

Elijah/Elisha – Standing Alone

Week 14 – The Leprous Enemy

Transition: Last week our Scripture passage was centered on two miraculous short stories (curing a poisonous stew and multiplying loaves of bread). These stories remind us that God both protects and provides for His beloved people.

Context: This week we are studying a passage that may be familiar because Jesus used it to illustrate a point to the people in His hometown. In Elisha's day, Syria was a mightier military power than the northern kingdom of Israel. Even more, they were fierce enemies. So, when Naaman, Syria's powerful military commander, requests help from some Israelites, and even more, when these Israelites agree to give him help, we should sit up and take notice.

Opening Questions:

- Have you ever asked for help from an “enemy” (e.g., someone whom you disliked or had harmed you or others you cared about)? If so, share the story. How did it turn out? Did it affect your relationship? If so, in what ways?
- Have you ever helped an “enemy” who was in need (out of a sincerely loving and kind heart)? Share the story. What made you decide to do it? Did anything special happen as a result? If so, share it.

Scripture/Storying: 2 Kings 5:1-19a

Discipleship Questions:

- What is your overall reaction to this passage? What impression does it make on you and why?
- In what ways is the Israelite girl a person of extreme social insignificance? What do you learn from her role in this story? Is there a situation in your life right now where you could speak up for the Lord? If so, tell the group.
- What is your understanding of how Naaman had thought his healing would happen? What do you base your viewpoint on? Have you ever done something similar? (...where you planned out how God was going to answer your prayer, but He didn't perform as you expected.) Share the story. What did you learn?
- Naaman was given a simple directive for curing his leprosy but initially balked at doing it. What simple but clear biblical instructions have you noticed that Christians ignore or rationalize away? ...which ones have you struggled obeying yourself, and why?
- From the passage, in what ways do you notice that Naaman was changed by his healing? What spiritual insights do you have from his blatant transformation?
- What is your reaction to Naaman's request to take some dirt from Israel so he can worship Yahweh back in Syria? What is your reaction to Elisha's response to him of “Go in peace?” What do you learn from this?
- What is the Holy Spirit teaching you through this story? How does it impact the way you think and live?

Prayer time: This week we are praying for Bridge Refugees, a ministry that Providence supports.

- Pray that the 11 families coming in over the next 5 weeks will arrive safely, that they will quickly integrate into Knoxville, and that the Church will come around them to welcome them.
- Pray that we will have the volunteers and material items (furniture, household items, toiletries, baby items, etc.) to properly welcome and house them. (God continues to answer this prayer daily! Thank you!)
- Pray that Bridge can quickly find housing and jobs for these new neighbors.
- Pray for an understaffed Bridge as we pull together to welcome these families. Additionally, there has been a lot of COVID/illness floating around the office which has exacerbated our staffing issues.