



WHAT ARE YOU THANKFUL FOR?

LUKE 17:11-17

PRISONS WEEK
A WEEK OF PRAYER

9TH - 15TH OCTOBER 2022

LUKE 17:11-17 As Jesus made his way to Jerusalem, he went along the border between Samaria and Galilee. He was going into a village when he was met by ten men suffering from a dreaded skin disease. They stood at a distance and shouted, "Jesus! Master! Take pity on us!" Jesus saw them and said to them, "Go and let the priests examine you. "On the way they were made clean. When one of them saw that he was healed, he came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself to the ground at Jesus' feet and thanked him. The man was a Samaritan. Jesus said, "There were ten men who were healed; where are the other nine? Why is this foreigner the only one who came back to give thanks to God?" And Jesus said to him, "Get up and go; your faith has made you well." (GNB) the Gospel reading for 9 October 2022 Prisons Sunday

It's hard to be thankful when life feels hopeless, lonely or unfair. In saying 'thank you' for the small things, we realise they are often the big things – the new day that brings another chance, family, friends, the air we breathe, shelter, food, the kindness of a stranger, even the loyalty of a pet. This year's Gospel reading for Prisons Sunday shows us the far-reaching impact of thankfulness.

From a harsh, hopeless place on the edge of society, the lepers cry out in pain and despair. God answers their prayer through Jesus, already travelling and working in that hostile place. And Jesus does more than heal them physically, his compassion shows them that they are people loved and valued by God, who can be restored to community and freedom. But the Samaritan who returns to thank Jesus finds an even deeper, everlasting spiritual freedom, amazed by the power and willingness of Christ to make him fully whole – his joy and thanks come straight from the heart.

Pray with us each day in Prisons Week as we journey this year through hostility, stigma and despair to move towards hope with thankful hearts for all that is possible. We make our faith journey with Christ at our side, giving thanks to God, always and everywhere.

THE PRISONS WEEK PRAYER

Lord, you offer freedom to all people. We pray for those in prison. Break the bonds of fear and isolation that exist. Support with your love prisoners and their families and friends, prison staff and all who care. Heal those who have been wounded by the actions of others, especially the victims of crime. Help us to forgive one another, to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly together with Christ in his strength and in his Spirit, now and every day. Amen.

COMPASSION

DAY 3

Jesus saw them and said to them, "Go and let the priests examine you."

Luke 17:14

Father, we bring before you all those in prison. You never turn anyone away who comes to you for help. You have the power to change lives, and so we pray you will reveal Jesus to them. Touch them deeply Lord, and bring healing and deliverance to their lives. Fill them with hope for the future, we give you thanks for all your love and goodness.

Victim of crime

SENT

DAY 6

And Jesus said to him, "Get up and go;"

Luke 17:19

Dear Jesus, you told the healed man to get up and go, now I am asking you to help me go and do the same; that in this place I might carry your message of love, kindness, gratitude, forgiveness and especially compassion to all. Help me to encourage all I work with, to grow in love for you, for others and most of all for themselves, and may your kindness grow and flourish.

Prison chaplain

HOSTILITY

DAY 1

As Jesus made his way to Jerusalem, he went along the border between Samaria and Galilee.

Luke 17:11

Lord Jesus, you knew how it felt to be in hostile territory. Send your Holy Spirit to be with everyone who is experiencing fear today and especially those spending their first night in prison. Stay close to guide and strengthen them so that they in their turn may open their hearts to know you, to love you, to serve you and to thank you. And we ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prison volunteer

HEALING

DAY 4

...On the way they were made clean.

Luke 11:14

Thank you Lord for reaching down into the pit and saving me. For healing the pain and self-destruction and setting me a new path. A path of peace. Peace with myself, with you and with those I love and have hurt. Help me to continue, to be grateful each day for what I have received.

Prisoner

HOPE

DAY 7

"...your faith has made you well."

Luke 17:19

Heavenly Father, I thank you today for the gift of faith you fill my heart with. A Faith that is helping me to hear and believe the 'words of life' that only Jesus can speak. To respond in obedience to his words of salvation and healing, forgiveness and cleansing, of grace and mercy. Words of invitation, comfort and acceptance in every place and circumstance I am in. Bringing hope and love in the Holy Spirit's light.

Prisoner

SUFFERING

DAY 2

He was going into a village when he was met by ten men suffering from a dreaded skin disease. They stood at a distance and shouted, "Jesus! Master! Take pity on us!"

Luke 17:12

Oh God, you know how depressed I get. You know how time passes so slowly for me. You know how at times I feel bitter and resentful. I am lost without you. Oh God help me to welcome those who offer friendship, to look for those who need to be comforted, so that in giving I might have no time for loneliness. Thank you for promising never to leave me alone, that in quietness and rest I shall find your strength.

Prisoner

GRATITUDE

DAY 5

When one of them saw that he was healed, he came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself to the ground at Jesus' feet and thanked him. The man was a Samaritan. Jesus said, "There were ten men who were healed; where are the other nine? Why is this foreigner the only one who came back to give thanks to God?"

Luke 17:15-18

Forgive me Lord, for all that I am and all that I'm not. Praise you Lord, for all that I am and all that I'm not.

Prison chaplain

Thank you for these kind-hearted people who've helped me through the toughest time in my life. Give us patience when we are tested. Help us see there is no point being lost in bitterness, when we should be grateful to be alive.

Family member

For nearly 50 years, Prisons Week has encouraged Christians everywhere to pray for prisoners and their families, victims of crime and their communities and those working or volunteering in the criminal justice system. Please pray each day during Prisons Week but also ask yourself if there is one thing that you as an individual, or as a church, can do to help any of the people for whom you are praying.

For more information, to donate, or to order more leaflets please visit prisonsworld.org You can email us via info@prisonsworld.org or you can write to us at: Prisons Week, c/o Free Churches Group, 27 Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9HH

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