

The Cleansing Touch Mark 1:40 - 45

Introduction:

This is another opportunity to present ourselves before the mirror of the word of God. We shall again remind ourselves of the love and compassion of God over the lost generation. A follow up from our vigil on Friday.

Contextual Consideration - Mark 1:40-45

The story here is about a Leper Cleansed through the compassion of Jesus and we have some lessons to learn as we go on.

(a) The account of the leper gives us an instructive example of the prayer that God answers:

- It was earnest and desperate—imploring Him.
- It was reverent—kneeling down to Him., GREAT HUMILITY
- It was humble and submissive—“If You are willing.” FULL SUBMISSION TO HIS WILL
- It was believing—“You can.”
- It acknowledged need—“make me clean.”
- It was specific—not “bless me” but “make me clean.”
- It was personal— “make me clean.”
- It was brief—

Notice what happened!

- Jesus was moved with compassion.
- He stretched out His hand. The hand of God stretched forth in answer to humble, believing prayer.
- He touched him. Under the law,
 - a person became **ceremonially unclean** when he touched a leper.
 - there was of course the **danger of contracting the disease**.
 - But the Holy Son of Man **identified Himself with the miseries of mankind, That was why he came in the flesh**
- He said, “I am willing.” He is more willing to heal than we are to be healed.
- Christ readily wills **favours** to those who readily refer themselves to his will
- He forbade publicizing the miracle until first the man had **appeared before the priest** and had made the required offering (Lev_14:2 ff).
 - To show that he came to fulfil the law
 - This was a test, first of all, of the **man's obedience**.
- **To verify** Jesus' great miracle to the community.
- Again we find that Jesus withdrew from the crowds and ministered in deserted places.
- **He did not measure success by numbers.**

Secondly, we will look at leprosy as a parallel to sin.

Leprosy has a lot in common with sin. As a leper is unclean in the sight of men so also are sinners unclean in the sight of a Holy God. That is why we need the cleansing touch of the master.

LEPROSY DESCRIBED:

The disease which we call leprosy today, generally

- Begins with pain in certain areas of the body.
 - Numbness follows.
 - Soon the skin in such spots loses its original colour.
 - It gets to be thick, glossy, and scaly. ...
 - As the sickness progresses, the thickened spots become dirty sores and ulcers due to poor blood supply.
 - The skin, especially around the eyes and ears, begins to bunch, with deep furrows between the swellings, so that the face of the afflicted individual begins to resemble that of a lion.
 - Fingers drop off or are absorbed;
 - Toes are affected similarly.
 - His throat becomes hoarse, and you can now not only see, feel, and smell the leper, but you can hear his rasping voice.
- In keeping with the law in Leviticus 13 and 14, Jewish leaders declared people with leprosy **unclean**.
- Lepers are called “**walking dead men**” – smell of the decaying flesh
 - Announcement – Unclean, unclean...
 - Bells attached to keep people away
 - Toeless feet, fingerless hands
 - Wandering sightless eyes
 - Checkless mouth
 - Leprosy slowly destroys human bodies
- This meant that lepers were unfit to participate in any religious or social activity.
- Because the law said that contact with any unclean person made a person unclean, too,
- Even the mention of the name of this disabling disease terrified people.
- How astounding it was, then, when Jesus reached out and touched this man who had leprosy.
- The real value of a person is inside, not outside.
- **Although a person's body may be diseased or deformed, the person inside is no less valuable to God.**
- In a sense, we are all people with leprosy because we have all been deformed by the **ugliness of sin**.
- That is why God out of His love send Jesus – John 3:16
- While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us – Rom 5:8
- He was made sin for us - 2 Cor 5:21
- By sending his Son, Jesus, God has touched us, giving us the opportunity to be healed of our sinful nature.

LEPROSY AND SIN

- Leprosy is a vivid and graphic physical picture of the **spiritual defilement of sin**.
- Sin is ugly, loathsome, incurable, and contaminating;
- It separates men from God and makes them outcasts. Isa 59:2
- Separation from Him is spiritual death in trespasses and sins
- If we obey and please him, we will receive his favour - I John 3:22
- Sin is inside us, deeper than the skin (Leviticus 13:3);
- Sin also spreads (Leviticus 13:8);
- Sin always defiles and isolates (Leviticus 13:45-46); and

- Just as leprous garments are **fit only for the fire** (Leviticus 13:52-57), so those who die clothed in sin will **burn forever**.

But then came Jesus [Mark 1:40-45]. When the untouchable is touched by Jesus (cf. Leviticus 13:42), "Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cured."

JESUS TOUCHED THE UNTOUCHABLE AND CURED THE INCURABLE!

