

Lesson 17: Power, Compassion & Authority to Heal

Matthew 8:1-17

I. THE MAN WITH LEPROSY (1-4; Lk 5:12-16) *CHRIST'S COMPASSION*

Leprosy represents the curse of sin. Jesus came to *cure us of sin* and its deadly effects.

A. Coming to Jesus—His determination shows his desperation.

1. His Condition—“A man with leprosy” / “full of leprosy”

- a. **Unclean**—excluded a person from social and religious fellowship with others
- b. **Incurable** (2 Kg 5:7; Jer 17:9)—Diagnosis was a death sentence.
- c. **Contagious**—no known cure in biblical times
- d. **Outcast**—Out of concern for public health, infected person banished from society

2. His Fear—“If you are willing”—would Jesus run away, rebuke him, send him away?

3. His Faith (Jer 17:14; 2 Kg 5:8)—“You can make me clean”

B. Touched by Jesus (3)

1. The Isolation of Suffering (Gen 3:7-8)—shame and fear cause us to withdraw/hide

2. The Compassion of Christ (Mk 1:41; Jn 6:37; 1 Jn 4:18)—ministers to emotional, physical & spiritual need. No one who comes to Jesus will ever be turned away!

3. The Beauty of Incarnation (Heb 2:17-18 & 4:15-16)—God became man so that He could touch us and we could touch Him!

C. Instructed by Jesus (4)—the cleansed leper did not obey Jesus’ instructions

1. The Secrecy (Mk 1:45)—“Don’t tell anyone.”

- a. **The crush of crowds**
- b. **First things first**

2. The Law (Lev 14:1-32)—“Go, show yourself to the priest...”

- a. **The Priest**—the Public Health official of Israel, could diagnose, quarantine, banish
- b. **The Offering**—priest’s wage and thanksgiving to God

3. The Witness—“As a testimony to them”

- a. **Verification of the Miracle**—priest would verify & document the miracle and authorize the former leper’s re-entry to the community
- b. **Testimony to the Priests**—that Jesus fulfills OT, should recognize Messiah

II. THE ROMAN CENTURIAN (5-13; Luke 7:1-10) **CHRIST'S AUTHORITY**

A. A Surprising Faith—stronger than any Jesus found among His own people

1. **A Gentile of Righteous Character**—loved the Jews, built their synagogue
2. **Conscious of His Unworthiness**—not a natural heir of the promise
3. **Confident in Christ's Ability**—even when not physically present

B. The Authority of Christ

1. **Recognition of Authority**—a military man recognizes authority
2. **Submission to Authority**—humbly appeals to Christ for help
3. **Use of Authority**—for the benefit of those under his authority, a reflection of Christ

C. A Place at the Table (Isa 25:6-9; Rom 9:30-32)

1. The Kingdom of Heaven

- a. **International** (Gen 12:3; Jn 10:16)—Gentiles (all nations) always in God's plan
- b. **Spiritual** (Jn 6:63 & 8:39-40, 56)—qualification is faith, not flesh (works or biology)

2. The Tables Are Turned

- a. **Inside Feasting with Abraham** (11)—Many Gentiles will come—the welcome
- b. **Outside Weeping in Darkness** (12)—Many natural Jews thrown out—the refusal

III. DEMONS AND DISEASES (14-17; Isa 53:4) **CHRIST'S POWER**

A. Peter's Mother-in-Law (14-15)

1. **Bringing Jesus Home with You**—Jesus not just for the crowds, also for your family
2. **Serving out of Gratitude**—not to *earn* favor but because you have *received* favor

B. The Human Condition (16)—oppressed by devil; deformities/diseases of body & soul

1. **Spiritual Illness**—He drove out evil spirits
2. **Physical Illness**—He healed all the sick

C. Isaiah's Prophecy (17; Isa 53:4)

1. **Jesus is not afraid of our sins and diseases.**
2. **We don't make Him sick; He makes us well.**