

## Thanksgiving 2020 // 11/29/20 // Luke 17:11-19

**SLIDE - Gospel Changes Everything** – final week next Sunday – Trike will close it out

**SLIDE - BORN IS THE KING** – Christmas songs – Rich in truth – Not just sing but consider more deeply

The First Noel
O Come, All Ye Faithful!
Silent Night
O Holy Night

**SLIDE - Thanksgiving 2020 (like no other)** - What is the must-have Thanksgiving meal food item? In the comments, share your answer. To remove it means we might as well not even have Thanksgiving. “Cor, no need to imagine we’re not having Thanksgiving.”

Mashed potatoes and gravy and stuffing. My entire second plate are those two things.

Many people mistakenly believe the goal of this season is to "Be thankful!" While gratitude is good, Jesus reveals something even greater, even more important, in today's story. And to actually walk away thinking to yourself, "I just have to be good, I just have to be thankful" is mistaken.

Today, we'll examine why that is and why it matters so much.

**SLIDE** - Walking through the passage. Nothing fancy or crazy.

As he is walking, Jesus hears those who cry out to him. The ten with leprosy were calling out to Jesus from where? From *outside* the village. Why?

- **SLIDE** - What was it like to have leprosy?
- MODERN EXAMPLES of PHYSICAL, SPIRITUAL, EMOTIONAL, RELATIONAL of those *outside*. Insider and outsiders.
  - Due to race, skin color, gender, age, national origin, disability, sexual orientation
  - In the church, whether single or married (separated or divorced), with or without kids, struggles with infertility or having experienced past abortions
  - Views on politics, views schooling (home, private, private Christian, private classical Platonic with neo-Grecian Socratic methods, or public), views on vaccines, views on essential oils, views on whether or not to host in-person services during a pandemic.
  - SO. MANY. WAYS. To make groups of insiders and outsiders. Those let into the camp versus those that are kept out, kept away, deemed unclean.

Jesus cares about those in need, those outside the camp, those in need, those who are sick, those who are suffering. He cares about you. He cares about your life, what you're going through, about those times where you metaphorically are being instructed by our culture to cry out

“Unclean! Unclean!” and then promptly isolate yourself from others. I’m not directly addressing covid-19. I’m speaking of the countless ways and near universal experience we’ve had that these 10 men are going through. It shouldn’t be too difficult for us to empathize with their plight. We’ve known this.

**SLIDE** The passage continues...

Jesus, in fact, took pity on them. How so? “As they went” it says, “they were cleansed.” As they went, in response to Jesus’ direction, they were cleansed. They believe Jesus. They trust Jesus. They follow Jesus’ word. And AS THEY WENT they were cleansed. On how many of the ten? All of them.

Healing by way of cleansing was **NOT** dependent on:

- **Their level of gratitude, or lack of it.** There is no indication that they were grateful in their departure. Or even, in a moment, when we see the one return that the other nine have their healing taken away. All 10 are healed regardless of how thankful or thankless they were.
- **Their meeting with a priest (i.e. religious observance).** They were healed prior to arrival. They were headed to the priests. But there was no penalty for pastor interference. That was punny.
- **Their ethnicity.** Two ethnicities are reflected in this passage. Both experience healing. The foreigner (as we’ll see in a moment) is healed too. Without differentiation. Why is that important? Why is that designation significant? This man was an outsider based on the rules of religious insiders. He would have been looked down upon. He would have been discriminated against. He would have had to worship differently and in different spaces. Was that a factor in who Jesus decided to heal? NO! No matter. Jesus healed all. All 10.

**SLIDE** - Why did Jesus heal? There could be many reasons. We could speculate. But, according to the text, according to what we see, what is the most likely answer to the question why did Jesus heal? Due to limitations in the story we must conclude he healed as a result of their willingness to trust him, to respond to his words, to go at his direction. They were cleansed **as they went**. As **they responded in faith** due to Jesus’ directions, they were healed.

