

## Connecting Scripture to Life

Invite participants to reflect

- Who in your context might feel excluded or “kept at a distance”?
- What might it look like for your community to cross a boundary in love?
- When have you experienced healing through gratitude or relationship?
- How might this passage speak to issues like racial division, homelessness, mental health, migration, or LGBTQ+ inclusion?

## Group Response:

what thoughts, examples and experiences would you want to share with whoever is preaching or leading worship in your context on Sunday?

- When did I find myself “between” this week?
- Who helped me to see God at the margins?
- For what am I most thankful today?
- How might my gratitude bring healing to others?

## Closing Reflection

In the borderlands,  
Christ walks beside us.  
In the cry for mercy,  
Christ hears us.  
In the act of gratitude,  
Christ heals us.

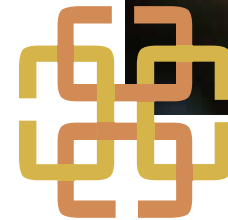
All:  
May we see  
with Samaritan eyes,  
thank with open hearts,  
and walk the road  
that crosses every divide.

Amen.



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Photo: Samuel Rodriguez, Unsplash



# HeartBeat

## Wholeness Across the Divides

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> of October

Lectionary Reading:  
Luke 17:11–190

## Gathering and Prayer

This passage finds Jesus walking between boundaries - between Galilee and Samaria, between belonging and exclusion. It invites us to wonder where our own borderlands might be.

## Prayer

God of healing and wholeness,  
you meet us where we are,  
you walk the roads between  
difference and division.  
Open our eyes to see your grace  
in unexpected places  
and your presence in those  
we call “other.”  
Amen.

## Icebreaker

“Between Two Worlds”

Invite each person to share (in pairs or small groups):

A time when you felt in between - between two cultures, opinions, generations, roles, or communities.

What did you learn in that space?

## Reading the Text

Read Luke 17:11–19 twice, slowly and aloud.

- First Reading: Listen simply for what stands out - a word, phrase, or image.
- Silence: A minute to rest in that.
- Second Reading: Listen for what God might be saying to you or to your community today.

## Context and Background

Luke writes this story “on the way to Jerusalem.” This is more than a journey on a map. It’s the road toward confrontation with systems of power that exclude and divide.

- Borderland: “Between Samaria and Galilee” - a place of ancient hostility. Jesus chooses to walk there.

- Leprosy & Exclusion: The lepers were not only ill but ritually excluded — forced to live apart, unable to join worship or community life. Their cry, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!” is both a prayer for healing and a plea for belonging.
- The Samaritan: The only one who returns in gratitude is the foreigner — the outsider.
- Wholeness: Jesus says, “Your faith has made you well” (sozo — saved, made whole). Healing is physical, relational, and spiritual.

## Wonderings

(choose a few to ponder)

- I wonder why Jesus chooses to walk through the borderland instead of avoiding it.
- I wonder how it feels to cry out for mercy from a distance.
- I wonder what it meant for the Samaritan to turn back while others kept walking.
- I wonder how gratitude can be a form of healing.
- I wonder where our own communities have built invisible borders — and who waits beyond them.

## Deeper Ponderings

This week from some African theological views (choose a few of these thoughts to discuss)

### SEEING WITH AFRICAN EYES - UBUNTU

*“I am because we are.”*

Desmond Tutu

Healing, in many African traditions, is about restoring community, not just curing illness. When the lepers are healed, they are invited back into life together. Wholeness happens when relationships are repaired.

#### Reflection:

How does Ubuntu challenge Western ideas of individual salvation?

### THE BORDERLAND AS SACRED SPACE EMMANUEL KATONGOLE

Katongole calls the Church to live in between - between tribes, classes, and histories. God works at the borders where divisions are most visible.

#### Reflection:

Where might your faith community be called to stand “between” - not taking sides, but building bridges?

### GRATITUDE AS THEOLOGY : LAURENTI MAGESA & JOHN MBITI

In African spirituality, thanksgiving is the heartbeat of life. To live rightly is to live thankfully.

#### Reflection:

What practices of gratitude help you to stay aware of God’s presence?

### THE FOREIGNER AS TEACHER : MERCY AMBA ODUYOYE

Oduyoye reminds us that those at the margins often reveal God most clearly. The Samaritan becomes the theologian of the story.

#### Reflection:

Who are the “Samaritans” today whose voices might teach the Church new ways of seeing God?