

## **Luke 5:12-16 – Jesus heals a leper**

Jesus continued to teach the people about himself and his kingdom. One day, as he did so, a leper came to him asking to be healed. Leprosy was a terrible disease. The leper was unclean and not allowed to enter the gathering of God's people. Those he touched also became unclean and not allowed to worship. They were cut off from the rest of Israel. It is a picture of us in our sin; unclean and cut off from God. This passage is not really about medical healing, but about returning into fellowship with God through Jesus; how filthy sinners like us can be cleansed and forgiven.

### **1. The leper's faith (v12)**

The leper's faith looked to Jesus directly. It focussed on him. It believed that everything depends upon Jesus; it said, "Lord, if you are willing". Jesus is the Son of God; he rules over all things and can do all things. He could not command Jesus what to do, but had to submit before him. He had to trust that Jesus knew what was best. We are not above Jesus, but must bow down before him. We say "if it is your will" and are ready to leave it to him. Faith recognises that we have nothing, and Jesus has all. He died and rose to save sinners; we must fall before him. Have you?

### **2. Jesus' pity and power (v13)**

Jesus put out his hand to touch the leper (v13), and to heal him. Nobody would ever touch a leper; but Jesus chose to heal him this way, to show him his kindness. Mark 1v41 says Jesus pitied him. He is kind and merciful to sinners. He said "I am willing"; he is always willing because he is full of grace and compassion. He never turns away anyone who comes to him (John 6:37); have you come to him?

### **3. The leper's disobedience (v14-15)**

Jesus gave the leper a command. He told him to show himself to the priests. This was in the law of God (Leviticus 14) – they were the ones to declare that a man was clean and could re-join the worship of God. Those who love Jesus will obey him (John 14:15). The command brought some difficulty – Galilee was some miles from Jerusalem. But the man would have been willing to do anything before being cleansed. Now, he should be very grateful. It was a privilege for him to bring this testimony to the priests, that Jesus had healed him. People who are saved should obey God's law. We are released from the law's condemnation; but not from its authority. However, this man disobeyed Jesus and started telling others first. This brought trouble for Jesus and hindered his preaching; when we use our own ideas instead of obeying, God is never pleased. Are we true disciples? Jesus said we must obey *everything* he taught (Matthew 28:20).

### **4. Jesus' continuing ministry (v16)**

Jesus withdrew himself. He was not seeking for crowds, fame or the praise of man. He was seeking to be faithful to his Father; he was seeking to go to a cross, and to take the wrath of God upon himself for our sins. His aim was not to get numbers, but to preach truth. Is it our desire to learn truth? He went out to deserted places, to pray and renew his fellowship with God. All our spiritual strength comes from God and all depends on him. If Jesus needed to do this, how much more do we? If we have no time to seek God, we will be empty and barren. All fulness comes from Jesus.