**SLIDE** - Continuing on, one of them returns. One of them comes back to Jesus. He praised God. He threw himself down in honor of Jesus. He thanked him. And there’s the designation. He was a Samaritan. A non-Jewish person returning to worship and thank the King of the Jews. Good story-telling right there.

How did Jesus expect the story to end? Jesus expected all ten who were healed to return. Right?

Let’s consider the questions Jesus asks. When Scripture asks a question, it’s important for us to discern what the intended answers are. So, what are the answer to his questions?

**Verse 17, were not all ten cleansed?** What’s the insinuation? Yes, all were cleansed.

**Where are the other nine?** Not here.

**Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner, this Samaritan, this religious outsider?** Yes, no one else has returned except this one. It seems that the foreigner is set in contrast to the others. Those who should recognize the source of their healing, the author of life, the long expected one, the coming one, the Jewish anointed one. They should recognize Jesus but did not. **BUT THE FOREIGNER DID!**

**IF we stop reading at verse 18,** OUR TAKEAWAY to this Thanksgiving message is “We should be more thankful just like the one Samaritan man and in contrast to those other thankless people.” “We should praise God when we are healed.” “We should be more like the Samaritan and less like the other nine.”

But the passage doesn't stop at verse 18.

What is the significance of verse 19? In returning to Jesus, what did the Samaritan receive that the others didn't? This is why I said earlier that the point of today's story IS NOT “I just have to be good, I just have to be thankful.” That the point is let's not be like those guys, let's be like that guy. And what we have is a new division of two groups—one thankful and the other not. Grateful insiders and thankless outsiders.

So, again, what is the significance of verse 19? Why is it there? What does the Samaritan receive that the others did not? What is the benefit of returning to Jesus?

Healing? No. Every indication is that 10 were healed and stayed healed.

Was it the opportunity to thank Jesus? Yes. No doubt that made for an incredible moment. But, again, then the passage could have ended at verse 16. The cinematic fade out as he weeps at the feet of Jesus.

So, what's the point? Why verse 19? Why is this included in the bible? Why does Luke choose to capture this, amongst all of the stories and healing and blessings and miracles?

**The answer given in verse 19, the final verse in our story.**

**<sup>19</sup> Then he said to him, “Rise and go; your faith has made you well.”**

**SLIDE** - All ten were healed. All ten were cleansed. All then were amazed. All ten (I assume) were giddy, thrilled to be able to go back into the village, to greet family and friends. This was a remarkable story, worthy of telling others.

Can't you just picture it?? I can imagine them running to the priest, with hope and anticipation. As they do so, they sight sight of their hands and wrists, Before their very eyes, they see their skin clearing up with every pump, every step, closer and closer. The closer and closer the village came, the clearer and clearer their skin became. They're looking at each other. They're seeing

the faces of the others be cleansed...completely...miraculously.They're looking at themselves. It's happening. Healing. Rejoicing. Kid-on-Christmas-morning-level giddiness.

Their time outside the camp, away from family and friends is over. A way has been opened for them to go home. To see their families. To hug their children. At last. No more distance. No more quarantine. Yesterday far off. Today brought near. Yesterday outside the camp. Today inside its walls. Yesterday, riddled with leprosy. Today, cleansed from it. Yesterday, dark, hopeless, helpless, despondent, pitiable. Today, light and life, hopeful and giddy, taken pity upon.

Family and friends asking for them to tell the story over again. And again. And again. How did this happen? How could this be? What happened? What changed?

**SLIDE - Verse 19, the final verse in our story.**

**19 Then Jesus said to him (the Samaritan, the one, the *only* one who returned), "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."**

One. Only one could finish the story. Only one knew, without a doubt, that it was Jesus. Jesus confirmed, "Your faith in me, your trust in me has made you well. Your return allows me the chance to confirm that I have done it. I have healed you. I have made you well. You need not wonder. You need not doubt. You need not worry. It was me. I have shown you pity. I have loved you. I have made you well. And as I have done once, I will do again. I am with you. I am for you. Do not doubt. Do not fear."

Only one heard those words. Only one finished the story with the words of Jesus. Only one had it confirmed that JESUS is the hero of the story, the rescuer, the healer, the savior.

