

## Daily Update - November 11th

Let's continue to spend time reflecting on God's word in prayerful quiet today, remembering God's faithfulness to us in his word and in his Spirit.

We can rejoice in God's protection, reminding ourselves that David calls us to trust him in the ancient words of Psalm 23

**A psalm of David.  
The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.  
He makes me lie down in green pastures,  
he leads me beside quiet waters,  
he refreshes my soul.  
He guides me along the right paths  
for his name's sake.  
Even though I walk  
through the darkest valley,  
I will fear no evil,  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff,  
they comfort me.**

## Luke 17:11-19 & Titus 3:1-7

The quality of mercy is not strain'd,  
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven  
Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest;  
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes:

The Merchant of Venice Act 4, Scene 1

In this story, Ten Lepers call out for Jesus to have pity on them. Their condition, the need they could not fulfil themselves was to be made clean so they could be in God's presence. Their leprosy prohibited them from the temple, from worship and seeking God's forgiveness and it also prohibited them from being with other people, from community, friends, social contact/ Belonging. This is similar to the situation we are in today. But their leprosy kept them in a state of perpetual shame and isolation. Unless they could be healed, they were stuck like that. And leprosy could not be healed. When they met Jesus, they cried out, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us."

Jesus' healing came by his voice. It is the expression of his divine will. He saw their need and healed them to be in the Father's presence. It is his desire for us to be in his presence too, to be clean as well. His love draws us towards us, but we resist because our principle fear is that God is not as merciful as we believe, that he comes to criticise and judge and we hide, perhaps like the other lepers we know the extent of our failing, so we isolate ourselves from Him in unbelief and despair.



In his letter to Titus, Paul expands on how far we go to hide from this simple truth; living instead in malice, envy and hate. Perhaps we even hide behind these things, afraid that God cannot forgive these things. Many people hold onto such misunderstandings. This is actually how Paul had lived. He would not believe God would offer forgiveness in this way. His utter contempt for the church was only washed when he met Jesus Christ for himself and found instead, kindness, love and verse 5, mercy. It is God's love that draws him near us too.

Only Jesus provides the solution to our deepest needs. Remarkably, the story in Luke shows that it is the one most aware of his need, the Samaritan, already despised by many, who expressed his faith in Christ.

Mercy then must become part of our way of life, to be people who meet chaos and disorder in people's lives with the grace and mercy imparted to us. I find myself challenged by the principle to love others as myself because I readily forget God's love to me! Like the priest in the temple, I'd be surprised by God's grace to others too!

The Psalmist beautifully captures the picture of God as shepherd, companion and host, all of it drawn from God's mercy.

### **Yielding prayer**

It is in His mercy, that God not only cares for us, but receives us as his own.

**You prepare a table before me  
in the presence of my enemies.  
You anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows.  
Surely your goodness and love will follow me  
all the days of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord  
forever.**

**Father help me to live this day to the full, being true to you in every way.**

**Jesus help me to give myself away to others, being kind to everyone I meet**

**Spirit, help me to seek the lost, proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.**

**Amen**

