

Gospel Meetings s.h.c.- 14 Naaman the Leper

by Stan Ford

The sermon explores Naaman's journey from leprosy to healing, illustrating the power of faith and God's grace in overcoming human misconceptions about salvation.

Duration: 41:16

Scripture: Ephesians 2:8

Topics: "Salvation Story", "Obedience To God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of complete obedience to God's will for salvation. He shares his personal testimony and expresses his desire for everyone to come to Christ and accept Him as their savior. The preacher highlights three key aspects of the salvation story: letting go of worldly possessions, acknowledging the debt of sin, and relying on the cleansing power of Jesus' blood. He also references a gospel track and a story about a man named Robert Lago to illustrate the message. The sermon concludes with a reminder of the blind man in the Bible who recognized Jesus as the Son of David.

Transcript

The fourth chapter of the Gospel according to Luke. The commencement of the ministry of the Lord Jesus. Luke, chapter four.

We will read in verse sixteen, And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor.

He hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. Verse twenty-seven, And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elias the prophet, and none of them was cleansed save Naaman. The Syrian.

May the Lord bless you. O God and Father, we want to say afresh this evening, thank you. Thank you for the one who paid the debt we could not pay.

We pray thee that each one of us may know him as our Savior, and crown him as our Lord. We look at thy word, and consider what thou hast to say to us. For Jesus' sake.

Amen. If there is one thing I am absolutely certain of, it is this. That all of you have listened to a legion of sermons, and maybe Sunday school lessons, on the story of Neb.

But it is remarkable, is it not? I'm certain all of us were stirred by it as we read the word of God together. It is remarkable that when the Lord Jesus starts his earthly ministry, it is not to the fifty-third of Isaiah, he turns. It's not to stories so familiar that tell us of the shed blood of the Lamb, and the lifted-up serpent, or he will tell those stories later in his ministry.

But right at the very beginning, he starts by reminding those Jews that have been critical concerning his first statement from the prophecy of Isaiah. He tells them of Naaman the leper. And I don't think I can do anything better than Jesus did.

If he reminds people of the story of Naaman the leper, maybe I'm doing what God wants me to do tonight, as I would finish this crusade with that same story. There are three very simple things that stand out for all of us as we casually read the story and see. There's no need to have lepers after your name from a theological seminary.

There's no need to be able to claim some high academic award. The youngest and the oldest in the reading of the story can see these things. And I'm going to ask you to keep them in your mind as we talk a little about them tonight.

I want to remind you that it's the story of a miserable condition, but he was a leper. And it's only men and women who have seen leprosy in its ugliest, maybe in the continent of India or the continent of Africa, maybe some that have seen it to way longer in Malaysia, to understand just what a miserable condition comes to a person who's suffering with leprosy. It is the story of a miserable condition.

It is not only the story of a miserable condition, but please note, it is the story of mistaken conceptions. For all of you have sat and pondered over, as you read the story, the words that come right to our hearts, I thought, I thought, I thought, would you mind me, right at the beginning, stopping and shouting hallelujah? Because it's not only the story of a miserable condition, it is not only the story of a mistaken conception, but it is the story of a mighty conversion, a mighty conversion. Of all the lepers in Israel, there was but one, Naaman, the Syrian, who was black.

But, as I take the story, I'm using it, please, just as an illustration of the wondrous message of the Christian faith. I trust you'll walk along with me. No need, really, for me to introduce Mr. Naaman.

I sometimes say of him, it is the story, indeed, of a distinguished person. I sometimes say of this story, it's the story not only of a distinguished person, but of a disillusioned person. I sometimes say it is the story of a disappointed person, and a disobedient person, but a delivered person.

But there are so many ways to look at the story. But, as I look at this man, Mr. Naaman, I remember there is one thing he did not lack in. He did not lack in personal courage.

As I look into the face of some of you young men, I have a strong feeling that many of you young folk are like I was when I was a young fellow. The only thing that mattered in life was personal courage. You know, I've never known a boy different than that, have you? I suppose there are some, but I've never known

them.

