

(Luke 17:14, ESV/NIV)

To understand this fully, let's start at Luke 17:12 (ESV):

*“As he entered a village, he was met by ten men who had leprosy. They stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, ‘Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!’
When he saw them, he said to them, ‘Go and show yourselves to the priests.’ And as they went, they were cleansed.”
— Luke 17:12–14 (ESV)*

Why Did Jesus Instruct the Lepers to Go to the Priests?

In the Old Testament, priests had the divinely appointed

responsibility to examine those suspected of having leprosy. According to the Mosaic Law, they declared individuals ceremonially clean or unclean based on their physical condition. This is clearly outlined in Leviticus 13 (NIV):

“When anyone has a defiling skin disease, the priest is to examine them, and if the disease has turned their skin white and the hair on it is white, and if it appears to be more than skin deep and has infected the lower parts of the body, the priest shall pronounce them unclean because it is a defiling disease.”

— Leviticus 13:9-11 (NIV)

Therefore, when Jesus told the ten lepers to “go and show yourselves to the priests,” He was instructing them to obey the Law and have the priests officially confirm their healing and restoration to the community. If they still showed signs of leprosy, they would remain unclean and isolated.

What is miraculous is that before they even arrived, their healing took place—demonstrating the power of Jesus’ word and faith in

action.

This parallels the healing of Naaman, the Syrian commander, who was instructed by Elisha to wash in the Jordan River seven times to be healed (2 Kings 5:14, ESV):

“Naaman went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy.”
— 2 Kings 5:14 (ESV)

Back in Luke, only one of the ten healed men returned to thank Jesus, highlighting the importance of gratitude:

*“One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice.
He threw himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan.
Jesus asked, ‘Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine?
Has no one returned to give praise to God except this*

foreigner?’’

— Luke 17:15-18 (NIV)

Two Key Lessons from This Story

1. Healing Requires Faith in Action

Obedience is essential to receiving God’s healing. The ten lepers had to take the step Jesus commanded—go and show themselves to the priests. If they had ignored His words, they would have missed their healing. Likewise, your breakthrough often comes through trusting God’s Word and acting on it, even when you don’t immediately see results.

2. Gratitude Glorifies God

God desires a heart of thankfulness. Of the ten healed, only one returned to give thanks—and Jesus pointed this out as an example of true faith and worship. Have you taken time to thank God for what He has done? Gratitude is an act of worship that brings glory to God.

Why Did the Lord Command the Lepers to Show Themselves to the Priests?

Final Reflection

Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior?
Are you ready to meet Him if He returned today?

If you haven't yet, now is the time. If you have, share this good news with others and live a life of faith and gratitude.

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