Nine others left to wonder. Was it me? Was it my sincerity? Was it my hope? Was it my zeal? Was it the speed with which I ran? Was it my gait, my stride? "*I ran really fast!*"

Was it the road? The path under my feet? Was there a correct path to the priest? Did I choose the right path? "*I thought maybe that was it!*"

Was it the weather? The sun on my face? The wind at my back? "*It could have been the weather. It felt like that perfect 75 and sunny.*"

Was it the time of day? Maybe it was the right time of day? Should I pause at 3:30pm? Is that a sacred time? A time that brings healing if I stop to honor 3:30pm? "*That might have been it.*"

Was it my peers? Should I seek them out? Was it our partnership, our joint venture together, against our mutual enemy of leprosy? "*It was probably because we banded together as brothers and did it?!"*

Was it the priest? Maybe they prayed on our behalf? Should I bring an extra tithe at our next service, at my next visit to the synagogue? *“Yeah, I’ll make an extra donation. That should be good.”*

Nine left wondering. Nine unable to finish the story, unable to identify with certainty the source of their healing, the hero in their story. Nine? NINE!?! Nine healed with no recognition, no understanding of their healer. Nine unable to bring their story to a true and fitting end. Nine left to wonder, to question, to express to their family and friends, their coworkers and neighbors that they didn’t actually know how they were healed.

**Why this story? Why this ending? For you. For me. This is written. This is shared. This story is preached today so that you might know. You need not wonder.**

If you’ve been blessed today...  
If you’ve been provided for...  
If you’ve been given...  
If you’ve been healed...  
If you’ve been shown mercy...  
If you’ve been forgiven...  
If you’ve been brought in...  
If you’ve been cared for...  
If you’ve been healed...  
If you’ve been given justice...  
If you’ve been given a gift...

**EVERY GOOD GIFT COMES FROM GOD.**

This story, these words, the example of the one, is that you might hear today that Jesus is the hero. Jesus is the giver. Do not wonder. Do not question. He is the source. He is the healer behind every healing. He is the one who stands behind it all. He is the giver of every good gift.

## **SLIDE – RUN IT BACK.**

Let's theorize or role play this scenario. Instead of leprosy as the malady, let's consider something much more common and accessible. Instead of leprosy, let's consider this story as though all 10 suffered from unhappiness. Just miserable. Dissatisfied with life.

If it were the case that the unhappy were put out of the village, Jesus happening upon this group is called out to, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!" In much the same way as those with leprosy, Jesus directs them to show themselves to the priest. As they went, they...became...happy. Each of the 10 recalls of their days outside the village dwelling in unhappiness. But with each step toward their meeting with the priests, more and more happiness fills their hearts. They are no longer unhappy. They used to be unhappy. But now they are filled with happiness.

One of them, realizing what had happened, came back. He praised God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet. He thanked him. He wasn't naturally a part of Jesus' family. Yet, given that Jesus took pity on him, that he replaced despondency with happiness, he worshiped him. But not all worshiped. Not all returned.

Weren't all ten made happy? Where were the other nine who were made happy? Have they not also returned to give praise to God? They did not. Just the one.

Only the one returned and, therefore, only the one was able to, with absolute certainty, HEAR that faith in, trust in, belief in Jesus was well placed. That Jesus was the one who made him happy. Not all these other possibilities. Jesus.

This story, this sermon, these words are written for your sake that should YOU experience happiness, YOU might know the source of your happiness is CHRIST.

**You and I will be tempted with thousands of imposters. Thousands.** This is not hyperbole. Thousands of ideas about what works, about what brings life, about where healing and help is found, about goodness/truth/beauty/justice, about what will help our country/help our economy/help our politics/what will help our families/what will help our community, about what will bring you happiness. Thousands of imposters.