Whenever youngsters come into my home, when my own children were smaller, and they climb the stairs and go into my library and run their finger over the long list of books, and the biographies, and all the biographies. Oh, those are the books I love. I've never once heard a boy say to me, Was he a good man? I'll tell you one thing, can you teach me something? I'll tell you one thing I've never, ever heard in the past.

Was he a learned man? They all would not ask the same thing. Was he a brave man? Was he a brave man? That's what boys want to know. Well, if you could like someone to look up to, how about considering Naaman? A man who lacked nothing in personal courage.

A man who was the general of the army of the king of Syria. A man through whom God, God, gave victory to the Syrians. Not, if you please, to the Israelites, but to the Syrians.

A man who lacked nothing in moral and personal courage. A man who lacked nothing in wealth. I've got a strong feeling, you know, that we're living in a day when people imagine that the only thing that matters in life is that you have wealth.

The cry of the 15th of Luke is all around us. Give me, give me, give me, give me! But he was a man who had. He had much personal wealth.

He was a man who not only did not lack personal courage and did not lack wealth, but he was a man who did not lack position. There are some people to whom personal courage may be a secondary. And wealth is secondary.

But, oh, how they crave that they might have position. They turn their thoughts and their attentions to the politics of the world, whether it be local, or whether it be national, or whether it be international, and they imagine, indeed, that if only they had position. For here was a man who was a great man with his master.

He had reached that. The tragedy of it, that with all those things--possession, achievement, authority--he was all up. I remember standing away in a great leper asylum in Pretoria in South Africa a few years ago.

The Christians in the little temple there in Pretoria, every Lord's Day, go to the leper asylum, and they go through the witness round, and they see the minister to those lepers. There would be, if I remember correctly, about 150 of them. But there was one thing that struck me forcibly.

I have seen lepers in ten parts of the world, and all the lepers I have seen were folk whose fingers were curved, whose ears were twisted, whose noses were lifted, whose feet--of course, you know, leprosy attacks in the far parts of the world. But I looked around and saw this crowd of lepers, and, while there were many that bore the outward sign of leprosy, I was amazed that the most of them--not all of them, but most of them-- looked no different than you and me. They bore no outward signs.

And I spoke to the doctor, the medical man in charge, and I said, Sir, you're excused my ignorance. I'm not a medic, as you know, but these folk don't look like lepers. I will never forget his answer.

He said, Mr. Borden, maybe they don't look like it, but every one of them have in their blood the disease that, unless they are treated, will break out in their skin. And I suddenly found that folk can look nice and be nice, and yet still have within them the very seed of evil. And as I use this as a picture of your need and mine, I say very kindly, Sir, very kindly, I say this, that we may have achieved personal courage, we may

have achieved personal wealth, we may have achieved personal authority and personal position, but God tells us outside of Christ there's no difference.

We've all sinned and come short of the glory of God. And there is within us that potential for evil, that all nature of evil, that will break out and make itself very obvious to others. We may even be taking as it were medicine for it, but it's in the bloodstream.

When this man, of course, claimed that he was a leper, he did not resign his position. He was not demoted. The king of Syria didn't say to him, Herman, no longer will you be the lord of my army.

He was not rejected by the Syrian society, but nevertheless he knew he was a leper, and he knew that in front of him there was little but pain and rejection. Until this girl came to him, this lovely little girl, and dared to say to her mistress, would that my master was with the prophet that is in Israel. He would heal him.

What confidence? Not me. What confidence? Do you know what Jesus said? He said there were many lepers, but none counted this girl out as a leper. She had no evidence.

She just couldn't say, hey, come with me, I want to introduce you to a leper who was clean. Here he is. Hold on.

Jesus said there was only one clean. Her faith was such that she believed in that prophet God. And what others couldn't do, she was confident he could.

The tragedy is this, but that miserable condition that this man found himself in, he only half listened to what the girl said. Now, may I say, very kindly, may I say this, I have a strong feeling there are lots of people who only half listen to what God has to say. There are lots of people who maybe in the past two weeks in these services, you have listened, but you've only half listened.

