The Mighty Must be Humbled January 12, 2020

*2 Kings 5:8-14 Series: Help When You Feel Helpless*

Christ sends none away empty but those who are full of themselves. – Donald Gray Barnhouse

Intro: The problem with pride.

1. God’s blessing doesn’t come with our pride.
2. This is a story not just of healing but of God convincing people of His glory.

v. 8 *Let him come now to me, that he may know that there is a prophet in Israel.*

Luke 4:27 *And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.*

1. Being left waiting at the door is sometimes just what we need.

v. 9 *So Naaman came with his horses and chariots and stood at the door of Elisha's house.*

v. 10 *Elisha sent a messenger to him …*

v. 11 *I thought that he would surely come out to me …*

v. 11 *But Naaman was angry and went away …*

* According to v. 8, what was Elisha’s ultimate goal in his encounter with Naaman? Why?
* When have you been conscious that God had a greater purpose in your circumstances beyond just fixing them?
* Why did Elisha feel it was important that he not receive Naaman personally?
* What are some ways that God can leave us at the door?

1. God’s blessing doesn’t come on our terms.
2. We want God to live up to our expectations.

v. 11 *I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call upon the name of the LORD his God, and wave his hand over the place and cure the leper.*

1. We want to adjust God’s commands for our convenience.

v. 12 *Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?*

v. 12 *Could I not wash in them and be clean?*

v. 12 *So he turned and went away in a rage.*

* What are some ways that non-Christians expect God to live up to their expectations today?
* What are some different ways that Christians can do similar things?
* Why couldn’t Naaman wash in any river and be healed? i.e. Why did God command that it be in the Jordan?
* What are some of God’s commands that you’ve found to be a little narrow and specific when you first heard them?

1. God’s blessing doesn’t come with our achievement.
2. Again, God gives servants the voice of wisdom.

v. 13 *his servants came near and said to him, “My father …”*

Proverbs 11:2 *When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with the humble is wisdom.*

1. The simplicity of God’s grace wounds our pride.

v. 13 … *it is a great word the prophet has spoken to you; will you not do it?*

Ephesians 2:8-9 *For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

1. God makes little children out of those whom He humbles.

v. 14 *he went down and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God*

v. 14 *his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean*

James 4:10 *Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.*

* God has spoken to Naaman through a captured slave girl (v. 3), a messenger (v. 10) and his servants (v. 13). Why?
* Is it helpful to be aware of patterns in the way that God works in your life? e.g. To ask, ‘I wonder why God keeps speaking to me through servants?’
* How is the command of baptism similar to God’s prescription for Naaman?

Study ahead: Next week, we’ll study 2 Kings 5:15-19.

Notes