

Full of Mercy, Love, and Power
Luke 5:12-26
Berean Baptist Church
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INTRODUCTION

As Jesus begins His public ministry and the work of the Messiah, He again shows Himself to be the healer king. But Jesus is not only concerned with physical healing; His care for us is deeper. And He is not only a king; His heart is greater. Jesus is a friend to the outcast and the forgiver of sins.

This was true in the villages of Galilee and is true today. Learn more about Jesus!

Seek mercy and help from Jesus!

This starts by trusting Him as your Lord and savior – becoming a Christian. And, it continues in the Christian life as we learn to proclaim His mercy and live as forgiven people!

Luke 5:12-14 Jesus is Full of Compassion

Vs 12 “leprosy” The translation "leprosy" could be misleading because today we exclusively use the term for Hansen's Disease. But in Jesus' time, they used the word "leprosy" for dozens of different diseases in the category of "leprosy." Israel's attitude towards lepers was not strictly biblical, but hostility and fear towards lepers were rampant in Jesus' day.

“leprosy” was any serious disease with symptoms manifest on the skin. It could be anything from psoriasis to a staff infection. The force of the term was not the type of disease, but that the diseased person was displaying God's judgment on their body.

Touching a leper was dangerous to your health and, some believed, even dangerous to your eternal soul.

Only God could heal a leper and such healing was tantamount to being raised from the dead. When a leper asked the king of Israel for help, the king said: "Am I God, to kill and make alive, that this man sends a man to me to heal him of his leprosy (2 Kings 5:6)?"

They were outcasts and had no way to earn a living; their only hope was charity and they weren't allowed to get very close to people to ask for help.

“And the leper in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, Unclean, unclean. All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be defiled; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be (Lev 13:45-46).”

This was the sort of person that came to Jesus and said: "if you are willing you can cleanse me." He said **“make me clean”** because being a leper was much more than just being sick: it was being dirty - unclean and untouchable – no longer part of the community, you were a story they told to scare children into being good, a monster to be feared and hated.

Vs 13 Luke takes great pains to point out that Jesus touched this man. Jesus could have healed him with a word, indeed He did, but Jesus also touched him.

Vs 13 "Be thou clean" Jesus heals this man with a word. He touches the leper out of compassion but is by the word of Jesus that he is healed. The OT Law mentions leprosy hundreds of times and no cure is offered. The only response is quarantine, and the only hope is a miracle from heaven.

Jesus performs that miracle. This is a picture of the power of Jesus to forgive sins, a power not found in religious legalism. The grace of Jesus can do what the religious rules can never do: make a sinner clean.

“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit (Rom 8:3-4).”

Under the OT Law, Jesus should have been made unclean by touching the leper. But instead, the leper was made clean when Jesus touched him. This is a profound picture of the doctrine of atonement. Jesus takes our filth upon Himself and gives us His own clean goodness (See Matt 8:17).

Come to Jesus and ask for His mercy because He can cleanse you!

Christians, do you follow the only who comforts the defiled? Follow Jesus by reaching out to the hated and forgotten!

Vs 14 Jesus has come to fulfill the Law, so he never teaches people to violate the Law. But He wants to be revealed in His own time according to His own program. He says "for a testimony unto them" because according to the Law, a former leper had to prove in a kind of religious court, that he was now clean.

Luke 5:15-16 Jesus is Religious

Vs 15-16 Jesus goes out to prepare in prayer. He knows that the multitudes are gathering. The healing of the leper was private and his forgiveness was implied.

But soon, very soon, Jesus will make a public statement that will change everything.

Vs 16 Jesus frequently retreats into private prayer (Mt 14:23; Mr 6:46). If Jesus without sin prays constantly, how much more should we? And He teaches about the life of prayer. Jesus deliberately makes time for prayer. He removes Himself from distractions, leaves the busy world, and communes with God.

Christian, follow Jesus by making substantial time for prayer!

Luke 5:17-26 Jesus Forgives Sins

A “sin” is an evil action, thought or word. Because God cannot be evil, our evil actions, thoughts or words, break our relationship with God and make us targets of God's good wrath against evil.