For there were mistaken conceptions. The message of God had come to him, oh, that you were with the prophet that's in Israel. But this man, how mistaken he was.

He thought, first of all, now, if I'm going to be healed, I know what has to happen. If I'm going to be cleansed of my necropsy, I know what has to happen. There has to be an important commission.

I mean, I'm the girl. I mean, if I go to anyone, I must go to the king. There must be an important commission.

And he goes, first of all, to the king of Syria, and he tells the king of Syria what the lassie has told his wife. And the king of Syria says, I'll send you to the king of Israel. Now, please, there was nothing wrong with the king of Syria.

Nothing wrong with going to the king of Syria. God had given victory for the king of Syria, so if God would have fellowship with him, nothing wrong with his general going to him, but everything wrong with going to him to try and get healed. Oh, how mistaken some people are.

We are living in a day of good organisation. I'm not going to start to listen. If I was to listen, I would never, never be able to tell you them all.

But if I move from place to place, I get utterly amazed that there's this society and that society and another society and all good organisations, nothing wrong with supporting them or going to them. Unless you want

to be cleansed of your sins. I mean, if that's what you want, there's no cleansing there.

I suppose the greatest of all organisations is the church. Thank God for the church. But if you think by having your name on the membership roll of a particular group of people, that'll get you to heaven.

Oh, please, please, madam, sir. Jesus said, I'm the way, not the church's law. Oh, I'll go no further.

I don't need to. I think it's very obvious and plain. He thought that if there was an important commission, to some person of higher upstanding all would be well.

Now, there are many important people who have left their shadow and many of them a deep shadow in the history of the world. Did you know anyone else but Jesus Christ who did that? There's none other name under heaven given amongst men whereby ye must be saved. Good people, nice people, but unable to save.

But not only were these mistaken conceptions being questionable, and he thought there would be an important commission, but then he thought that there had to be an imposing contribution. Oh, as long as you can pay enough money, you'll get there. Yes.

Oh, let me go along to my bank. Let me get ten pounds of silver. Let me get six thousand pieces of gold.

I say, let me go along to see Mr. Penny, and I'll purchase there ten fingers of raven. I'll take these things with me. Now, I'm not going to even attempt to give you the value of ten talents of silver, and I wouldn't try to give you the value of six thousand pieces of gold.

Not today. Not today. I only want to say that none of you will disagree with me.

This was wealth in any man's money. Ten changes of raven? This is wealth in any man's money. And he thought, oh, this I will take.

I will go to the king of Syria. He told me he can't help, but he will give me letters to go indeed to the king of Israel, and I will take his contribution. Let me say again, I thank God that no one could be afraid of these services and talents.

I thank God no one's put it to action. I want to tell you again, it's not a bad idea to be the first person to leave. I'm a little ashamed.

I want to tell you this, my God's not poor. You can't buy your salvation, my God. It's no worth taking it if you'll do some great thing or give some great thing.

My Bible tells me this. But salvation, it's not. It's not a fact.

And we are exhausted. We can't buy it. Oh, I thank God I have a God who loves you.

Whether you're rich or ready, he loves you whether you have little or have nothing, or much. Until we try, let God pay the debt of nothing. It is the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanses me of sin.

Let me tell you a little story. That's not my story at all. I'm borrowing it, but the man I'm borrowing it from, he's holding glory.

So he won't consent to using his story. Many of you are familiar with the lovely gospel tract, maybe one of the finest that ever has been printed. I would love to use more of them, but they've become so expensive I can't.

But, a lovely gospel tract, the reason why. More than legal, I had the joy of preaching with, years ago, when he came over as the field director of the Soldiers and Airmen's Christian Association in my country. And I heard him, while I was working with him, I heard him tell this story.

Robert Laidlaw is the owner, or was the owner while he was alive, he was the owner of a very large store in New Zealand, similar to your theory. The Farmer's Market. With departmental stores in almost every town in New Zealand.

With a very large staff. You will understand that sometimes there was pilfering. And they had an order in the business, that if anyone was found pilfering, they were immediately dismissed.

