



Sermon Discussion Questions

February 11, 2024

*Jesus in Galilee*

## **CLEANING THE UNCLEAN**

Luke 5:12-16

1. **Opening Discussion Questions** (in a group setting you will probably only want to do one of these questions)
  - a. Have you ever been confronted by someone that you really did not want to see or talk to, but the situation made it necessary? Describe the situation, the reason you had hoped to avoid the individual and how you responded to the situation? How did you feel after the encounter?
  - b. In the last 50 years the world has experienced two major pandemics – HIV/AIDS and COVID-19 – and both diseases continue to affect millions worldwide. Which disease concerns you most? Which would you do most to avoid? Why? Of the two, which do you think probably has the greatest impact on individuals who contract it? Why?
2. **Sermon Outline/Key Points**
  - a. Jesus Heals the Visibly Unclean
    - i. An unclean man begs.
    - ii. A gentle Savior heals.
    - iii. The crowd goes wild.
  - b. Jesus Loves to Clean the Unclean
    - i. Jesus loves those who look or feel unclean.
    - ii. Do you need Jesus' cleansing touch today?
  - c. Imitate Jesus by Touching the Untouchable and Nurturing Your Spiritual Life
    - i. Live with compassion toward those who look or feel unclean.
    - ii. To do that sustainably, invest in your spiritual life.
3. **Study/Discussion Points:**
  - a. *Sunday Afternoon* – As soon as possible after listening to the sermon set aside some time to prayerfully ponder these questions:
    - i. What one thing most stood out to you in this sermon?
    - ii. What new truth did you learn or of what truth were you reminded?
    - iii. After listening to the sermon, is there a Scripture passage you feel led to meditate on or commit to memory this week?
    - iv. What is one specific thing you feel God is leading you to do after hearing this message?

- v. Did God convict you of a need to make any changes in your life and walk with Him?

*b. Monday – Jesus Heals the Visibly Unclean*

- i. Begin this week by reviewing the Old Testament commands about leprosy. Read Leviticus 13:1-11 and 45-46. You may also want to scan or read the verses between these two passages.
  - 1. What does it suggest to you that such a long set of commands is given concerning leprosy/skin disease?
  - 2. In your view, what is the most surprising/difficult part of the instructions?
  - 3. Remembering that these instructions were given when the Israelites were in the wilderness after fleeing Egypt, how would you have felt if you found that someone you loved had to be isolated outside the camp for seven days? How do you think it would have affected you and your family? The isolated person?
- ii. Now read Leviticus 14:1-20 for the instructions on what must be done if/once a person has recovered.
  - 1. What do you find most surprising or interesting about the cleansing process?
  - 2. In a society where men were expected to have a beard, what does the shaving in verse 8 & 9 suggest to you about how the recovered individual would be able to reintegrate into their family and society? How long would it be before they were treated normally?
  - 3. What is suggested by the fact that the cleansing process requires the healed person to offer a guilt and a sin offering?

*c. Tuesday – Jesus Heals the Visibly Unclean.*

- i. In the Bible leprosy is often seen as a type or symbol of sin. Thinking about the verses you read in Leviticus yesterday and whatever you may know about leprosy, what makes it such an appropriate symbol of sin?
  - 1. What similarities do you see when comparing Leviticus 13:3b and Matthew 15:8-9?
  - 2. What similarities do you see when comparing Leviticus 13:46b with Genesis 3:23-24 and Habakkuk 1:13?
  - 3. What similarities do you see when comparing Leviticus 13:46a & Numbers 19:22 with Genesis 3:17-18 and Romans 8:20-21?
  - 4. What similarities do you see when comparing Leviticus 14:19-20 and 1 John 1:9?
- ii. In Jesus' day there was no known cure or treatment for leprosy. How would (should) the following Old Testament events have influenced the priests and the peoples view of Jesus when He healed leprosy?

