

# church of Christ at Greenwood

371 West Main Street  
Greenwood, Indiana 46142  
317.888.8288  
churchofchristatgreenwood.org

August 27, 2023

## “Behold, I thought...”

Human beings are rarely short of opinions. It is common to hear, “You know, I was just thinking...” And often those thoughts get people into serious trouble. Sometimes people think too much when they should just be listening. This is most certainly not a new problem.

Naaman (2 Kings 5.1-14) was a great man, highly valued by his master as a faithful servant and valiant military officer (verse 1), but he was afflicted with leprosy, an unsightly disease that would eventually take his life (verse 1). A little Israelite servant girl, taken captive by Naaman’s army, remembered a prophet in Samaria and knew that he could cure Naaman’s leprosy (verses 2-3). With great excitement Naaman made preparations to go see this prophet that he might be cured (verses 4-5).

When Elisha, the prophet from Samaria, learned that Naaman was seeking him, he sent instructions that Naaman should come to him (verses 6-8). As Naaman and his entourage approached the prophet’s house (verse 9)...

*“Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, ‘Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh will be restored to you and you will be clean.’ But Naaman was furious and went away and said, ‘**Behold, I thought**, “He will surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the place and cure the leper.” Are not Abanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?’ So he turned and went away in a rage”*  
(verses 10-12).

Naaman said, “Behold, I thought...” Before he arrived at Elisha’s house, he had already decided how he wanted to be cured. He fully expected that Elisha would come out and make a big show of it. But that is not what God had in mind. And even if washing in a river was required, Naaman thought of much better options than the Jordan. But, again, that’s not what God had in mind. Naaman needed to learn some important lessons, and so do we!

Cont’d, inside →

## **A way may seem right but be wrong.**

There can be no doubt that Naaman thought his way would work. But as good as the idea might have seemed, it would not have cured him. Why? Because it is not what God (through Elisha) had to say on the matter. “There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death” (Proverbs 14.12). Men may think of ways to be saved, to worship God, and to serve Him, but if they are not firmly grounded in the Word of God, they are in vain (2 John 9).

## **God’s ways and man’s ways are different.**

It was not what Naaman expected, but God had already determined the way that his leprosy could be healed. And regardless of what Naaman or anyone else thinks, God’s ways of doing things are always better than the ways of men. “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,’ declares the Lord. ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts” (Isaiah 55.8-9). We can conduct our spiritual lives any way we like, but any way that is not God’s way will ultimately fail.

## **Man cannot direct his own steps.**

When Naaman heeded the admonition of his servant and did just as Elisha had said, his leprosy was healed (2 Kings 5.13-14). God’s way worked flawlessly. “I know, O Lord, that a man’s way is not in himself, nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps” (Jeremiah 10.23). We need to realize the inferiority of our own ways when compared to His. We must surrender our will to His. God’s wisdom “pertaining to life and godliness” has been revealed to us (2 Peter 1.3). Let us each resolve to quit thinking of our own ways where God has given His perfect ways for us to follow.