**Jesus said he came that we might have life.** That life is found principally in HIM. It does not mean this life is without gifts from God, precious gifts. **But it is to say that HE is the MOST precious gift given.** His death, his cross, his salvation is the greatest gift. Therefore, should we be given a lesser gift or temporarily be given a gift to have it later removed, we're still okay. Why? Because we have the greatest gift, the author and source of life. **Jesus says the life he offers us will become a fountain of living water, not a dead wishing well of stagnant, copper-stained water, but an ever-increasing, ever-satisfying, ever-flowing spring of living water.**

**He says to you and me, this story is shared so you will KNOW that it is me. Life is found in me. Trust in me.**

## **SLIDE - THREE PRACTICAL REASONS WHY THIS MATTERS SO MUCH**

### **#1 – Jesus heard those who cried out to him.**

Remember how our story began. Jesus is walking. There are 10 afflicted men standing at a distance, standing outside the village. They cry out to him in their distress.

**And he hears them. He hears them. And he hears US.**

By extension, you and I can know that God hears us. As we suffer, are afflicted, in pain, in toil, he hears us when we call out to him. Though we are at a distance due to sin, this world, on account of unholiness, injustice, ungodliness, he hears us when we call to him.

**And he takes pity on us.** He responds. He answers. Maybe not in the exact manner or timing that you and I might prefer. But he hears. He takes pity. He answers.

**SLIDE - #2 - So you might know.** And not wonder. And not doubt. Instead that you might know. Without this surety, we chase. We pursue. We wonder. We wander. We go looking. For something else. For someone else.

What did the nine who failed to return not receive—the certainty of who healed them, of the source from which they were cleansed. Instead, they were left to question, to wonder, to hypothesize, to doubt, to chase, to go looking for something else, someone else.

But the one who returned **KNEW** to whom he should thank, to whom he should direct praise. Him. Jesus. No wondering. No doubting. Every good and perfect gift comes from **HIM**.

**This is so you might know. Nine did not know. One, only one, knew.**

You and I need to hear this story's teaching. Do not wonder or doubt. Jesus is the source. You do not need to chase or pursue fountains of youth, social media influencers, celebrity couples...as though they've found in their money, in their fame, in their followings the source of life. Jesus is the source.

**This story is shared so that you might KNOW what this Samaritan KNEW. IT WAS JESUS. IT IS JESUS.** Today. Here. Now. In our midst.

Do not go wandering, looking for something else, for someone else. Jesus is the source. He is the stable foundation amidst political instability. He is the maker of every tongue, tribe, and nation amidst racism. He is the just judge amidst injustice. He is the caretaker amidst the poor and destitute. He is the healer amidst the sick and hurting. He is the compassionate one amidst the vulnerable. He is the author of life amidst a violent world. He is the savior amidst our sin-sick souls.

Jesus. This is written so you might know **JESUS**. Do not wonder or wander. Come to Jesus. Return to Jesus. Know that it is Jesus.

**SLIDE - #3 - So the lesser informs the greater.** The visible informs the invisible. The temporary informs the eternal. The one time informs for all time. The one person informs for all people.

What Jesus did there, Jesus does here. What Jesus did then, Jesus is doing now. What Jesus did in that story, Jesus now does in your story, in our story.

He doesn't just heal visibly but heals spiritually. He doesn't rescue temporarily but eternally. He doesn't only heal one person but can heal all people.

The greater of this story is not that this Samaritan was healed of his leprosy and rejoined his family. The greater is that he understood the hero of the story, the true healer, is Jesus. Not just of leprosy but in all of life.

**This lesser informs the greater.** This story seen, observed, demonstrated before our eyes is lesser. This isn't so you and I would seek a lesser temporary physical healing (as desperate as many of us are AND as a culture experiencing a pandemic).

Rather it points to the greater healing we all need,

- not from one particular malady but from disease itself,
- not from being put at a physical distance from family but from a spiritual distance from God,
- not from something named leprosy but from something called sin,
- not from something that can harm the body but from something that harms the soul.

Jesus takes our sin. He takes upon himself our declaration of "Unclean! Unclean!" He takes our infirmities. He takes our diseases. He takes our punishment. He takes our shame. He takes our disgraces. He takes our being isolated outside the camp so we might come in.

