When God Feels Like the Enemy May 22, 2022

*Luke 5:12-16 Series: How It All Began*

Jesus didn't have to touch lepers. He could have been just as effective from a hundred yards away. But he touched them. - Don Bubna

Intro: Why did we need Jamal to kiss Latika’s scar?

1. Maybe your scars aren’t proof that God’s against you after all
2. He wasn’t just scarred; he was full of scars

v. 12 *While he was in one of the cities, there came a man full of leprosy.*

1. Lepers weren’t supposed to be in the city

Luke 17:12 *as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance*

Leviticus 13:45-46 *The leprous person who has the disease shall wear torn clothes and let the hair of his head hang loose, and he shall cover his upper lip and cry out, ‘Unclean, unclean.’ He shall remain unclean as long as he has the disease. He is unclean. He shall live alone. His dwelling shall be outside the camp.*

1. Faith means recognizing Jesus as the solution not the problem

v. 12 *And when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and begged him, “Lord, if you will, you can make me clean.”*

* How would Latika’s understanding of Jamal’s love have been different if she had never had a scar?
* What was so difficult about life for lepers in ancient Israel?
* What do you think made the leper find hope in Jesus rather than blame Him? What gives you that hope today?

1. Jesus’ touch heals the scar
2. Jesus draws near when no one else will

v. 13 *Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him*

Mark 1:41 *Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand and touched him* …

The touch is completely unnecessary for the physical healing.

1. Religion says, be clean, and God will embrace you

Haggai 2:13 *Then Haggai said, “If someone who is unclean by contact with a dead body touches any of these, does it become unclean?” The priests answered and said, “It does become unclean.”*

1. Jesus says, if I embrace you, you will be clean

v. 13 *Jesus … touched him, saying, “I will; be clean.”*

* Why do you think Jesus touched the leper when he could have healed him from a distance?
* Mark notes that Jesus was *“moved with pity”* (1:41). When we find ourselves scarred like the leper, why do we tend to think that God doesn’t care?
* Why doesn’t Jesus heal everyone’s scars?
* How does Jesus’ encounter with the leper illustrate salvation?

1. Jesus wants to do more than heal the scar
2. Jesus doesn’t just say “be healed”

v. 13 *be clean*

2 Corinthians 5:21 *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

1 Peter 2:24 *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.*

1. Jesus calls us to grateful obedience

v. 14 *go and show yourself to the priest*

v. 14 *make an offering for your cleansing as Moses commanded*

v. 14 *for a proof to them*

1. Jesus calls us to embrace others the way He did us

Acts 10:28 *You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or to visit anyone of another nation, but God has shown me that I should not call any person common or unclean.*

Acts 10:15 *And the voice came to him again a second time, “What God has made clean, do not call common.”*

* What makes people feel unclean today?
* What would it mean for us ‘embrace those who are unclean’?
* What keeps you from doing that?
* What truth from this passage do you most want to remember or apply this week?

Study ahead: Next week, we’ll study Luke 5:17-26

Notes