But while they were immediately dismissed, as a Christian he could not till, that he could put them in court. But there was no breaking of the law, any pilfering, any stealing, business. One day he was in the office, and as he was working in his office, one of his managers came in and said, Mr. Laidlaw, I've some very bad news there.

It's old Jim. Now please, I don't remember if his name was Jim. I am just using that name.

He said, it's old Jim. What's the matter? We've just had the orders with him, they've been going through his books, and a large sum of money has been taken. But sir, let me finish the story.

He's been with us now for many, many years, started as a lad, started when you started the business. But his wife has been serious to you. He's been nursing her, he's been doing his work, he's been piling up doctor's debts, and the money that's been taken has been used to pay the doctor's debts.

And every month when he's received his wages, almost all his wages have gone back to pay off the money that he took. And if we had not had a spot order, we wouldn't have found out. Mr. Laidlaw, can you see it in your heart, you'll be merciful.

Robert Laidlaw said, bring him in. And old Jim came in. And as he came in, the tears were in his eyes, and he was winking in his hands, and he said, Mr. Laidlaw, for God's sake, forgive me.

For God's sake, forgive me. Jim said, Ann, no sir, will you forgive me? I'm sorry I've done it, sir, but will you forgive me? Jim said, Ann, I can't tell you how hurt I am. Not that you stole the money, that's bad enough.

But the thing that hurts me is that you were in that situation, and you didn't think you could come and ask me for help in the first place. That's what's hurt. But listen, Jim, you'll forgive us.

You'll forgive us. Go home. You'd better take a week off from your work and pay up your wife's certificate.

We'll forget it. Immediately, there rushed back into the man's cheek, colour, and into his lips, blood. For there was no colour in his cheeks and no blood in his lips when he came in the office.

Consenting, Mr. Laidlaw, he almost ran from the office back to his home. Would you tell me something? What? What? Why, as soon as he got home, the first person that came and knocked his door, didn't he say to his wife, It's the paint. They covered it.

Why was it that the blood came back to his lips and the colour came back to his cheeks? You know why, don't you? He believed in the integrity of the man who said you're forgiven. I want to tell you something. I believe in the integrity of the man who's in glory.

I believe in the integrity of the man who said, If you'll come just as you are, I will not cast you out. I'll receive you and forgive you. I believe in the integrity of the man who has dared to record in his words that salvation is without money and without rest.

Oh, my friend, do you believe in him? But not only was there a mistaken conception because he thought there had to be an important commission. Not only was there a mistaken conception because he thought there had to be an imposing contribution, but there was a mistaken conception because he thought, he thought, there had to be some impressive ceremony. Oh, he went along, you see, and he saw the king of Syria and the king of Syria sent him to the king of Israel and then the king of Israel saw him.

The king of Israel was frightened. He said, this king of Syria has sent his hand to me with leprosy, asking me to make him well. I can't do anything.

All he's doing is finding an excuse to go to war with me. Then it turns away. The king spoke it harshly, disappointed anyway.

Maybe, maybe, please. Maybe in a temper. Maybe saying, well, I bought money.

I've travelled this long journey. I've got my service. I thought it was going to be well.

Maybe he was angry. I only know that on his way, the servant of the prophet told him that there was a message from God. Go and wash in the pool.

Go and wash in the river. Get thyself sanitized. But, oh, he thought there should have been some impressive ceremony.

He said, I thought that the, I thought that the prophet would come out and lay his hand on my leprosy. Well, if the prophet had done that, he'd have been a leper himself. But, oh, there'll be some impressive ceremony.

Oh, nothing that way. Oh, my friend, my friend, what a mistaken conception. Are you looking for some impressive ceremony? I've met men and women since I've been here who've told me they weren't quite sure they were saved, and they weren't quite sure because when they asked the Lord to save them, they didn't have some funny feeling run up their backs.

Or they didn't, uh, I don't know what they expected. I want to remind you of something that you all know. For what I'm saying tonight, every one of you heard again and again and again, and I want to remind you of something else you know.

