A life of sickness, poverty, and shame had ended in a second. The ten lepers, spotting Jesus as he entered a village, had asked him for mercy, and he had made them clean. Yet out of the ten of them, only one turned around to praise the Savior who had healed him and granted him new life. Jesus asks, “The other nine, where are they?”

Saying thank you isn’t a difficult thing to do, really. But we see in Luke 16-18 that much of the very essence of following God is found in these simple, “easy” things. Following God involves doing our duty, forgiving someone, or admitting that we’ve done wrong. In Luke 16-18, we see examples of people who do these very things and are commended by Jesus for it. He doesn’t tell stories about men who single handedly ended wars or rescued entire nations from poverty. Instead, he tells about people who made small decisions to respond to God’s action in their lives.

In these chapters, Jesus isn’t calling us to don capes and superpowers. In fact, he says we only even need the smallest amount of faith. When the disciples asked Jesus to increase their faith, all Jesus would tell them was that faith “as small as a mustard seed” would suffice. Size, here, is not what is important. Small or big, the point is that it is there. However much faith we think we have, it only really matters that we have any at all. And faith is not the only small thing in our Christian story—the kingdom of God itself is also referred to as a mustard seed (back in Luke 13). It doesn’t matter how big the kingdom is. What is important is that it is here among us, in our every response to God, no matter how small or routine that response may seem.

In being like the one and not like the nine, we embody the kingdom of God.

**Study Questions** (for individuals or groups):

- Jesus tells a parable about the rich man and the beggar at his gate (16:19-31). What is the point of this story? How does this apply to us?

- What does Jesus mean when he says in 18:16 “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.” Who does the kingdom of God belong to? How do we become like them?