

Read: Luke 17: 14-16

“Go, show yourselves to the priests.” Luke tells us that as they went, they were cleansed. This part of the story raises a question in my mind. Which priests? Do they go to the priests in the temple on Mt. Gerizim where the Samaritans worshiped, or to the priests in the temple in Jerusalem. After all, they were in the region between Samaria and Galilee. Luke doesn’t answer that question. In fact, there is no further mention of the priests, or the temple, or what might have taken place there.

Maybe these issues fade out in the story because Luke wants to suggest to us that, really, only one of the ten comes to the Priest. Hebrews 4: 14 says that Jesus the Son of God is our great high priest. And only one comes to the Temple. In John 1:14 we read that the dwelling place of God with humanity is in Jesus. And only one brings his sacrifice of thanksgiving as he bows at the feet of his Master.

Jesus is our Priest; He is the new temple; all of our thanks and praise belongs to Him.

**PRAY:** Sing “I Love you Lord, and I lift my voice, to worship you, O my soul rejoice. Take joy my King, in what you hear. May it be a sweet, sweet, sound in your ear.” Express your thanks to Jesus.

## FRIDAY MARCH 25

Read: Luke 17:19

Many Christians stumble over the words, “your faith has made you well.” What is Jesus actually saying? Didn’t *Jesus* make the man well? In fact, were not all ten cleansed (healed), yet in the story only one seemed to express his faith.

Sometimes Christians have hurt others when they say, “you don’t have enough faith.” Maybe they say that to a person who remains ill even after repeated prayers for healing. Maybe they say that when after asking God for something, nothing “seems” to change. I believe people who speak that way miss completely the point of what Jesus is saying.

This man who was cleansed, came to the Cleanser, beheld Him, bowed before Him, praised Him, recognized in Him his Priest and Temple, all by faith. In faith he acknowledged Jesus in all these ways, perhaps more. And when we humbly put our trust in Jesus, submit to Him, bow before Him—when we see Him for who He is and what He has done, then we are well.

Can you see Jesus in this way? Then “your faith has made you well.”

**PRAY:** Sing: “Open our eyes Lord, we want to see Jesus, to reach out and touch him and say that we love him. Open our ears Lord and help us to listen. Open our eyes Lord, we want to see Jesus.”

## SATURDAY MARCH 26

Read: Luke 18:1-18 in preparation for tomorrow’s sermon.

Consider coming to morning prayer today in the sanctuary at 6:00AM.

# WEEKLY DEVOTIONS GUIDE

MARCH 20-27, 2011

BY: PASTOR ANDREW BEUNK

NEW WEST CRC

**SERIES: A 'TANGIBLE DISPLAY' PEOPLE: JOURNEYING WITH JESUS IN LUKE**

SERMON: “TRUE RESPONSE OF A DISCIPLE: GRATITUDE”

LUKE 17:11-19

PASTOR ANDREW BEUNK

SUNDAY MARCH 20

**KEY THEME OR TAKE-AWAY:**

## MONDAY MARCH 21

Read: Matthew 24: 1-8

Birth pains. Only about half the population in our world is capable of experiencing them, at least in a physiological sense, the other half of the population must graciously and supportively observe them. And for some couples the time for enduring birth pains can be very lengthy.

In the midst of the pains some wives have said to their husbands, “you’re never coming near me again!” But as time goes on, the birth pains are endured again and again. For most often, birth pains give way to joy!

Jesus says that the famines, earthquakes, tsunamis, wars, and rumours of wars are like birth pains. The mounting crisis in Libya, the devastation in Japan, the drought in parts of East Africa, the looming crisis of global warming, these and more, are, in the context of the Kingdom, present-day birth pains. Paul says in Romans 8: 22, “we know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.”

Birth pains create a longing in us for the joy and beauty of a new creation. To a husband and wife, it’s a newborn child. To a world rocked by earthquakes and rocketed by wars, it’s the promise of a New Day.

Jesus tells us that these events are signs. Signs that the coming of the end of the age is near. We must not allow these events to deceive us into believing God is powerless, or compassionless, or a myth. No, says Jesus, “such things must happen.” Why? Birth pains. Terrible pains, screaming, despair, “why have you forsaken me?”... then Joy! New Beginning! “Behold, I am making all things new!”

**PRAY:** Pray that more and more people will discern the signs of the times and turn to Jesus Christ for new beginning.

Pray also for the earthquake and tsunami victims of Japan, and for the mounting crisis in Libya.

## TUESDAY MARCH 22

Read: Matthew 25: 37-40

Yesterday the Honduras Serve Team arrived in El Coyolar. Greetings were exchanged. For some, old friends were embraced, for others, new friends were introduced; brothers and sisters in Christ, ordinarily separated by thousands of kilometres, now serving the Kingdom side by side, together.

Perhaps today the shovels will start digging new latrines and the hammers will start building the new pilas. As the new relationships deepen and the new facilities are constructed, Jesus is showing his face. The Holy One is there, in the midst of them, receiving their gifts and blessing their work. “Whatever you did.... you did it for me.”

Some from our team will be tempted to think that they are the ones coming to give. Since they have come with resources they may think that they are the ones, serving the “least of these.” And in one sense that is true. But if they are truly willing to allow Jesus to be present with them, they will also experience their Honduran brothers and sisters serving them. They will receive the gift of Joy that can flow from a simpler life-style; the gift of Trust amidst futures with limited opportunity; and the gift of Dependence in the presence of uncertainty.

In our Western culture of abundance, and possibility, and independence, we can fail to realize how we ourselves are “the least of these”. Too often, we are “least” because we’ve lost true Joy, child-like Trust, and unshakable Dependence.

Perhaps these are some of the resources our Honduran brothers and sisters will bring to our team... and they in turn to us.

**PRAY:** Pray for the Honduras team: Alex DeGroot, Emily Verseveldt, Brittany Groen, David Groen, Daniel Brouwer, Chris DeGroot, Curtis Heinen, Derek Breedveld, Aaron Haines, Jenna Noort, Colleen Beunk, Mike Hoyer, and Colleen Hoyer. Pray that all will see Jesus as they serve together.

## WEDNESDAY MARCH 23

Read: Luke 9: 51-56; 10:30-33; 17: 15-16

These are the only three passages in Luke where the word “Samaritan” appears. The first time is at the very beginning of the “Journey to Jerusalem” narrative. In chapter 9:51ff we see that the journey had to go through Samaria. It had to go through the region of people that the Jews in Jesus’ day despised. Jesus had to travel right through a region of people who the disciples thought were “spiritual lepers”. And when they did not welcome Jesus (9:53), though the disciples wanted to call down fire from heaven to judge them, Jesus rebuked his disciples as if to say, “These are my children too. My Kingdom will reveal itself *through* them.”

And so it does. It’s the Samaritan that takes pity on the left-for-dead traveler to Jericho. And it’s the Samaritan who comes to Jesus having been healed by Him.

Those we least expect become revelations of Divine mercy and gratitude. Those who the disciples judged were on the outside, demonstrate true faithfulness.

**PRAY:** Pray that Jesus will bring us through the Samaritans in our lives; our families perhaps, our neighbourhoods, our city, our world. Pray that we will see the Mercy and Compassion of God revealed through those from whom we’d least expect it.

## THURSDAY MARCH 24