**The lesser informs the greater. AND THE GREATER IS SO SO GOOD!**

## **COMMUNION**

**The lesser informs the greater**

**The lesser (bread) informs the greater (his body)**

**The lesser (cup of juice/water/wine) informs the greater (his blood)**

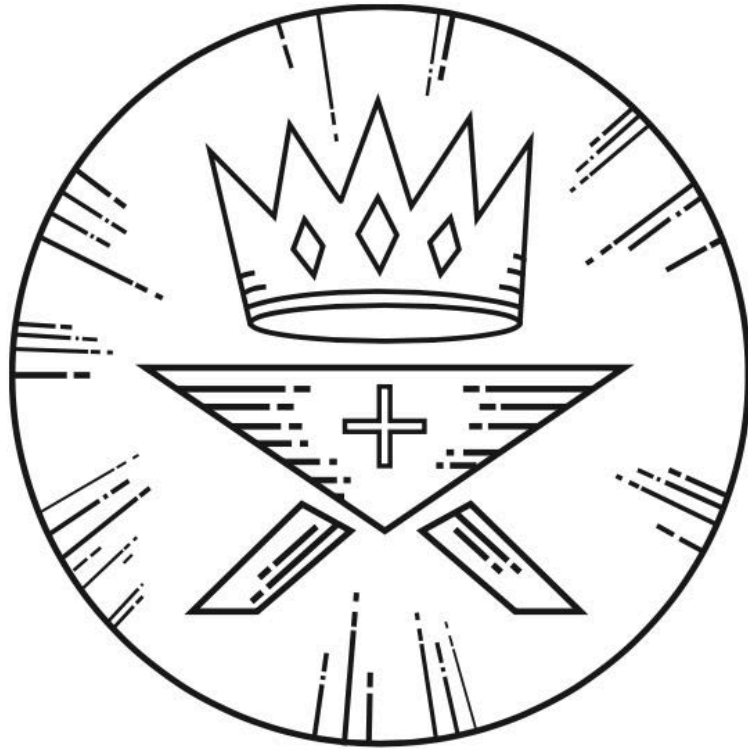




# The Gospel Changes Everything



Fall  
2020  
Series



**BORN IS THE KING**



## Luke 17:11-19

<sup>11</sup> Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. <sup>12</sup> As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance <sup>13</sup> and called out in a loud voice, “Jesus, Master, have pity on us!” <sup>14</sup> When he saw them, he said, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went, they were cleansed.

# What was it like to have leprosy?

## Leviticus 13:45-46

45 “Anyone with such a defiling disease must wear torn clothes, let their hair be unkempt, cover the lower part of their face and cry out, ‘Unclean! Unclean!’

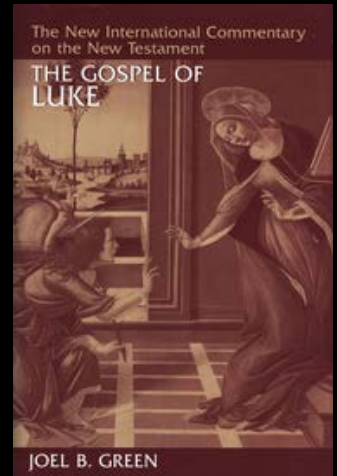
46 As long as they have the disease they remain unclean. They must live alone; they must live outside the camp.”

## Luke 17:11-19

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Jews are not the only ones who qualify for God's messianic blessings; outsiders may receive the benefits of salvation and, indeed, may prove to be more discerning about Jesus' identity and role within the divine plan than Jewish insiders. Salvation comes to this former leper apart from normal concerns with physical ancestry and religious purity.