There's only one man in the Bible that we're told about who went by his feet. And you know who that was, don't you? He was blind. And there came into him a rapture of a son.

And the son said, Father, that blind father said, Who is it? That's the voice of Jacob. And the son said, I'm not Jacob, I'm, I'm, I'm, I'm Esau. And he took a stick of leaves and broke it on his arm and broke it around his face so that he couldn't grow a beard.

And he said, I'm Esau. And his father said, come here my son, let me do it. And he stretched out his hand.

He felt the hair on his cheek and the hair on his arm. And he said, oh dear, it's Esau. And I don't know if you can spot a feeling, but he went by his feelings and he was utterly disillusioned.

Agree? I'm not asking you if you saw a feeling that you're saying. I'm asking you either thing. Or are you like Mr. Nairman saying, I hope there will be some impressions, however? So we have seen this evening, haven't we? We have seen, first of all, that every one of us are in the same miserable condition that Nairman was in.

We have seen that so many have their mistaken conceptions. They think there ought to be an important commission. They think there ought to be some imposing contribution.

They think there ought to be some impressive therapy. But then the servant said, master, if the prophet had asked thee to do some hard thing, wouldn't you have done it? If there is one thing that continually impresses me as I travel the world, it is how religions that demand physical things from people can get so many far. I've seen folk climb stairs on their bare knees until the skin is just pulled off their knees.

They still do it because they think they're pleasing God. I've seen folk away in the Near East who have passed through all sorts of physical pain because they think somehow they're pleasing their Buddha. I am amazed how people imagine that our God is a cruel God and demands cruel things for men and women.

Please, my God is such a loving God that he said, I'll bear that cruelty for you. I won't ask you to have it or bear it. I'll bear it.

And the servant said, if the master, if the prophet had asked me to do some hard thing, wouldn't you have done it? Don't we realize that we're saved by grace? And saved by grace alone, that it's the blood of Christ that cleanses us from all things. The man went out into the river. Though he could have thought of many better rivers than this river, this muddy, muddy river.

He went out and seven times he went under the water. I have, please, I have nothing to say about the number seven. I've heard some fantastic sermons on the number seven.

I have nothing to say about it. Beyond this, what the prophet asked him to do, he did. And I want to say what Jesus asked you to do.

If you want salvation, you've got to do it. You've got to do it. He went down seven times, and hallelujah, he came up clean.

The Bible says his flesh was like the flesh of a child. Isn't that lovely? Like the flesh of a child. Jesus said there was only one leper that was cleansed, but hallelujah, he was cleansed.

He was cleansed. Tonight, I have a Lord that's saying to you, if you want salvation, then let me tell you the way. And what he requires of every one of us is complete obedience to his will.

I wonder if I may put my hand in my pocket and take out my little testament. I suppose over the years, or I've had this testament, I don't know how long, it's just about wearing out a bit, but I suppose over the years I've used this very testament to show the way of salvation to literally hundreds of men and women. I wish I'd been able to use it a little more here, but I'm going to use it now.

That not one man or woman will leave this chapel saying, no one told me how to this day. I'm going to make sure none of you do. Will you come to Christ? Will you accept him as your Savior? He will say, I was.

When? I want to make reference to four verses. We will stay in the epistles of the Romans because I don't want to be jumping here and there. Romans 3 and 23, listen.

For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. For all have sinned. Oh, we're so much like men.

Romans 6 and 23. For the wages of sin is death. The diamond sinner.

The wages of sin is death. The end of your leprosy is death. But isn't it wonderful that between Romans 3 and 23 that tell us that we've all sinned, and Romans 6 and 23, in between those two verses, Romans 5 and 8. But God commendeth his love towards us in that while we were let sinners, all have sinned.

While we were let sinners, Christ died. The wages of sin is death. Christ died for us.

Sir? As simple as I know how, that's the message of the Gospel. God has made it so simple that a white fairy man, though a fool, shall not hurt a lady. He tells us we sin.

We know that's true. He tells us that the wages of sin is death. We know that's true.

