

I Am Willing

Matthew 8:2-4 AMPC

[2] And behold, a leper came up to Him and, prostrating himself, worshiped Him, saying, Lord, if You are willing, You are able to cleanse me by curing me. [3] And He reached out His hand and touched him, saying, I am willing; be cleansed by being cured. And instantly his leprosy was cured and cleansed. [4] And Jesus said to him, See that you tell nothing about this to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest and present the offering that Moses commanded, for a testimony to your healing and as an evidence to the people.

But in **Mark 1:45** - the healed leper went out and began to talk so freely about it and blaze abroad the news spreading it everywhere that Jesus could no longer openly go into a town but was outside in lonely desert places. But the people kept on coming to Him from all sides and every quarter. I want you to take notice of Jesus response to this leper when he asked Jesus, are You willing to heal me of my leprosy. I know you are able. I know you have all power and authority to heal. But Jesus are You willing to heal me of my leprosy today. Jesus response was **“I Am willing”**. I want to entitle today’s message, I AM WILLING.

Leprosy was a condition that was treated as a terrible disease by the community of Israel. For example, the book of Leviticus chapters 13 and 14 extensively covers this insidious disease. It describes the priest examining over and over again the progression and contagiousness of leprosy on someone. If a person was suspected to have a contagious and growing leprosy in their body, the priest could order the lepers clothes and entire house destroyed. Leprosy separated you from your family once you were diagnosed to have it. It did not matter who you are or what financial status you had in the community, you had to yell loudly, “unclean, unclean”, when people came around you, leprosy completely separated you from those you love. You could only speak to them from a distance. Can you imagine this being you and me in the 21st century? Leprosy also caused you to lose body parts, and guess what? You are still alive while seeing body parts fall off. But, the worst part of leprosy is that it causes damage to the central nervous system to the point you cannot feel anything in certain parts of your body, so your whole body could go numb. You can lose all sensitivity to your whole body at some point, to the point you don’t feel pain when you cut yourself or get injured, or in cases where your body gets close to heat or cold you would never feel the danger.

Jesus has come to confront the spiritual leprosy of His people.

Spiritual leprosy is something in your life that causes you not to feel the love of Jesus Christ. Because when you cannot feel Him over a period of time, your natural inclination is to find substitutes to validate feeling good about ourselves. And just like natural leprosy we face social embarrassment to tell anybody we are not feeling God, so we wear our daily mask to hide spiritual leprosy. So, when you do not discern nor feel God’s love you don’t realize it when you hurt other people. You are numb to the body of Christ. So, like the disease of leprosy I seek to keep my intimate and transparent distance from the people closest to me. Spiritual leprosy causes you to not feel the love of God coming from others trying to bond with your life. I grew up in a home where it was not safe to share your deepest emotions and feelings. So as an adult I found it hard to express true feelings, and when I couldn’t, it resulted in expressing anger, impatience, and being untrusting of the motives of other people. I did not want to admit spiritual leprosy attacked my central nervous system for feeling love and empathy in the body of Christ.

But, when Jesus answered the leper what did he tell the leper? I Am willing!

Our opening chapter, the leper did not come to Jesus complaining about how bad people treated him. He didn't accuse his family, his organization, or government for his unhappiness. He didn't even scream unclean. **Matthew 8:2**, says he came with an attitude of prostration and worship. He fought through the massive crowds to get to Jesus from verse one. He knew Jesus could heal and has the power to heal. But he asked the question are you willing to heal me today Jesus. This question centers around the love Jesus had for this leper. Because the Bible says, ***"He was willing to heal the leper"***. This denotes as God saying, "I Am choosing to touch you today for your spiritual leprosy because it's my choice to do this". Jesus did not care about leprosy protocol that requires a priest not to even touch a leper. But the love of this Jesus does not get contaminated when it touches your spiritual leprosy. It's a touch that can be instantaneously. It can be permanent. For He can be touched by the feelings of our infirmities. For Jesus said I Am willing to touch your spiritual leprosy today in this service.

