luke 17:11-19 and Leviticus 13:45-46.
☐ Print one handout per child for their age group.
☐ For Ellie's Lab, set out hand lotion, fine glitter, a bowl of plain water, soap, a sink or second bowl of soapy water, and paper towels.
☐ Cut ten paper strips for the review game and number them 1 to 10.

Supplies

Hand lotion · Fine glitter · A bowl of plain water · Liquid hand soap · A bowl of warm soapy water (or a sink) · Paper towels · Hand wipes · Paper strips · Masking tape · A marker · Printed handouts (one per child) · Crayons · Pencils · Bibles (one per child in 3rd–6th grade) · A blanket or sheet

HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT

The one who came back was the outsider.

Luke tells us Jesus was "passing between Samaria and Galilee" (Luke 17:11), on the border between two groups who usually wouldn't even talk to each other. Their sickness had made the ten lepers outcasts together.

When all ten were healed, nine hurried off. Only one turned around, praising God in a loud voice, and fell at Jesus' feet. Then Luke adds a short phrase: "and he was a Samaritan" (17:16). The man everyone expected to be furthest from God was the one who came back to Jesus. Jesus called him "this foreigner" (17:18), and sent him home with the best news of all: "your faith has made you well" (17:19).

Background

Luke 17:11 places Jesus "on His way to Jerusalem," traveling along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As He entered a village, ten men with leprosy met Him. Following the law (Leviticus 13:45-46), they "stood at a distance" and shouted, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" (17:12-13).

Jesus didn't touch them this time or even say "Be healed." He said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests" (17:14). That's what a healed person did to be declared clean (Leviticus 14). It took faith to start walking while still sick, "and as they were on their way, they were cleansed."

"When one of them saw that he was healed, he came back, praising God in a loud voice. He fell facedown at Jesus' feet in thanksgiving to Him—and he was a Samaritan" (17:15-16). Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where then are the other nine? Was no one found except this foreigner to return and give glory to God?" Then He told the man, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well!" (17:17-19).

A note on leprosy: the Bible's word covered several serious skin diseases. Today Hansen's disease, sometimes called leprosy, can be cured with medicine. Keep the focus on what it meant then: sickness, shame and being shut out.

Keep this grace-first. All ten were healed by grace before anyone said thanks. The nine weren't punished; they simply missed the best part, returning to Jesus Himself. Thankfulness isn't paying Jesus back. It's

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turning toward the One who gave the gift.

Bible Times

Leprosy in Bible times
In the Bible, "leprosy" was a name for several serious skin diseases. People who had it were called "unclean." They had to live outside the town, wear torn clothes and call out "Unclean!" so others would stay away (Leviticus 13:45-46). They couldn't hug their families or go to worship. Being sick also meant being very lonely.

Jews and Samaritans
Samaritans lived between Galilee and Judea. Long before Jesus, they and the Jews had split over how and where to worship God. By Jesus' day, Jews and Samaritans usually avoided each other completely (John 4:9). A Jew would never expect a Samaritan to be the hero of a story.



Dasch Digs Up: Did You Know?

People with leprosy had to **stay away from everyone else**, so the ten men shouted to Jesus from a distance.
Luke 17:12-13

The men were healed **on the way** to the priests, after they obeyed Jesus but before they saw it happen.
Luke 17:14

The one who came back wasn't quiet about it. He praised God **in a loud voice**!
Luke 17:15

Jesus asked, **"Where then are the other nine?"** He noticed who didn't come back.
Luke 17:17

In Israel, a healed person showed himself to **a priest**, who checked the skin and declared him clean so he could go home.
Leviticus 14:2-3

Words to know

Thankful	Glad and grateful for what someone has done for you.
Leprosy	A serious skin disease that made people live apart in Bible times.
Mercy	Kindness to someone who is hurting or doesn't deserve it.
Unclean	Not allowed to be near other people or to worship with them.
Samaritan	A person from Samaria, a group most Jews avoided.
Cleansed	Made clean and healthy.

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Say it right

Samaritan: suh-MAIR-ih-tun **Galilee**: GAL-ih-lee **leprosy**: LEP-ruh-see

Object lesson

One came back 5 min

You'll need: Paper strips, A marker

1. Give ten kids a numbered paper strip. Say, "You each just received a wonderful gift from Jesus!"
2. Tell all ten to walk away to the other side of the room. Then quietly ask one child to turn around and come back.
3. Ask, "How many got the gift?" (Ten.) "How many came back?" (One.)
4. Read Luke 17:17-18. Say, "Jesus noticed. He loves when we come back to Him, not just to say thanks, but to be with Him."

The point: Jesus gives good gifts to everyone, but thankfulness brings us back to the Giver. The one who returned received the best gift, Jesus Himself (Luke 17:15-19).



