



Courageous Faith and Obedience
Pastor Greg Formey
(Luke 17:1-19)

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At the beginning of this year, we were encouraged to begin our journey with courageous conversations. And, as it comes to a close, we must put “walk to our talk” by exercising courageous faith and obedience.

Through the text, the Lord allows us to learn two shocking lessons in the lives of the disciples that drive home our profound obligation to respond. One is a lesson in forgiveness, as Jesus set a high bar for them to jump over. The other is a healing encounter the Lord used as a master class on how to follow a command simply because He gave it.

YOU HAVE ENOUGH FAITH TO OBEY

In **Luke 17:1-10**, Jesus was setting the stage. He stunned the disciples by declaring that they did not need great faith to forgive those who offend them. He asserted that all they needed was obedience.

³“If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them. ⁴Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying ‘I repent,’ you must forgive them. (NIV)

At that point, the disciples knew they needed help. They were acutely aware that they could not forgive at that level on their own. They naturally concluded that the remedy was an infusion of more capacity from God. They appealed to Jesus, **“Increase our faith!” (Luke 17:5b, NIV)**

They placed the responsibility on Jesus to somehow strengthen their ability to do what they had been commanded to do.

Here is the Lord’s surprising reply:

“If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it will obey you.”

Jesus does not give us even one inch of wiggle room with this issue. He makes it clear that the amount of faith we have is not the major issue when we receive a command from God. The major issue is obedience.

YOU MUST COURAGEOUSLY OBEY TO BE BLESSED

To aid Jesus with this crucial issue, the Lord next set up a stunning living illustration in the form of ten desperately ill men who simply and courageously obeyed His command and, by doing so, received great blessing from God.

The Condition

Luke 17:11-14

¹¹As Jesus continued on toward Jerusalem, he reached the border between Galilee and Samaria. ¹²As he entered a village there, ten lepers stood at a distance, ¹³crying out, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”



The Command

¹⁴He looked at them and said, “Go show yourselves to the priests.”

The Lord is honored when we use the faith we have, and simply do as He commands. This is the case throughout the Scriptures. Here are three examples:

- Moses as he raised the rod toward the Red Sea
- The priests as they stepped into the Jordan to enter the Promised Land
- Naaman as he dipped seven times into the river for healing

The Immediate Response

^{14b}And as they went, they were cleansed of their leprosy.

All they needed was to hear the Master say “Go!”

They were cleansed as they obeyed, not when they were commanded.

Questions: What is God telling you to do that you’re not doing? What are you waiting on?

HOW COURAGEOUS OBEDIENCE TURNS OUT

¹⁵One of them, when he saw that he was healed, came back to Jesus, shouting, “Praise God!” ¹⁶He fell to the ground at Jesus’ feet, thanking him for what he had done. (NLT)

This story is not only about Jesus’ ability to heal, but also about a man’s attitude toward his healing. What undoubtedly shocked (and surely must have embarrassed) the disciples was what they realized next.

Luke 17:16b - “This man was a Samaritan.” (NLT)

¹⁷Jesus asked, “Didn’t I heal ten men? Where are the other nine? ¹⁸Has no one returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?”

ONE MORE THING...

Good things happen when we have the courage to exercise faith and obedience.

Luke 17:19

And Jesus said to the man, “Stand up and go. Your faith has healed you.” (NLT)

James 2:20 confirms this by declaring, “Faith without works is dead?”