



TOPIC: BE A BLESSING

Sermon in a Sentence:
Despite the circumstances we may be enduring, let us seek to be a blessing to those around us.

Points to Make:

- 2 Kings 5:1-14 tells the story of an Israelite slave-girl working in the house of Naaman, a Syrian captain.
- Syria (or Aram, depending on the translation you read) had been a thorn in Israel's side for many years, going all the way back to the time of David and Solomon (1 Kings 11:23-25). Many wars had been fought, many had been killed on both sides of the conflict, and the hatred between them was fierce. (God Himself used the Syrians at various times to bring judgment upon Israel (2 Kings 5:1)).
- As we consider this young girl, what would her most recent experiences have been like? She was/had:
 - Captured by a hated enemy
 - Seen and experienced the atrocities of war
 - Likely grieving the death of family members
 - Alone and scared in a strange land
 - No hope for her future – she was now a slave
 - Likely had experienced and seen her fellow slaves mistreated by their captors
 - No doubt wondering why God had not stepped in to help Israel in their time of need.
- Yet, in the middle of this crisis, her young eyes were filled with compassion as she saw the plight of her new owner, Naaman, a man being consumed by leprosy.
- Many of us would have quickly adopted a “serves you right” attitude if we saw someone in his condition.
 - He was the commander of the Syrian army – the army that had just captured and enslaved Israel.
 - He was the one responsible for the death of so many of this girl's people – a horrific carnage.
- Naaman was a man of such power and status that there would most likely be no way for her to talk to him. But because of her compassionate heart, the slave-girl reached out to her mistress and asked her to speak to Naaman on her behalf.
- This girl has a lot to teach us!
 - Her attention was not focused on only herself and her needs
 - She clearly had no desire to see ‘an evil man’ suffer for his sins
 - Her personal pain did not cause her to gloat over Naaman's disease
 - Even though she could not speak directly to him, she still found a way to get the message through
 - Even though she did not have the power to fix the problem, she expressed the *desire* that Naaman would get to the one who could help him
 - She was willing to do what she could!

Key Scripture: 2 Kings 5:1-14 (NKJV)

- Her few, simple, heartfelt words of compassion set a chain of events in motion that completely changed Naaman's life and destiny.
 - Even though he got the message ‘second-hand’ through his wife, Naaman had enough faith in what the girl had to say to take it to the king (v.4).
 - The king had enough faith in Naaman's ‘third-hand’ message that he wrote a letter to the king of Israel on his behalf (v.5).
 - Naaman had enough faith that he took an incredible gift with him to reward the prophet: 750 lbs. of silver and 150 lbs. of gold, plus 10 changes of clothes (v.5) (Armani or Canali, no doubt)! The current value of these items is just over \$3.5MM!
 - Naaman was healed of his disease (v.14).
 - He became a God-fearing gentile, sacrificing to the God of Israel (v.17).
 - No doubt this slave-girl was handsomely rewarded for the part she played in these events.
- God received the glory due Him!
- We have no idea what God can and will do if we simply allow His compassion to flow through us and speak of His awesome power. God can, and will, bless and change lives around us if we are willing to speak up and look beyond ourselves, our circumstances and our situations!

Discussion Tools

- As humans, we typically remember the wrongs that were done to us more easily than the “rights” and respond accordingly.
 - What were the wrongs that were done to you this week?
 - What was the attitude of the person who committed the wrong? Do you believe he or she did it purposefully or unwittingly?
 - What was your attitude in this situation? Were you like the slave-girl 1 Kings 5:1-14 or, as the phrase goes, did you give that person a piece of your mind?
 - If you had a response like the slave-girl in 1 Kings 5, what caused you to be compassionate and to be a blessing to essentially your enemy? If you did not have that response, what actions can you take now to better prepare yourself to have a different attitude for the next time?
- How are you going to be a blessing and not a “cursing” in someone's life?

Ice-breaker: What is the most amount of layers you have had to wear outside because of cold temperature?

PRAYER TIME
“Make me a blessing, Oh Saviour,
I pray. Make me a blessing to someone
today.”