**Bless Every Home**

“Share”

2 Kings 7:3-9

1. Introduction
   1. God’s heart is to bless every home. God wants to bless you and, through you, bless others. This is his missiological strategy and has been from time immemorial. Gen. 12:2, “I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.”
   2. We are issuing a challenge this month to “bless every home.” We do this when we pray for, care for and share with others the story of Jesus.
   3. Here’s a simple acronym we’ve been using:
      1. Begin with prayer
      2. Listen
      3. Eat
      4. Serve
      5. Story
   4. Last one is story. Share the story of what God has done for us. That’s the theme of today’s message. I’m going to tell you the story of four desperate men who were blessed and became a blessing to others because they shared the story of what God had done.
   5. Scripture
      1. Now there were four men who were lepers[c] at the entrance to the gate. And they said to one another, “Why are we sitting here until we die? 4 If we say, ‘Let us enter the city,’ the famine is in the city, and we shall die there. And if we sit here, we die also. So now come, let us go over to the camp of the Syrians. If they spare our lives we shall live, and if they kill us we shall but die.” 5 So they arose at twilight to go to the camp of the Syrians. But when they came to the edge of the camp of the Syrians, behold, there was no one there. 6 For the Lord had made the army of the Syrians hear the sound of chariots and of horses, the sound of a great army, so that they said to one another, “Behold, the king of Israel has hired against us the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Egypt to come against us.” 7 So they fled away in the twilight and abandoned their tents, their horses, and their donkeys, leaving the camp as it was, and fled for their lives. 8 And when these lepers came to the edge of the camp, they went into a tent and ate and drank, and they carried off silver and gold and clothing and went and hid them. Then they came back and entered another tent and carried off things from it and went and hid them.
      2. 9 Then they said to one another, “We are not doing right. This day is a day of good news. If we are silent and wait until the morning light, punishment will overtake us. Now therefore come; let us go and tell the king's household.”
   6. Pray
   7. Transition
      1. The lepers in our story are not named, but the truth is that they could bear our names. This is because their story is really our story if we’ve come to know life in Christ. The story has these elements: a dilemma, a decision, a discovery and a duty.
      2. Let retrace this story. I hope it becomes our story too!
      3. It begins with a serious dilemma.
2. A serious dilemma

*Now there were four men who were lepers at the entrance to the gate. And they said to one another, “Why are we sitting here until we die?”* (7:3)

* 1. Deteriorating condition
     1. Lepers. Outside the city. Banished.
     2. Leprosy is a symbol of sin. We too are unclean.
     3. Famine! They’ve gone from the frying pan (leprosy) into the fire (the famine). They’re as good as dead.
     4. We are too. Listen to Ephesians 2:1, “And you were dead in the trespasses and sins.” Apart from Christ we are as good as dead!
     5. Can it get any worse? Yes, not only do they suffer from deteriorating conditions, there’s a deadly complacency that threatens them.
  2. Deadly complacency
     1. They are sitting there.
     2. n 1903, a mountain fell on a town in the Canadian Rockies. The town of Frank, Alberta, was buried under 100 million tons of limestone. At least 76 men, women, and children were killed.
     3. It was the rich seams of coal in Turtle Mountain that caused people to build a town under its shadow. The desire for coal led residents to ignore the regular tremors in the rocks above them. In fact, miners counted on the tremors to knock loose seams of coal and make their work easier. Days before the disaster, the mine had become "virtually self-operating in that all the miners had to do was shovel up coal as it fell from the ceiling."
     4. Even the local Blackfoot nation did not like to go near the mountain, referring to it as "the mountain that walks." But the town ignored all these warnings. Just after 4:00 a.m., April 29, 1903, an enormous piece of Turtle Mountain, 3,000 feet long and 500 feet thick, broke off and tumbled into the valley below.
     5. The exact number of dead will never be known. Of the 76 known dead, only 12 bodies were ever recovered. http://www3.sympatico.ca/goweezer/canada/frank.htm; submitted by Harold McNabb, Victoria, B.C., Canada
     6. Complacency can kill!
  3. Transition: Thankfully, they did not remain complacent. They made a decision.

1. A strategic decision

*If we say, “Let us enter the city,” the famine is in the city, and we shall die there. And if we sit here, we die also. So now come, let us go over to the camp of the Syrians* (7:4a).

* 1. Consider the alternatives
     1. City
     2. Complacency
     3. Syrians
  2. Choose the action
     1. Deut. 30:19, I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live,
     2. Joshua 24:15, And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

1. A surprising discovery

*But when they came to the edge of the camp of the Syrians, behold, there was no one there . . . . they went into a tent and ate and drank, and they carried off silver and gold and clothing and went and hid them* (7:5b, 8b).

* 1. Available provision
     1. God had acted on behalf of His people!
     2. 2 Kings 7:5-7 says, So they arose at twilight to go to the camp of the Syrians. But when they came to the edge of the camp of the Syrians, behold, there was no one there. 6 For the Lord had made the army of the Syrians hear the sound of chariots and of horses, the sound of a great army, so that they said to one another, “Behold, the king of Israel has hired against us the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Egypt to come against us.” 7 So they fled away in the twilight and abandoned their tents, their horses, and their donkeys, leaving the camp as it was, and fled for their lives.
     3. God has acted on your behalf! He has provided for your salvation through Christ.
     4. John 10:10
  2. Abundant provision
     1. John 10:10, . . . and have it to the full!

1. A subsequent duty

*Then they said to one another, “We are not doing right. This day is a day of good news. If we are silent and wait until the morning light, punishment will overtake us. Now therefore come; let us go and tell the king's household”* (7:9).

* 1. We must realize our sin
     1. James 4:17, So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.
     2. He that Hetty Green, the “witch of Wall Street.” Parlayed her inheritances into billions. Purportedly the richest woman in the world at the time. Her son Ned broke his leg but she didn’t want to spend the necessary money to get him proper treatment. Eventually he lost that leg. She ate oatmeal but heated it on the radiators in her office (that a bank let her use free of charge).
  2. We must repent for our sin
     1. I believe it was the great missionary statesman and church leader, D. T. Niles, who was the author of that marvelous definition of Christian evangelism as — “one beggar telling another beggar where to find food.”
     2. There’s an interesting character from the Gold Rushes of the late 1800s. His name was George Carmack. On Aug. 17, 1896 he discovered a gold vein in the Bonaza Creek, a tributary of the Yukon River. It became the launch of the Klondike Gold Rush. He freely and gladly told of what he discovered.
     3. We have discovered a treasure greater than all the gold and silver in the world. It is eternal life.