

# Where are the others?

Luke 17:11-19

July 24, 2022

Richard Odei-Wontumi

We live in a world, surrounded by many things of different nature given to us by God or provided by Him. But being humans, we always want to show that its our ability that has brought us where we are today.(show slide 2) 2 reasons: 1. Less of God more about ourselves. And 2 It's our hard work

This should not be so.

In today sermon, we are told about ten lepers suffering leprosy. Note that the Greek word referred here as people with various diseases, who sought Christ mercies to be healed of their diseases. They got what their heart desired but what was their reaction? I teach today on the topic: "Where are the others?"

Every purpose of Christ while on earth and even today is based on 3 things:

1. Strategic planning:(show slide 3) He has a Vision and a Mission and planned His activities to achieve these Vision and Mission. He positions Himself at a place for a purpose; He goes through places or towns; or at the temple; or among people for a reason. He does not go anywhere for just going there but for a reason. He told his mother "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come?' John 2:4
2. With Christ, everything is about timing (show slide 4). Every activity He involves Himself must be timed and not wasted. There is time for everything under the sun as Ecclesiastes says. With Christ every minute is an opportunity to do God's work on earth. He made this know when He said in John 9:4 "I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." Timing is everything.
3. Christ just looks out for the greatest impact He may have on humans in strategizing and planning of His deliverables (show slide 5). His activities must have great impact on human to bring glory to God Almighty. The world needed faith and trust (which had eluded than for a long time after the prophets of old). He must instill that trust, faith and bring hope to the people. He told His brothers who hated him saying: "My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you; but it hates me because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. You go to the feast. I am not yet going up to this feast. For My time has not yet come." John 7: 6-8

Our Lord positions Himself to affect His world around Him, so does He today.

Our Lord Jesus knew the rift between the Jews and the sibling Samaritans. Yet twice He had went through that land to give hope to the people, making them know that boundaries are just

lines, but God seeks people who would hope and have faith in Him. (Show slide 6) The visit brought Him into contact with these 10 lepers who, according to the traditions of the time, were seen as unclean and isolated. They were outcast from the society, therefore had to live at the outskirts of towns like Galilee and Samaria. They had no hope and lost faith in the system. Planning, timing, and impact are Christ key goals.

His encounter with these lepers was very unique in the sense that for the first time 10 lepers have mixed race that was unacceptable by the Jews. Jews and Samaritans at the same place consoling each other. We can be united and see each other with God as a common numerator despite our differences (our different denominator) or choose to focus on the difference? It is God that binds us together with love and unity in Christ Jesus.

The lepers requested for mercies because they were not sure whether Christ would show mercy. Lepers are always at the mercy of the people during Jesus' time and old testament days. In Matthew 8:1-3, a leper came to kneel before Jesus and said, "Lord if you are willing, you can make me whole?" They do plead for mercy because they do not know whether their request would be granted or not. They realized who Jesus was but they failed to understand that He is a merciful God, He came their way to fulfill a purpose. We are the same, we know who Christ is, but we lack the courage to ask Him to help us. He said if we ask anything in His name, He will do it. John 14: 13-14.

Jesus out of a willing heart asked that they go show themselves to the Priest, as commanded by Moses in Leviticus 13 & 14. It was the Priest who must examine the leper and declare the person clean. The lepers gathered faith and proceeded to go and show themselves to the Priest. But the lepers forgot that Christ is the High Priest from whom the final say comes. He sent them to test their faith just like Naaman, who refused to hide from Elisha's call to go and wash himself in the River.

They were healed on the way but only the Samaritan came back to show gratitude to Jesus because He realised 2 things quickly (show slide 7):

- a. As a Samaritan he can not enter the temple to be examined like a Jew, why should he go and see the Priest?
- b. He quickly realized that he was in the hands of a better Priest, who is the High Priest for life. In Him our faith is complete. He does not discriminate between the Jew and Samaritan. Christ did offer all of them the same opportunity to be healed. He is above all.

So, he came back to acknowledge Christ's goodness to him and praised God for the gift of healing.

**But Christ asked: "where are the others?" (show slide 8)**

The other nine (9) are like me and you, who are willing to follow traditions of the fathers and forget that God is everywhere and no matter who the human Priest is, he is human and fallible. But He, God, Is there for us at anytime and He does not change. Jesus is our High Priest and sits at the right hand of God the Father and interceding for us. Yet we are very ungrateful for the things he has done or continue to do for us. We live as if we own our world and our lives. The Samaritan was grateful for healing mercies but where are the others? Were they also Samaritans? No, for Jesus call the Samaritan a foreigner. Which means the nine(9) were locals, Jews. Their ingratitude was inexcusable just like us.

### **Why are we not grateful in life and to God? (Show slide 9)**

1. We think everything is our handiwork,
2. we earned it through our hard work forgetting that it is God who gives us the ability to create wealth. Deuteronomy 8:17-18

I came across a definition of Gratitude and would like to share. It says: **(Show slide 10)**

“In general terms, gratitude stems from the recognition that something good happened to you, accompanied by an appraisal that someone, whether another individual or an impersonal source, such as nature or a divine entity, was responsible for it,” explain researchers Lúzie Fofonka Cunha, Lucia Campos Pellanda, and Caroline Tozzi Reppold in a 2019 article published in the journal *Frontiers in Psychology*

This was what the Samaritan found and went to Jesus to show his appreciation. Same as the woman at the well, who brought a nearby city to hear the word of God through Jesus because something good has happened to her.

### **Why do we need to be grateful or thankful or show appreciation? (Show slide 11)**

1. God has given us the opportunity to earn that privilege. It is not our right:
  - a. We don't own life; it is given to us. Some of us behave as if we own our lives but not.
  - b. We did not come to the world with anything, and we will go with nothing, even if you are rich or poor
  - c. We are like a flower that flourish so beautifully today, tomorrow we are gone.
  - d. We are passing through. We are just missionaries sent by God on earth for His glory.
2. We do not own everything, even if we think its our hard work.
3. It builds good relationships.
4. It makes you a better person and makes you look good all the time.
5. It unlocks opportunities that may be shut.
6. Grateful people are happy and joyous people.  
***“Gratitude blocks toxic emotions, such as envy, resentment, regret, and depression, which can destroy our happiness.” ROBERT EMMONS, PROFESSOR AT UC DAVIS***
7. It makes you emotionally, psychologically, and physically healthy.

8. It makes us see good in others than ourselves.

## **How can we show gratitude?**

(Show slide 12)

- Appreciating who God is and that we owe our life to Him
- Acknowledging that nothing we owned or earned is our effort, but God gave to us to be stewards and we will be accountable.
- Be grateful for everything that comes your way. I Thessalonians 5:18
- Appreciate others more than yourselves even when they do not affect your life. Philippians 2:3
- Appreciate your wife, husband & Children, even when the relations are not great. Be grateful, it could be worse. Say thank you for the little things they bring you in life.
- Be grateful for your extended family and friends. They are pain but they sharp you as a person.
- Accept who God has made you to be. You are not like anyone else. You are Who You are.

People may think you are wrong in showing appreciation because they do not understand. Do not give up. The Samaritan had his complete healing when he came back to show appreciation. The others may have healing but just physical not emotional, psychological, and spiritual.