Ellie's Lab Science experiment

Clean hands 12 min

You'll need: Hand lotion, Fine glitter, A bowl of plain water, Liquid hand soap, A bowl of warm soapy water (or a sink), Paper towels, Hand wipes

1. Put a little lotion on one child's hands and sprinkle on glitter. These are pretend "germs."
2. That child shakes hands with two friends. Look how far the "germs" spread!
3. Try washing with plain water only. How much glitter is left?
4. Now wash with soap and warm water, rubbing for 20 seconds (sing "Happy Birthday" twice). How clean are they now?
5. Ask, "How long would it take to wash away a disease like leprosy?" (You can't wash it away.) Read Luke 17:14. Say, "Jesus made them clean in an instant."

Why it works: Germs and dirt stick to the oils on our skin, and water alone slides right off oil. Soap molecules have one end that grabs oil and another end that grabs water, so they pull the oil, dirt and germs off your skin and rinse them away. That's why soap and scrubbing work so much better than water. Some diseases spread by touch, which is why people with serious skin diseases in Bible times had to live apart. No amount of washing could cure them, but Jesus could.

The point: We can wash glitter off our hands, but only Jesus can make people truly clean. He healed ten men with a word. When we see what He's done for us, we come back and say thank You.

Safety: Check for skin allergies to lotion or soap. Keep glitter away from eyes and mouths, and wash hands well before snacks.

Act it out: Where are the other nine?

Parts: Narrator, Jesus, The Samaritan, Nine men with leprosy, Villagers (everyone else) · **Props:** A blanket or sheet

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NARRATOR
Jesus was walking to a village. Ten men with leprosy stood far away.

VILLAGERS
(backing away) Stay back! They're sick!

TEN MEN
(calling from far off) Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!

JESUS
Go, show yourselves to the priests.

NARRATOR
They started walking. And on the way...

TEN MEN
(looking at their hands) We're clean! We're healed!

NINE MEN
(running off) Let's go home!

THE SAMARITAN
(running back, shouting) Praise God! Praise God! *(kneeling at Jesus' feet)* Thank You, Jesus!

JESUS
Weren't all ten made clean? Where are the other nine?

JESUS
(lifting him up) Get up and go. Your faith has made you well.

EVERYONE
Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good!

Review game

The thank-you chain 6 min

You'll need: Paper strips, Masking tape, A marker

1. Each correct review answer earns a paper strip. The child writes or draws one thing they're thankful for on it.
2. Tape the strips into a paper chain. Try to make it ten links long.
3. Hold up the chain and say the memory verse together.

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Tips by age

Preschool	Count ten fingers and say "Thank You, Jesus!" for something different on each one.
K–2nd	Let each child be the one who comes back in the skit, running and shouting "Thank You, Jesus!"
3rd–4th	Talk about why it might be surprising that the Samaritan was the one who came back.
5th–6th	Compare "cleansed" (17:14) and "made you well" (17:19). Discuss the difference between receiving Jesus' gifts and receiving Jesus.

Song ideas

♪ **Thank You, Lord (for Giving Us Food)** Preschool, K–2nd · Traditional table song
♪ **Jesus Loves Me** Preschool · Traditional
♪ **Give Thanks** K–2nd, 3rd–4th, 5th–6th · Worship chorus
♪ **Count Your Blessings** 3rd–4th, 5th–6th · Hymn

Song titles only. Use any recording or songbook your church has permission to use.

Activity sheet answers

K–2nd	Fill in the verse: devotion, endures, forever · Story order: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 5 (top to bottom) · True or false: 1 false, 2 true, 3 true
3rd–4th	Secret code: WHERE ARE THE OTHER NINE · Verse in order: 1, 4, 2, 3 (top to bottom) · Quiz: 1 Have mercy on us, 2 To the priests, 3 A Samaritan · True or false: 1 false, 2 true, 3 false, 4 true
5th–6th	Verse in order: 1, 4, 2, 3 (top to bottom) · Who said it: 1 The ten men with leprosy, 2 Jesus, 3 Jesus, 4 People with leprosy (Leviticus 13:45) · True or false: 1 true, 2 false, 3 false

Note for parents

Today we learned about **the ten lepers**. Ten men with a terrible skin disease called out to Jesus, "Have mercy on us!" Jesus healed all ten, but only one came back to thank Him, and he was a Samaritan, an outsider. Jesus said, "Your faith has made you well."

Ask at dinner: *What are ten things Jesus has given our family? Let's say thank You for each one.* Count them on your fingers together.

Memory verse: "Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; His loving devotion endures forever." (Psalm 107:1)

Going deeper: Leviticus 13:45-46; Leviticus 14:1-9; 2 Kings 5:1-15; Psalm 107:1-9; Luke 5:12-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

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