

REDEMPTION CHURCH

He Saves Us | Week 1: *The Leper*

MATTHEW 8:1-4

When he came down from the mountain, great crowds followed him. And behold, a leper came to him and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, if you will, you can make me clean." And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I will; be clean." And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a proof to them."

CONTEXT

Some historical context on leprosy from the Scriptures:

One of the longest passages of Leviticus is about leprosy. There are 3 instances in the OT where people were afflicted w/ leprosy as a punishment from God. There were very specific instructions for how to be declared clean after leprosy.

Leprosy "rules": They had to isolate, warn others of their presence, and only the priest could deem them clean again.

This week we kicked off week 1 of our series "He Saves Us." Last week, in the prequel, we learned that Jesus does indeed "get us"; but, more importantly, He saves us!

For the next few weeks, we will be studying one-on-one encounters that Jesus had with real people. This Sunday we looked at a familiar story concerning a very isolating disease – leprosy.

Notes:

It's important to understand the historical stigma and social context surrounding leprosy. When Jesus healed this particular man, the crowd around Him would have been aware of all of these things.

Many commentators draw a comparison between leprosy and sin. Sin corrupts someone spiritually the way leprosy corrupts physically. [Leviticus 14](#) describes what a man must do to be ceremonially, or religiously, declared clean after being healed of leprosy. We can see parallels between the process of being cleansed of leprosy and how we overcome the effects of sin.

With that in mind, here are a few things that this leper's healing teaches us:

#1: What do leprosy and sin have in common?

- We can't cleanse ourselves from leprosy, in the same way we can't cleanse ourselves from sin.
- We can read [Leviticus 13](#) to learn all about leprosy, but it does not offer any remedy or cure. When we see the king's response in [2 Kings 5:7](#) we are reminded that the understanding was that only a miracle could heal leprosy.
- Similarly, we aren't able to cleanse ourselves from sin.
- Sin makes us unclean before a holy God. We can't be good enough, go to church enough, etc. Apart from an act of God, we are stuck in our sickness/sin.

LEVITICUS 5:1, 3, 5-6

"If anyone sins in that he...

3 touches human uncleanness, of whatever sort the uncleanness may be with which one becomes unclean, and it is hidden from him, when he comes to know it, and realizes his guilt; **5** when he realizes his guilt in any of these and confesses the sin he has committed, **6** he shall bring to the Lord as his compensation for the sin that he has committed, a female from the flock, a lamb or a goat, for a sin offering. And the priest shall make atonement for him for his sin.

2 PETER 3:9

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

ROMANS 5:19

For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

ROMANS 12:1

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

"...and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith..."

–Philippians 3:9

There is always *something* going on underneath ([1 Timothy 5:22-25](#))

#2: What does this leper's cleansing teach us about ourselves?

- We can always approach Christ.
- A leper had to announce their presence by shouting, "Unclean, unclean!"
- We, on the other hand, can always humbly approach our Savior.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

–1 John 1:9

- Our confession should begin with an honest, specific acknowledgment of our sin. It concludes with our acceptance that He has fully and completely cleansed us (DO NOT keep carrying it, walk in freedom).

#3: What does this leper's cleaning teach us about Jesus?

- Jesus always desires to save the humble heart and cleanse us (2 Peter 3:9).
- Jesus doesn't just "get us" and our problems or sin, He cleanses us and removes the sin.
- Jesus transfers His cleanliness to our uncleanness. Unlike with leprosy, He does not receive uncleanness from our uncleanness.
- Jesus and His cleansing power rehumanizes us, just like when He rehumanizes the leper in Matthew 8.
- Jesus transfers His cleanliness to us (Romans 5:19).

Now what?

Our right response to being saved and cleansed by Jesus is to receive the new, restored result and respond in proper order:

- We get baptized (Want to get baptized? Email jamey@experienceredemption.com for more info.)
- We put off sin (our "old clothes" –like pride, anger, jealousy...)
- We put on holiness (our "new clothes" –inviting the sanctification process to begin in our lives).

We then celebrate and worship Him (Romans 12:1)!