WHICH WAY DO I GO?

We lay down a challenge to all of us this morning. A challenge to “move forward” in our personal walks with Jesus the Christ!

Maybe we need spiritual shoes like the shoes ancient Roman solders had to wear. They were designed so that a soldier could walk forward but had difficulty walking backwards. It was a way of reminding them that they are to ever march forward not backwards into battle.

We are going to read a few verses from Second Kings – 7:3-8

These are verses not referred to often but like all scripture are useful to us in our growth as Christians.

**The four lepers show us three directions we can possibly take in our spiritual lives:**

**1 – RETREAT {V4}**

“If we say, we will go into the city, the famine is there, and we will die.”

One of their options was to go back into the city, but there were serious consequences that awaited them if they did so. They would eventually die of starvation. A long slow death.

If we choose to go backwards in our spiritual life, serious consequences await us as well. We will slowly starve ourselves of God’s word and provision. Depriving ourselves of God’s teachings will act just like food starvation, a long slow spiritual death.

 FAMINE

Nothing can make your life more dry and unfulfilling than going backwards spiritually.

A spiritual death awaits people who choose to go backwards.

This begs the question, **How do we “retreat” or go backwards in our relationship with God? How can we recognize spiritual retreat so that we can head it off or avoid it altogether?**

We pick up old sins we have been forgiven of.

We pick up old habits that slowly chip away at our spiritual lives.

Going to church regularly is not a priority anymore. If you don’t believe this is a big problem, just look around.

The second path we can take in our spiritual lives-

**REMAIN {V3,4} or stay where you are.**

{V3} They said to each other, “Why stay here until we die? And if we stay here, we will die.

They could have chosen to stay right where they were but that also would have resulted in certain death!

If we choose to stay right where we are spiritually, we can expect certain spiritual death as well.

*Someone gave a sundial to a group of people in the jungle. They regarded it as an icon and wanted to keep it holy, so they built a house over it to keep it safe. This of course, kept the sun away from it. They had rendered it useless by trying to protect it! They honored the sundial, but they made it of no practical use. That’s how many people regard Christianity. It has become something they have enclosed within beautiful walls and cathedral ceilings. But, far worse, they also wall off the CHRISTIANITY from their own individual daily lives!*

We have looked at two options so far, **RETREAT OR REMAIN**. Neither of those options are ones we should strive for. But we are not done yet. There is a third option.

**RUN – READ V 4-8 Move forward, take a chance, take a step of faith!**

The lepers decided to take a chance and proceed to the camp of the Arameans.

**What will we find if we take a chance and proceed and move on in our spiritual lives?**

***SECURITY!! {v5-7}***

The lepers weren’t sure what the future would hold when they took the action they did, but God intervened. God provided abundantly!

It was a dark and stormy night when a lady was on a boat crossing Lake Michigan. The lightning, thunder, and rain made her very nervous. She saw jagged rocks jutting above the surface of the lake. In fear, she asked the captain, “Do you know where all the rocks are out there in the lake?” “No,” the captain replied, “I don’t, but I do know where it’s safe!”

**As all of us sail through life we are going to see lots of rocks out there. Some we will know how to avoid; others will come upon us as a surprise. The important thing to know is “where it is safe.” Jesus knows the safe way, follow Him!**

The good news? God will keep us safe and secure and watch over us as we decide to grow in our faith and spiritual walk.

***Read the illustration “A touch of His Presence”***

It is important that while we proceed in the Lord that we keep ourselves fed.

We read in verse 8 that the lepers found blessings and riches unlike any they had ever expected.

**Our main point: If we take a chance and surrender to the direction of the Lord, we will find blessings unlike any we can imagine!!**

In closing:

All of us have a choice to make. That’s what we learn from this story of the lepers from Second Kings.

Our choice?

To retreat

To remain

To Run

Will you take a chance and surrender and run, move from where you are in your spiritual quest?

How will you choose to do so?

In your prayer life

The word of God

Your giving

Witnessing

Find a place, a nitch to respond to the Lord this morning and make your unique move to where God wants you to be.

If you retreat you will never come to know the true grace that God wants for your life.

If you remain where you are spiritually, you will have stymied your growth and your potential. You will be like a Bonzi tree that looks good but never did reach its full potential.

Or, or you can run into the arms of Jesus and the Father. They will provide and provide abundantly. All of us need to accept the fact that only the Lord can cause us to grow spiritually!

Which way do I go? Its up to each one of us to decide. Do we retreat? Do we remain? Or do we, by faith, run with the Lord?

To anyone who has yet to accept Jesus as Lord and savior, you can start your walk this morning, come forward as we sing an invitation song and be baptized into His Kingdom. Begin your new life now. Don’t retreat or remain as you are. Run to Him and He will meet you with open loving arms. God wants to bless your newly chosen life.