~Joel Green, New International Commentary of the New Testament , The Gospel of Luke



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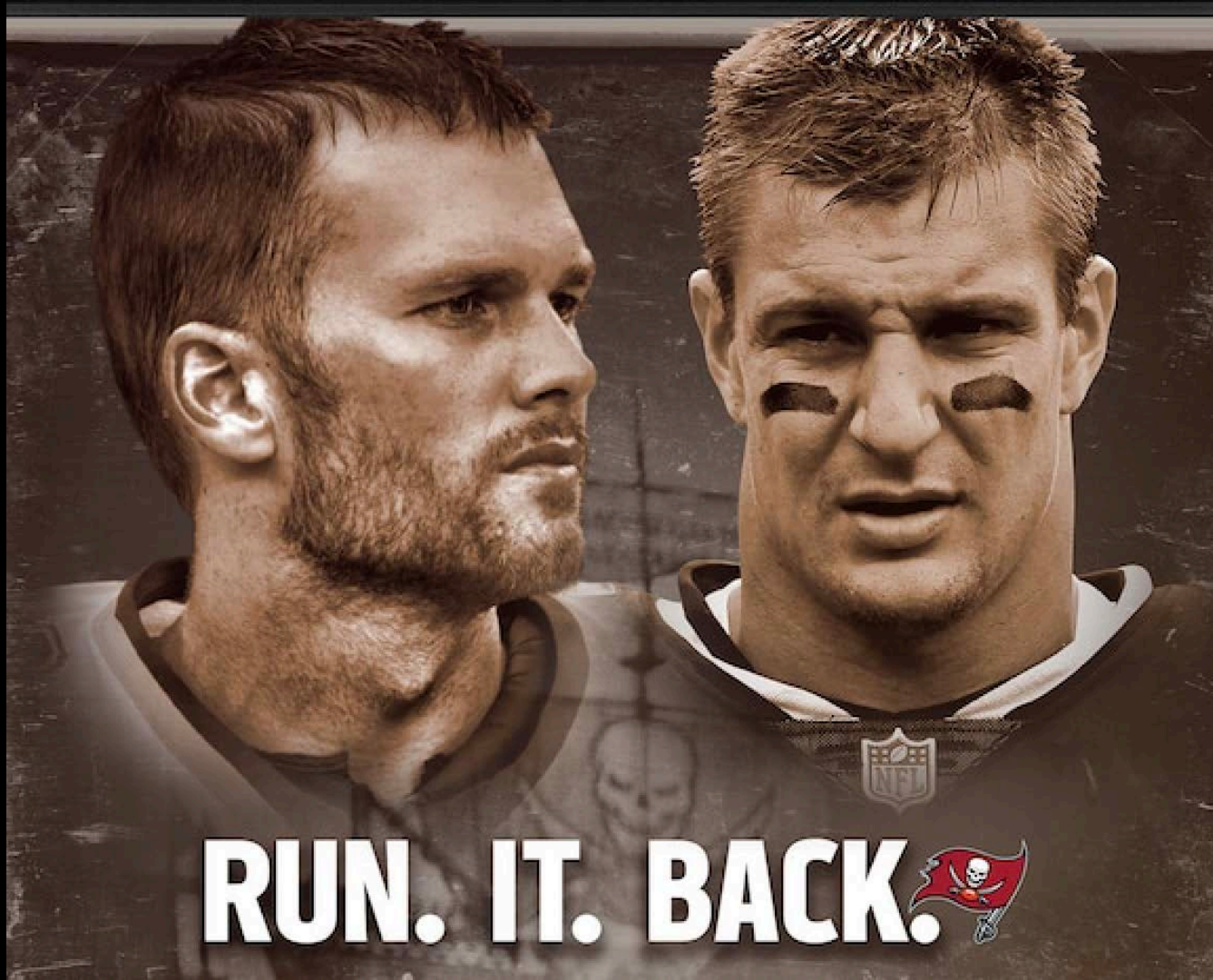
## Luke 17:11-19


<sup>15</sup> One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. <sup>16</sup> He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him — and he was a Samaritan. <sup>17</sup> Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? <sup>18</sup> Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?" <sup>19</sup> Then he said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."



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**RUN. IT. BACK.** 

# Why this matter so much

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2. “So you might know”

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1. Jesus heard those who cried out to him

2. "So you might know"

3. So the lesser informs the greater

This week, will you call out to him –  
knowing that it is Jesus, who is the source?