I Am willing to touch your spiritual leprosy.

I am referring to spiritual leprosy called fear and worry. Like natural leprosy it can grow and not be seen for a while. But it attacks your central nervous system when it's time to love and trust other people. I call this spiritual leprosy because fear and excessive worry can become apart of your personality and values when making decisions. People grow up thinking this way. It causes you not to feel love from the body of Christ. Spiritual leprosy attacks the love in the body of Christ. With selfishness and self preservation living. It causes you not to feel love from Jesus. But Jesus said, ***"I Am willing to heal today"***. Spiritual leprosy can be resentment, anger, offenses that never heal. It makes parts of the body fall off each other. The leper still lives but cannot feel love in his body. Pride and gossip are forms of spiritual leprosy amongst us.

Proverbs 6:16-19 AMPC

[16] These six things the Lord hates, indeed, seven are an abomination to Him: [17] A proud look the spirit that makes one overestimate himself and underestimate others, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, [18] A heart that manufactures wicked thoughts and plans, feet that are swift in running to evil, [19] A false witness who breathes out lies even under oath, and he who sows discord among his brethren. Jesus said I am willing today to cause you to feel love again. That's the kind of power and love I have for the impossible in your life.

I can repair the leprosy cutting you off from being intimate and transparent with loved ones. But, like the leper in the Bible, I have to come to Jesus prostrate and with the determination of worship. I can breathe new life into your spirit today causing you to feel my love in a transformative way. For in Him we live, we breathe, and have our being. Jesus is not repulsed at your hypocrisy that you have told no one of your inner most deepest struggle. He is willing to come close to your leprosy. His love comes with the quickening power to remove the shame and the social scars of your leprosy. And the quickening presence of the leper healer is in this room right now, to confront in me, and in you, the spiritual leprosy of laziness, the attitude of indifference and independence. When that spreads it's like leprosy. It causes body parts to fall off. Jesus said, ***"I Am willing"*** to help cleanse you from the leprosy of negativity, where it's been hard to be positive about your life and you find yourself becoming more negative lately. This is spiritual leprosy Jesus said, I Am the only one who can cleanse you of this kind of mindset.

I believe the spirit of lust is like leprosy. You won't feel God like you need to giving into this kind of spirit in the privacy of your life and inner fantasies. It's like a leprosy. You become distant with people close to you. I believe social media can be a form of leprosy. Where it separates you from communicating with people. And when people try to get close to you and make real connections you vomit all of the social media screaming uncleanunclean...unclean. Social media is causing some serious attention deficits in our interpersonal skills with others. It can make you numb to focusing on God's love, because you are now consumed about what somebody said on a blog, a news network, or Facebook page. I call this spiritual leprosy because it makes numb to the love of Jesus Christ.

Impatience is a form of leprosy because it no longer feels the love of God for a situation so you take matters into your own hand. Impatience no longer feels comfortable to wait, and becomes antsy and stressed to take matters into one's own hands.

To this day, no human walking the earth has ever cured leprosy, but Jesus Christ.

Only Jesus has the power to cleanse permanent our individual spiritual leprosy today. And He said, ***"I Am willing"***.

But in ***Mark 1:45*** - **the healed leper went out and began to talk so freely about it and blaze abroad the news spreading it everywhere that Jesus could no longer openly go into a town but was outside in lonely desert places. But the people kept on coming to Him from all sides and every quarter.**

What would happen when the touch of the leper healer goes throughout this congregation and guests today? This verse is saying real evangelism comes when we, our cleansed spiritual leprosy, is used to reproduce ourselves. You have heard the many stories of Sis. Rogers and I, concerning our past. We have chosen to use it as a tool for spreading ablaze the power of Jesus the leprosy cleanser. But you first have to admit you may have spiritual leprosy today. That's the first step. Then Jesus said, ***"I Am willing"*** to heal and cleanse you right now today! So, you and the body, can feel the love of God towards each other.

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