Vs 17 “Pharisees” - Were a popular sect within Judaism. They believed in the Scriptures and lived to make the teachings of the Word accessible to common people. Many were sincere and fervent in their desire to be righteous.

But they often misinterpreted the Scriptures and just as often substituted human traditions for God's

commandments. Many were hypocrites and made a show of their religion loving the praise of men. Some Pharisees followed Jesus, but most were too proud to believe a gospel that could save people unlike them.

“doctors of the law” - this is a generic term describing teachers of the OT Law. This includes Pharisees but also includes experts from other traditions.

Vs 18 When the KJV was translated, **“palsy”** was a term used for paralysis. This man was either a paraplegic or a quadriplegic.

Vs 19 “ they went up on the housetop and let him down with his bed through the tiling into the midst before Jesus.”

The paralyzed man was being carried around on a stretcher by his friends. When they could not get people to move out of the way, they found another way. Coming up to the roof they removed the dirt, thatch, and tiles, and lowered their friend on his bed down directly in front of Jesus.

Vs 20 “When He saw their faith, He said to him, "Man, your sins are forgiven you."

Jesus says this in a way to emphasize complete and continuing forgiveness; his sins were forgiven and he would continue to abide in forgiveness by faith in Jesus.

Vs 20 “ their faith” This forgiveness was based on faith: informed trust in Jesus. They did not know much about Jesus, but they believed that He could help, and were willing to seek His help.

Vs 20 “when He saw their faith” Jesus could see their faith, along with everyone else in the house, because their faith was shown by their work. This action took great, persistent faith. This is a faith willing to work hard and willing to take risks – in short, this is living faith.

Vs 21 “Who can forgive sins, but God alone?” This is a fair question. Just like there is no precedent in the OT for a cure for leprosy, there is no precedent for a man who can forgive sins. Leprosy could only be cured by a miracle from God, and sin could only be forgiven by God Himself. *Who is this Jesus?*

Vs 24 “But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins...”

There is absolutely no precedent in the Law for anything like this. The only approach to forgiveness was through the sacrificial system, but these sacrifices had to be offered again and again because they had no inherent power. They were symbols of a better sacrifice to come.

All sacrifices from Abel, to Abraham, to the end of the Prophets, worshipers looked forward to sins somehow being forgiven. They were saved by trusting God. But the way of forgiveness was always a mystery.

Now, in this crowded house in Galilee, with its torn open roof, and everyone marveling at the persistence of this paralyzed man's friends, the way of forgiveness is revealed to be Jesus.

Not long after this Jesus would say “ I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me (John 14:6).”

Vs 24-25 “(he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house. And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.”

Seek Jesus' mercy! Jesus has the power to forgive your sins and save your life! Just as He raises the physically helpless, he saves the spiritually helpless.

*Come to Jesus and ask for His mercy because He can forgive your sins!
Christians, do you live as one forgiven? Do you rest in His grace and live to glorify Him?*

CONCLUSION

Luke 5:26 "amazed...glorified God...filled with fear...strange things today." Many that were there glorified God. They were amazed, shaken, and thankful after seeing God work. These are signs of real encounters with holy power.

See that Jesus is full of compassion and can cleanse the dirtiest!

Whoever you are, whatever shame you carry, however much you think of yourself as damaged goods, mentally, physically, or spiritually – know that Jesus embraces the defiled in love and cleansing power!

He lives today and answers those who call on Him, *Seek mercy and help from Jesus!*

Christian, now that you have trusted Him, do you go where He goes, do you embrace who He embraces. Now, we are subject to disease and death in a way that Jesus was not, so we should use the wisdom that God supplies.

But wisely, if you following Jesus, full of mercy, you should live showing the mercy of God to the defiled!

Whatever you have done, however far you have walked away from God, He is able to forgive you.

See that Jesus is full of power and able to forgive your sins!

He lives today and answers those who call on Him, *Seek mercy and help from Jesus!*

*Christian, if you have received mercy, do you go on your way rejoicing and glorifying God?
Seek mercy and help from Jesus!*