

## Monday (Afternoon) Rewind - June 23, 2008

Good afternoon. On Sabbath we took a dip in the Jordan with Naaman, the leper and learned that need and faith that results in obedience are all that is required to receive mercy. Three facts make Naaman's story fascinating. First, he was not an Israelite. Naaman was a general for the nation of Aram (Syria), enemies of God's people. Second, he was used by God. 2 Kings 5:1 says that "Through him [Naaman] the Lord had given victory to Aram." It comes as a shock to some that God would use people outside the church--people who don't believe all the things we believe--to accomplish His purposes, but He does. Why? Because God wants to save everyone, and because His people often possess less real faith than those who are most aware of their great need. Third, Naaman was a leper. This deadly skin disease knew no class or status. It represents the universal condition of humankind. All have sinned. All are infected. All are universally doomed and hopeless without Christ.

But God had a plan--however strange it may appear. Through this story we learn: 1) God's ways are best; 2) God wants our obedience more than anything else; 3) God can use anything to accomplish his purposes. In this case, God chose seven dips in the muddy Jordan river to remove Naaman's leprosy *and* his pride.

Rewind to 2 Kings chapter 5 and see if you can identify pride, humility, testimony, impotence, confidence, and obedience at work in Naaman, the slave girl, the king of Israel, Elisha, and Gehazi. Then ask yourself, "What is my Jordan?" What is God asking you to do that offends you? Maybe just the humble act of acknowledging your helplessness to fix what's broken in your life is hard for you. Isn't it funny that the place of greatest humility becomes the place of greatest healing? Life can change dramatically when we stop trying to do things our way and begin doing things God's way. Somewhere there's a Jordan river with your name on it. Don't avoid what God has ordained to heal you. -Pastor Randy