1. Exodus 4:6-8
2. Numbers 12:9-15
3. 2 Kings 5:1-15

*d. Wednesday – Jesus Heals the Visibly Unclean.*

- i. Read the focal passage – Luke 5:12-16 – carefully, making note of as many details as possible. What was most significant to you?
- ii. Now read the parallel accounts in Matthew 8:2-4 and Mark 1:40-44.
  1. What differences did you notice in the three accounts of this event?
  2. Which of the three did you find most moving or inspirational? Why?
  3. Which of the three best shows the desperate condition of the leper?
- iii. Focus on Luke 5:12-13. Reread these verses and try to form a mental picture of the event.
  1. At least as recorded, what did the leper not do that would have been expected? What would have been the expected response of the crowd to this omission? What does it suggest about the mental condition of the leper?
  2. What does the leper’s posture and statement show us about how he viewed Jesus? What did he know, and did he not know?
  3. The text tells us he begged but then only records one sentence. Using your imagination, what else do you think he might have said?

*e. Thursday – Jesus Heals the Visibly Unclean.*

- i. Read Luke 5:12-16 again.
  1. Why do you think Jesus responded by mirroring the leper’s statement? What does His response say to you about Jesus – His nature and His identity?
  2. Before speaking Jesus did something that His disciples and the crowd would have found astonishing. If you had been there, how would you have reacted to seeing Jesus reach out His hand to touch the leper? How should it have affected your immediate relationship to Jesus?
  3. Lepers didn’t just suffer physical pain from the disease, but they were isolated from society and from worship of God. Which condition does Jesus seem to address first? What might this suggest about how we should do missions?
  4. Do you envision Jesus’ touch as a single finger (the way we might approach something disgusting) or more like a hearty handshake (as we might an old friend)? How do you think the leper felt when Jesus touched Him?

5. Leprosy is a disease that frequently leaves individuals grossly disfigured – and is often accompanied by the foul odor of decaying flesh. How do you think the man looked after Jesus healed him?
    - ii. Jesus then gave the healed leper specific instructions.
      1. Why do you think he told the man to “tell no one”? What does verse 15 suggest as one possible reason? What reason might be suggested by John 12:10?
      2. What would be accomplished by him going through the process with the priests? Why was it necessary for this man’s future? What was the man’s condition until he did so?
- f. **Friday** – *Jesus Loves to Clean the Unclean!*
- i. Jesus’ earthly ministry was characterized by the time He spent with those that the Jewish religious establishment would write off. How many examples can you think of? Some you might consider are Matthew 9:9-13, Mark 4:3-9, Luke 7:36-48, Luke 19:1-8, and John 4:4-26.
  - ii. How do Matthew 20:28, Philippians 2:6-8, 2 Corinthians 8:9 and Romans 3:24 display Jesus’ love for and desire too cleanse the unclean (sinners)?
  - iii. Reread the story of Naaman’s cleansing in 2 Kings 5:1-15. How does his experience relate to our salvation (see Romans 10:10 and Ephesians 2:8-9)? What did he try to do that so many people attempt when confronted with their sin?
- g. **Saturday** – *Imitate Jesus by Touching the Untouchable and Nurturing Your Spiritual Life.*
- i. Often the focus in our evangelical churches is on salvation and we stop there – not emphasizing the works that must follow. Carefully read Matthew 25:31-46. If a friend or family member evaluated your life which group would they likely believe you were in?
  - ii. Sometimes an example from someone’s life best instructs us. For this sermon it would be hard to think of one better than Father Damien. Don’t allow his Catholic background to prejudice you as you watch the video at <https://www.publicchristianity.org/youth-resource/the-leper-priest-father-damien-of-molokai/> How many of us would be willing to go so far to serve our Lord?
4. **Application:** The focal passage ends with the simple statement that Jesus withdrew to an isolated place to pray. Make sure that you are doing the same this week.

## 5. Prayer Points:

- a. **A**doration – Psalms 8:1 and 29:1-2
- b. **C**onfession – Proverbs 28:13 and 1 John 1:8-10
- c. **T**hanksgiving – Psalms 95:1-2 and 100:4-5
- d. **S**upplications – Matthew 21:22 and John 16:19