That while he hates our sin, he loves us. Jesus Christ came down from heaven and went to Calvary's cross, that our sin may be placed upon him. He took my sin in his own body to the tree.

There he proved God's love towards us in that while we were sinners, Christ died. Who are you saying? Who are you saying? Just put you at the back seat and we're all saved. We're all saved.

He died for all. The fucking world saved. Don't you know it? May I give you a simple illustration, even of a serious matter.

The first session of Immigration, we all passed through when I came to America at the beginning of May. I said, Mr. Ford, have you got a return ticket? They weren't prepared to risk letting me come to your country unless they had means of putting me on a plane and sending me home if I was a Jew. That's it.

That's what they'd ask you if you came to my country. And I have a ticket. So take me to England.

It's been paid for. I've got it. Do you know that ticket will never take me to England? I've got it.

It's been paid for, but that ticket will never take me to England. I can stand on it. I can sit on it.

I can do what I will with it and it'll take me nowhere. It's not the ticket that takes me to England. It's the plane.

And I can't get aboard the plane unless the proof of a fare being paid is in my hands. Dare I say it's written. When Christ died on Calvary's cross, He paid the fare for every one year to get out.

For every man and woman in the same place. My Bible says, not for my sins, but for the sin of the whole world. But you've got to step on the line.

You say, Mr. Preacher, that's what I'd like to do. Out. Romans 3 and 23.

We've all seen it. Romans 6 and 23. The witness of sin is death.

Romans 5 and 8. God proves His love towards us in the way we react to that Christ died for us. Hallelujah. Romans 10 and 13.

Lose or win. What woman did you hear me say the other night? I've got a God that places one arm on the shoulder of a fair, lovely girl with a very lustrous glory in her eyes. He places another arm on the shoulder of a man's back.

He places another arm on the shoulder of a young man that bothered him to do that which is vile without an arm torn out. He places another arm on the shoulder of a libertine and he says, Whosoever, whoever you are, I've got a God who in Christ wishes to stretch arms towards you and glory to himself. Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Isn't that lovely? Whosoever shall call make their passionate entreaty. You know the word call there means a passionate entreaty. It's the sort of call a fire brigade gets when there's a fire.

Help! It's the sort of call a lifeboat gets when a boat is sinking. Help! It's the sort of call you give to the doctor when your child is coughing with a fever. Help! Whosoever will call on the name of the Lord shall I don't do yet.

Ooh, I wish I could hit that home. Shall be saved. Please don't leave this service tonight saying, I don't know how to be saved.

So that's the way. Are you prepared to call on the name of the Lord? Please, God you will, for his name's sake. Amen.

We're going to sing the hymn we have sung so many times, number 221, I think it is, or maybe 212. 221, 2-2-1, please. If you are tired of the load of your sin, let Jesus come into your heart.

I'm not going to make an appeal. I'm not going to ask anyone to stand up and come forward. But I am going to say this, and maybe in this service we'll see, a man is what? If you haven't trusted the Lord, will you trust him to guide you? It is not right that you deny.

You get your sin taken away tonight by coming to see him. Some of you youngsters here, I don't even know if you say, that you can't do that. You say, I'm going to lay my debt I'm going to come to him.

Some persons here, lonely, tired, praying, God, I'm going to ask that you'll rise as we sing together the first and last verse of 221. If you are tired of the load of your sin, let Jesus come into your heart. If you desire a new life to begin, let Jesus come into your heart.

Just now, you're nothing anymore. You'll neglect him no more. Just now, open the door.

Let Jesus come into your heart. If you would join the glad song of the blessed, let Jesus come into your heart. If you would enter the mansions of rest, let Jesus come into your heart.

You'll neglect him no more. Each one of us stand before thee, individually. Each one of us realize that, like Naaman, we need to be cleansed.

For we've all been. But we thank thee for that fountain that's open for all uncleanness. For that Christ to die.

We ask that none of us tonight will reject him a moment longer. But that we might take him as our savior tonight. For we ask it in his name, for his glory.

Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/10/SID10378.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/stan-ford/gospel-meetings-shc-14-naaman-the-leper/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net