

Sermon outline for morning service 31.1.2016: 2 Kings 5:1-14.

Lives of rich and famous of great fascination and lived at great cost.

Naaman was famous in his time. Commanding General of the greatest army in the world – Syrian army, superpower of its day. He could have just about anything he wanted, or could command that it be done or brought. He had everything - everything, that is, except his health.

General Naaman had leprosy -in a state of desperation where he was ready to try anything.

Captive servant girl suggested answer in prophet from home – Elisha.

King of Syria write to King of Israel for safe passage & introduction, accompanied by generous gifts

Elisha the prophet does not even come out of his house. Sends simple instructions to dip in river seven times.

Naaman is arrogant and full of pride. This is beneath him.

Naaman's help comes from a very humble source. Firstly captive slave girl and now ordinary soldier who brings Naaman to his senses. What is there to lose, after all? "If the prophet had commanded you to do something difficult, would you not have done it? How much more, when all he said to you was 'Wash, and be clean?' "

So Naaman swallowed his pride and bathed, and to his surprise his flesh became like that of a young child. He was cured.

For Naaman the cure was too simple. Too simple to go bath in the muddy waters of the Jordan. No, it should be something complicated.

He nearly missed out on the healing because it was too simple.

Our story? DO we miss out the simple steps in order for focus on the spectacular moving of God? Bible full of dramatic stories where God moves in power and majesty BUT also of the simple....

Where is your spiritual life lived out? Mountaintops and valleys – ordinary or spectacular.... Even at transfiguration they had to come down the mountain and get on with real life....

Simple steps that we forget which are foundational:

- **Prayer. Bible Study.** Actually spending time talking and listening to God –is transformative. You wouldn't go for days without eating – and expect to be healthy.
- **Silence.** What could be simpler? You don't have to do anything. Just turn off the noise and sit and be. God this is your time. Turn off your phone and slow down and allow myself Sabbath time with God.

Elijah – God not in the dramatic earthquake, hurricane...but in the “sound of sheer silence” that he encountered God and was transformed.
- **Fasting** is really just a physical way of training ourselves to push beyond our normal comfort limits, so that if the lessons learned in doing that can enable us to do it emotionally and spiritually we might be able to push ourselves out into the deep places of God.

Committing ourselves not to dry January but to FAITHFUL February. What simple steps do you need to re-walk again?