JESUS IS STILL TOUCHING LIVES:

- The healing of Christ in salvation from sin is instantaneous and complete ("the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from every sin). I John 1:7-8
- If you realize that the leprosy of sin has infected your person, then you have no doubt that you are a sinner.
- If you believe that, there is no reason why you should not go immediately to him.
- He has compassion, he will actually **touch the leprosy of your sin**, and you will be immediately healed!
- Have you humbled yourself to say, "I know you are willing, make me clean"?
- If not yet, then why not this morning, why not do it now?
- Sin defiles us in the sight of God, but through Christ, we can be healed of the plague of sin that separates us from God.
- God loathes sin; it is repulsive to Him.
- Sin bans us from the presence of God because God will not allow sinful man in His sight and presence (Psalm 5:5; Habakkuk 1:13; Revelation 21:27).
- This includes all forms of disobedience and rebellion (1 Samuel 15:23; Proverbs 15:9).
- All sin is abhorrent to God
- Sin offends our holy God and separates us from him. Because God is holy, he cannot ignore, excuse, or tolerate sin as though it didn't matter.
- Sin cuts people off from him, forming a wall to isolate God from the people he loves.
- Sin fills the vacuum left when God's truth no longer fills our life.

Only God can defeat sin.

- God wants us to live with him forever, but he cannot take us into his holy presence unless the sins are removed.
- **This is only achievable through the cross.**
- Have you confessed your sin to God, allowing him to remove it?
- The Lord can save you if you turn to him.

God is not willing that sinners perish (2 Peter 3:9) and that He is willing that all men be saved (1 Tim. 2:4).

IF YOU ARE HERE TODAY OR HEARING ME FROM ANYWHERE AND YOU HAVE NOT ACCEPTED CHRIST AS YOUR LORD AND SAVIOUR, THIS IS THE TIME FOR YOU. TOMORROW MAY BE TOO LATE.

Anyone who has never trusted the Saviour is spiritually in worse shape than this leper man was physically.

GIVE YOUR LIFE TO HIM TODAY!

- Here in the UK we celebrate sin – Pride UK (pride in homosexuality?) Queen James Bible ???
- We are kicking God out of our system – no wonder the confusion, broken homes, broken lives around
- We have forgotten that righteousness exalts a nation – Prov 14:34 and
- All nations that forget God will be turned to hell – Psalm 9:17

The Lord is still waiting with outstretched Arms.

To save and heal our land- 2 Chronicles 7:14

Whosoever comes, he will not cast out – John 6:37

There is still room at the cross

*♪There's room at the cross for you- s.m-r.m.r-d.t—s.f.m.f.m.r.d: m.s.f.m.r- d.d.r.d.r.l-
t.d.s.- m.f.m.r.d*

Oh yes, there's room at the cross for you-

Though millions have come - there's still room for one,

Yes there's room at the cross for you

TO THE WORLDLY CHRISTIANS: BATS

The story of the unsaved Bishop

- We cannot serve 2 masters – Mat 6:24
- You are either a Christian or you are not – Rev 3:16
- Love not the world, is the command – I John 2:15-17, Jas 4:4
- Many in the churches are un-regenerated – Isa 58:1-2
- More than entertainment
- We need to feel GOD not only feeling good

True worship is more than religious ritual - going to the Church every day, fasting, and listening to Scripture readings.

The key point is that of a **living, vital relationship with God.**

God doesn't want us to act pious when we have **unforgiven sin** in our heart and **continue our sinful lifestyle.**

Many are ceremonially religious but morally unrighteous. As it happens in the world today

We are called to be different!

LESSONS/CHALLENGES FOR US AS CHRISTIANS

- We have been saved by grace – Ephe 2:5-8
- We are not to continue in Sin – Rom 6:2
- We are to rededicate our lives to him as living sacrifice
- We are called unto holiness – Heb 12:14
- We no longer belong to ourselves – Gal 3:13-15
- We are to continue to grow in grace – 2 Peter 3:18

- Prioritise the things of God
- Seek ye first the kingdom of God – Mat 6:33

HAVE YOU RECEIVED THIS CLEANSING TOUCH?

♪ He Touched Me

[Verse 1]

Shackled by a heavy burden
'Neath a load of guilt and shame
Then the hand of Jesus touched me
And now I am no longer the same

[Chorus]

He touched me, oh He touched me
And oh the joy that floods my soul!
Something happened and now I know
He touched me and made me whole

[Verse 2]

Since I met this blessed Saviour
Since He's cleansed and made me whole
Oh I will never cease to praise Him (to praise)
I'll shout it while eternity rolls

Examine yourself:

If Christ come today, how ready are we?